

Our Firm Foundation

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 15, Number 6

June 2000

HATE CRIMES AND CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM

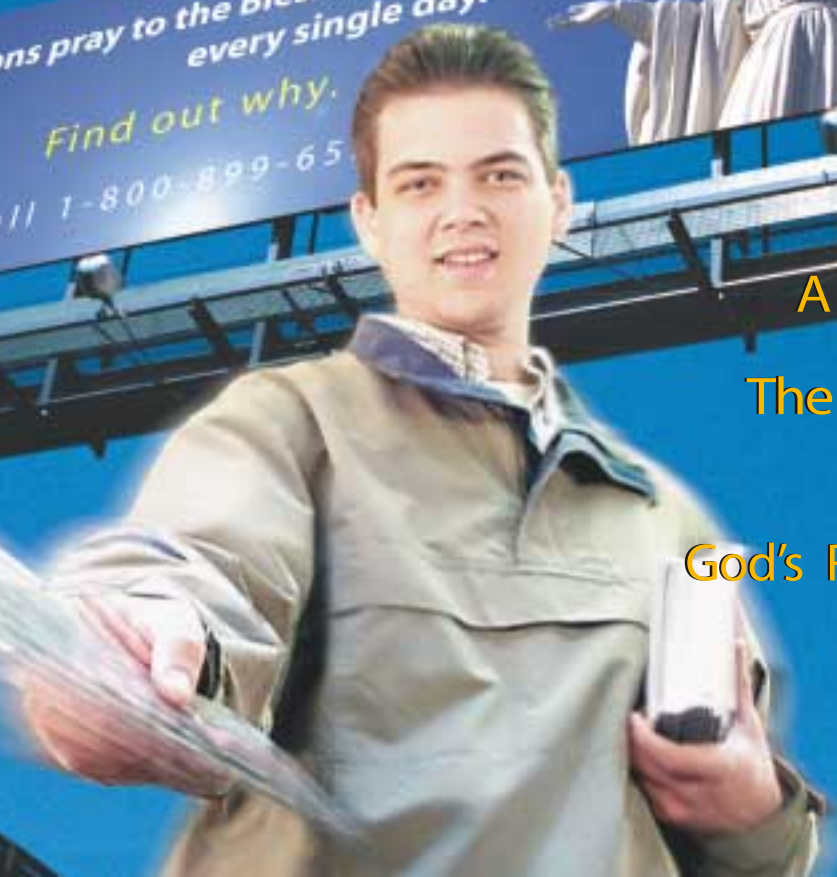
Millions pray to the Blessed Virgin
every single day.
Find out why.
call 1-800-899-65



A Better Marriage

The Proper Attitude
in Prayer

God's Remnant Church
in the Last Days



Now at the birth of the new millennium the finishing touches are being put upon the ecumenical movement. Our millennium will be heralded as the era of global peace and spiritual unity.

In May 1999, Anglicans and Catholics produced a 43-page document entitled "The Gift of Authority," which recognized the pope as the "moral authority" to unite the various Christian denominations. Dr. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, said, "In a world torn apart by violence and division, Christians urgently need to be able to speak with a common voice."¹

On October 31—the anniversary of the day Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the doors of the Church in Wittenberg 482 years ago—the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church signed a Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification in Augsburg, Germany.

These ecumenical movements between the Protestants and Rome, and other joint declarations between the various Protestant denominations, are a fulfillment of prophecy. When "the leading churches of the United States" unite on common points of doctrine, the next step will be to "influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions."²

Increasingly around the world, nations are making civil holidays out of the Vatican's holy days. This is especially true in those countries where Catholicism is a dominant force. In Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, and all Central and South American countries, August 15 is a

national holiday that commemorates the Catholic belief in the assumption of Mary to heaven. On November 1, all of these countries commemorate what the Catholic Church calls "All Saints Day."

Croatia signed an agreement with the Vatican that states in Article 9: "Sunday and the following Holy Days will be free from work: a) January 1, commemoration of Mary, the most holy Mother of God, New Year; b) January 6, the Epiphany of the Lord or the Holy Magi; c) Monday following Easter-Sunday; d) August 15, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; e) November 1, all the saints; f) December 25, the Birth of the Lord; g) December 26, first day after Christmas, St. Stephan."³

These movements by the Vatican to have civil governments adopt her holy days as civil holidays violates the principle of the separation of church and state and the liberty of conscience. John Paul II is pursuing what he regards as the common good of all humanity. However, what is good for the Catholic Church is not necessarily good for society as a whole.

The assumption of Mary to heaven is a falsehood. In fact, she is awaiting the resurrection of the just when Christ will return the second time. Therefore, the establishment of this Catholic teaching as a civil holiday is doubly dangerous. It promotes a falsehood and strikes directly against liberty of conscience. Furthermore, to enforce our beliefs on others is selfish and unchristlike.

Currently the Vatican is promoting Sunday legislation from both a secular and religious perspective.

Much of the talk about Sunday laws highlights social, cultural, and family benefits. For example, John Paul II says, "Through Sunday rest, daily concerns and tasks can find their proper perspective: the material things about which we worry give way to spiritual values; in a moment of encounter and less pressured exchange, we see the true face of the people with whom we live. Even the beauties of nature—too often marred by the desire to exploit, which turns against man himself—can be rediscovered and enjoyed to the full."⁴

By emphasizing the secular benefits of Sunday laws, the pope knows that he can gain greater international acceptance for its legislation. Tragically, millions will be pulled into the Sunday movement for the secular benefits, while millions more will be swept away for religious or spiritual unity reasons.

The state is supposed to protect every citizen's religious rights. We are to be protected in having the freedom to observe our religious holy days, but we must never be forced to keep holy days by making them civil holidays. We must protect the rights of all people to practice their religion unhindered by government. Whenever this principle of freedom has been violated, history attests that persecution will surely follow. ✠

Jeff Wehr, Associate Editor

References:

¹ *Daily Telegraph* (United Kingdom), May 13, 1999.

² Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 445.

³ Website: <http://www.hbk.hr/vijesti/1996/talug/tprv.html>

⁴ Pope John Paul II, *Dies Domini*, paragraph 67.

About Hope International . . .

Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.

It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of *Our Firm Foundation* to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world. —Editors

Executive Editor: Ron Spear
Associate Editor: Jeff Wehr
Administrator / Editorial Committee
Chairman: Harry Hansen
Managing Editor: Harvey Steck
Layout & Design: Kevin Patterson,
Bryan Bailey

Subscription Information

Prices for the annual subscription are listed below. Although we strive to keep them as low as possible, if your finances cannot meet the requested amount, please send whatever you can. We want this material to be available to all. If you wish to give a donation to assist in providing subscriptions for those whose funds may be limited, send your gift marked "Subscription Assistance" to the address below. Your donation is tax deductible.

United States: US \$18.75
Canada and Mexico: US \$23.75
Overseas (surface mail): US \$23.75
Please inquire for overseas air rates.
Large Print Edition: US \$45
Audio subscription: (2 cassettes per month) US \$60 per year. For foreign subscriptions, please inquire regarding postage.

Hope International publications may be obtained from the following source:



Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328 USA

Phone: (360) 832-6602
Mon–Thurs: 8:30am–5:00pm
Fri: 8:30am–12:00pm PST
Fax: (360) 832-3720
Email: office@hopeint.org
Web: http://www.hopeint.org

Shipping Information

For all products advertised in this publication (unless otherwise noted):

- Add 10% shipping plus US \$2 handling.
- For destinations outside the USA, add 15% shipping plus US \$2 handling.
- If actual shipping charges are greater, you will be billed the difference.

Washington residents: Please add an additional 7.7% sales tax.

All money received must be in US funds drawn on US banks.

Copyright © 2000 Hope International

Front cover composition: Kevin Patterson
background images © PhotoDisc, Inc.

All other art is used with permission or is copyright © Hope International, unless otherwise noted.

4 A Better Marriage
Sally Hohnberger
Can the Lord take a marriage—good or bad—and make it better?

8 Hate Crimes and Christian Evangelism
Colin Standish
Is it now a crime to help save a lost soul?

14 The Proper Attitude in Prayer
Ellen G. White
How should we show reverence to God when we pray?

19 God's Remnant Church in the Last Days
Ron Spear
How can we prepare for the crisis ahead?

22 Separation of Church & State Under Attack
Philip Garber
Does the Bible really teach separation of church and state?

25 Sharp Thrusts and Christian Politeness
Dores E. Robinson and Ellen G. White
Inspired counsel on meeting opposition

departments

Defending the Faith	12
News Watch	17
Health for Life	28
Letters to the Editor	31



A Better Marriage

Sally Hohnberger

“Lord,” I prayed, “I want a better marriage! I have a good marriage by the world’s judgment, but I want a better one.” A strong desire for my spouse—not me—to be the priest of our home was the reason for my unrest and outcry to the Lord years ago.

The Lord encouraged me with this text: “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye.” Psalm 32:8. I sensed that this thought in my conscience was from God. Would I act on God’s suggestion, or just continue to go my own way?

Knowing that I could not change my husband, I chose to put this emotionally charged desire into God’s hands. I had to trust that God could change his heart and take this burden away from me. To my surprise, rest came to my soul.

Friends, while my emotions indicated that I was in a state of unrest, I made a choice: “Lord, I know you can change my emotions. Please show me what you would have me to do. Help me to be aware and sensitive to the influence

of your Holy Spirit directing me. Whatever it takes, Lord, I am truly willing to cooperate with You—to obey your will—that I may have a better marriage.”

Thankfully, it was not very long before my chance came. God is a faithful Teacher. I was reading John 17 at the time, trying to apply the text of this chapter to myself personally, and then I came upon verse 19. I asked God, “What does ‘for their sakes I sanctify myself’ mean practically to me today?”

It seemed that the Lord spoke back to my heart, “For your sake Sally, I gave you an example of dying to self. I chose to do My Father’s will against my fleshly nature. As I overcame, in My Father’s power, not My own, so may you overcome. It is the best way I can help you, and it is the best way you can help your spouse, your marriage or anyone else to make any real, lasting changes in their lives. Let Me have your heart fully.” See John 12:24.

I pondered, “What can God do with a heart fully surrendered to Him?—The answer: Anything, everything! But if I let God change

my thoughts, my words, and my deeds, how am I helping my husband change?”

“When a spouse or anyone else sees you change in your weak areas—your wrong reactions or habits—they can be encouraged that they too can be changed by coming to Me. Many do not change because they do not know how. Many have not found the way that works consistently. Just seeing someone live that life of grace truly in Me can benefit many. Many will just observe, desire, and imitate what they see. You are helping your spouse by letting Me change you.”

“So I must decide to follow You and not wait for my spouse to join me in this commitment?”

“Not until you fulfill and do your part, can I fulfill Mine. Without your cooperation and obedience, you are left in your sins and old ways, and that does not help your spouse. I will teach you, if you will let Me. You can best help your husband by letting Me have control over your thoughts, feelings, words, and deeds. It will take discipline to choose to surrender every moment of the day, which is necessary if

you want Me to work this redemption from sin's power in you. When I have you, I will reach out to your spouse through you."

During His earthly life, Jesus did His Father's will and lived by His Father's divine power—not His own—and it was in this surrendered, cooperative relationship that He was enabled by His Father's grace to live above the pull of His fallen, human nature. Jesus was showing all of us the way to come out of self-serving. *Self-serving destroys marriages.*

By experience, I truly saw that the grace available in an abiding walk with Jesus could do nothing to redeem me from this fallen nature until I was willing to die to self and live for Jesus. See Galatians 2:20. If I am willing to die to self that Jesus may live in me, I can have a better marriage. If I do not cooperate with the Lord in dying to self, He cannot change me or my marriage. God brought these thoughts to my heart daily, moment by moment. God is calling for *your* heart as well.

"Lord, I'm willing. Show me what I must do with my bundle of choices today," I responded.

"First, you must stop dwelling on your husband's faults, mulling over how awful they are, how awful he is, how much you want him to change and to become the priest of your home. Instead, put your spouse in My hands in a positive prayer life—not the negative one to which you are accustomed. Filter your words through Me before you speak. Be content to conduct worship yourself. Be cheerful in this task; turn to Me to change those wrong thoughts and feelings, and I will."

As a result I took His hand and began learning how to follow Him—how to die to self and how to live for God.

"Sally, remember, you cannot choose for your spouse to change, but you can have the power yourself to choose to let Me change you. You will see that as you cooperate to let Me change you, your marriage will change too. Dwelling on what you cannot change can only

tempt you to despair. Rather, dwell on what *you* should do *in Me*. In that way you will recommend the religion of Christ as nothing else can."

"Lord, that makes a lot of sense. Let me see. For my husband's sake I sanctify myself; for my boys' sake I sanctify myself. For my extended family and friends' sake I can best help them if I sanctify my thoughts, words, and deeds. In this way I am recommending—in the strongest possible way—that if Jesus can change me, He can change them, too."

"Yes, Sally. You have it down clearly in theory, but now we need to help you gain some *experience*." As we concluded this "conversation" in my thoughts, I felt that the Lord had spoken to me with much compassion. He knew that knowing and doing are two very different schools, and that the latter is the greater test of the two.

God reasoned with me in these thoughts. He led me step by step, and I surrendered choice by choice against my feelings and thoughts that were compelling me in the opposite direction. It was hard in the moment, but what a joy it was when I chose to sing the "happy song"! Jesus transformed my disposition, my thoughts and even my feelings! Grace can work *only when and if* we cooperate.

Jim was a better husband in my eyes and my thoughts, yet it was not he who had changed. God had changed me! When my husband came into the room it was possible and enjoyable—with Jesus leading—to respond pleasantly. Love for him filled my heart where once there had been resentment, sadness, and hurt.

God called me out of complaining into complementing my hus-

*Jim was a better husband in my eyes and my thoughts,
yet it was not he who had changed.
God had changed me!*

These principles work not only for the wife but also for the husband. "Whatsoever he sayeth unto you, do it." John 2:5. Try it and see if the Lord can make your marriage better.

Ironing Out Irritations

The choices I had to make in the next few months were many and were against my nature, my inclinations, and my emotions, and they went something as follows:

One day as I was ironing and became irritated over some little thing my husband had said, the Lord whispered in my ear, "Sally, you don't need to complain about him, and rehearse his faults this way. These thoughts destroy marriages; instead, follow Me. In everything give thanks. 'A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.' Proverbs 17:22."

band. "Tell him how much you appreciate his management of your finances." It was true that he did a good job in that area, but at times I resented his saying "No" to my wants. In fact, this was a present point of contention. However, I chose, surrendered, and followed Jesus, and thus I found divine thankfulness. "Tell him how thankful you are for his watching the boys so you can have a tub bath. Tell your spouse how sweet he is to tickle your arms a few moments while you are doing his typing."

Expressions of gratitude and admiration of our spouse's attributes have a positive effect on our minds and dispositions as well as on theirs. Kindness awakens kindness. Complaining is the path to the pit of despair. Rehearsing wrongs is the shovel that deepens the pit of hopelessness. Every day

we should do something to please our spouse—do a favor, give a thank-you, or a compliment, or help him with *his* project. To die to self requires us to live for others daily.

God called me out of my attitude of independence from Him: “Sally, in that argument with him, self responded. You did not filter through Me what you should say. The flesh led you, and you obeyed. Choose Me, and I will lead you instead. Respond to My call to your heart. I will direct you through

The grace of Christ working in me changed my thoughts and feelings, which greatly influenced my responses. For example, instead of thinking hopeless thoughts, or getting angry, led by God, I put my energies into crying out to Jesus and counseling with Him, asking, “What wilt thou have me to do?” Acts 9:6. As I did my part, Jesus faithfully instructed me as to what to say, or not to say, in the moment, and thus our marriage improved. My joy was not dependent upon

commit 15 minutes in prayer daily for my husband. Jesus taught me how to pray for him so he could be in Jesus. It was quite a new exercise in my thinking. Instead of rehearsing his faults to God in prayer, which would awaken in me a “pity party,” I saw him as he would be when he surrendered himself to God. I saw him leading out cheerfully in family worship. These thoughts engendered love, respect, and positive emotions in me towards my spouse. I went away from prayer hopeful—not more heavily burdened as had been the case before.

Through engaging in intercessory prayer, my emotions were changed. Hope replaced despair; love replaced anger; and God-led responses replaced human responses. I became content to lead out in worship—no longer resenting or longing for release from it. Many a miracle had God wrought out in me!

I became sensitive to my words and expressions. God led me to avoid saying “you always,” “you never,”—untrue or exaggerated illustrations of my husband’s wrongs. Self must die, and I would choose to live for Jesus instead. I had to learn to condense my talk while my spouse had to learn to say more. Inclinations, habits, and cultivated tendencies did not need to be heeded in conflicts or disagreements—rather, I learned to just obey the voice of God. It was vitally important that I commune with God before communing with my spouse. This can make or break a marriage. The blessing of obedience to God was that our communications improved drastically! Conflicts would arise at times, but God led me through them—eventually to a solution. A better marriage came in due time, but *peace came in the moment of following Jesus*. There was a joy in having power to do the right over the wrong!

When I would yield to and follow the flesh—or my inclination—the fruit was a lot of hurt and emotional heartache. Going my way

Letting God cleanse my heart, my words, and my responses was the way to a better marriage. Do you long for a better marriage? Try God’s way.

these conflicts in a better manner, and in time we can eliminate most of them. Take my hand, and follow Me.”

God always called for *my* surrender. “Oh, Lord, everything that you ask is directly opposed to my nature, to my inclinations and habits. It is not an easy work to cooperate as You are sanctifying me; it takes effort to die to self!”

“Anything good takes effort. Sally, filter your thoughts through Me before you speak. I will direct you aright as to what to say and whether to speak or not to speak. Do not correct your husband when he leads out in worship. You are hindering him; you do not understand his struggles. If you follow Me, I can redeem you from self ruling you. Leave him with Me. When he surrenders to Me, I will make him the priest of your home.”

Thereafter I tried God’s way—dying to self, filtering through Jesus what to say, surrendering to be led and to do His will. As a result, my husband became the priest of our home.

Letting God cleanse my heart, my words, and my responses was the way to a better marriage. Do you long for a better marriage? Try God’s way.

my spouse changing anymore. My joy was that God was working a change in me!

Apologize for Your 5%

God asked me to confess my wrongs, to apologize for my wrong in an argument—even if it was only 5% this time! I argued with God that this was unfair—that my husband needed to apologize to me!

“Follow Me, Sally. Trust Me that this is in your best interest. It does not matter if it appears to give your spouse an advantage. All I ask of you is that you follow Me, to give Me your heart.”

I did God’s will, and my husband drew closer to Jesus because I changed. As a result, he apologized in time for his wrongs—truly a miracle at that time! God knows what is best to get to the heart. As I trusted to follow God that day, our marriage improved. I repeated this experience with greater confidence in Jesus with each opportunity.

Praying for My Husband

In the next few weeks, God taught me how to have real positive, *intercessory prayer* for my husband. This had a profound, powerful, and positive influence in our marriage. He suggested that I

is always a curse. I hurt; my husband hurt; and the abyss between us widened. Choosing to serve God, doing right, and dying to self, are the best things we can do for our marriages.

Miracles were wrought in my husband as well! As I put my need for a priest before Jesus, God laid the conviction upon my husband's heart, and he became restless, irritable, and troubled. Not until my spouse decided to follow Jesus, doing His will, did he find peace. He struggled with his problems, but at last he surrendered to Jesus' call to his heart. Jesus empowered him to face his thoughts and feelings of inadequacy. At last my husband took up his God-ordained duties to be priest of our home, and he has never laid them down since. Jesus can change your marriage too! Are you willing to daily die to self?

Once I learned the power of intercessory prayer, I took many problems to Jesus. I became very comfortable in placing my problems at the feet of Jesus and letting Him present these things to my spouse's heart. God did a much better job than I ever could! I had never liked conflicts anyway, and this way I did not have to face them anymore! Or did I? Just about the time we are comfortable with one method God uses, He changes the program—to keep us dependent upon Him and not upon a method. It was not the method that transformed our marriage, but it was Christ directing the method. There is a time to be quiet, and there is a time to speak and to challenge.

Better Communication

One day I was sitting on the back porch enjoying the green of the grass, thinking how it represents faith and that all green things point up to God in heaven—the object of our faith. The blue of the sky represents obedience, and obedience is possible only when we connect with the Creator behind the blue of the sky.

Just then a thought came into my mind. "Sally, you need to tell your husband that he is wrong in this particular area of his thinking."

"No, no, not me, Lord! This isn't really You, is it?" Three times the Lord affirmed the same thought until I was convinced that this was indeed God asking me to confront my husband face to face. This would be a conflict; I was sure. My inclinations and emotions were to avoid such issues. However, in a short time, I chose to lean upon Christ's strength, wisdom, and His promise to lead me.

Later when we went for a walk I told my husband what was on my heart. Then my mind began to go blank like paper being eaten in a paper shredder! This meant that I would not be able to put any two thoughts together if I were to let go. It was a problem-solving technique I had developed over the years, which had spared me some hurt in the past.

However, God called to my heart, "Don't let go; die to self's way—choose! Take My hand. You need not lose your ability to think and speak."

A struggle ensued. Who would I obey? Who will be Lord in my life

This is truly letting God be Lord in my life!

That was the beginning of God teaching me *how to communicate* with my spouse when we do not see things the same way. I needed the experience of God leading my mind and controlling my emotions—being free to serve God, doing what was right. This made my marriage better. God wanted to teach both my husband and me how to filter our thoughts through Him before we spoke to each other. In this way we could resolve any difficulties or misunderstandings in our marriage. It is great to resolve issues and yet be able to love one another freely!

Swing Time

Subsequently, we established daily "swing time" in order to allow for each other to share our concerns as we enjoyed our porch swing together. Eventually, all the barriers in our marriage would break down as one would air a concern about the other and then

*Self had to die in both of us
to bring new life into our marriage.
Changes were made on both sides.*

right now? I chose God, and I cried out for His help! I restated my thinking to my husband, but he did not agree with me. Yet, I had done God's will, and joy was in my heart! Not losing control was a new experience for me.

The next morning as we talked, my husband told me that he was convinced during his time with God that morning that I was right in what I had said.

"Wow, Lord! You're great!" I exclaimed. Following God, called me to die to self by being quiet at times—not arguing or defending myself. Following God, also called me to die to self by speaking and confronting sometimes—with God directing my words and responses.

present a possible solution to the problem. I had to learn to be solution oriented. The other one learned *to listen, to hear* the spouse's perspective honestly, and not to pick on the words or illustrations, but just to listen—I mean to *hear* what the other one was trying to say. Self had to die in both of us to bring new life into our marriage. Changes were made on both sides.

God became very real—truly a present Help in trouble! God helped me express myself more concisely. God helped my spouse express himself more fully. Each of us learned to express things delicately, honestly, and to give each other

(continued on page 11)

HATE CRIMES

Millions pray to the Blessed Virgin every single day.

Find out why.

call 1-800-899-6577

AND

CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM

Colin Standish

The plan of the Southern Baptist Convention to send about 100,000 missionaries to Chicago this summer to evangelize that city has created a furor. That furor does not come from atheists, agnostics, pagans, secularists, or from local government sources; amazingly, it comes from fellow Christians who form the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago, according to the *World Net Daily Exclusive* on Friday, December 3, 1999. The Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago represent 40 mainline denominations – including Roman Catholics, United Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians – and Jewish synagogues.

The premise for the opposition is that Christian evangelism has the potential to incite hate crimes against non-Christian groups. The letter, sent by the council to Paige Patterson, head of the Southern Baptist Convention, with headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee, cited recent shootings of Jews in Chicago and the vandalizing of a Moslem mosque. What the letter does not

show is that there is even the least connection whatsoever between Christian evangelism and these acts of violence. However, the Council of Religious Leaders just assumed such a likely connection.

It is incomprehensible that those who claim to be the representatives of Jesus Christ on earth could so much as contemplate the cessation of soul-winning evangelism in the light of the plainest words of Jesus to all His followers: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:19–20.

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark 16:15–16.

It would seem that some of those who will be presented with the gospel by Southern Baptists are Jews and Moslems. Surely the gospel commission encompasses the

evangelizing of these groups. But, according to *World Net Daily*, the letter included these words, “While we are confident that your volunteers would come with entirely peaceful intentions, a campaign of the nature and scope you envision could contribute to a climate conducive to hate crimes.”

It becomes plain that at least some of those on the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago have lost their vision for the gospel commission. As quoted in *World Net Daily*, the words of Bishop C. Joseph Sprague, of the United Methodist Church of Northern Illinois Conference, are particularly galling to me. One can think back to the great pioneering Methodist evangelists led by John Wesley and John Whitfield who scattered the gospel over much of the world – even to the South Pacific Islands. Their vigorous evangelizing of America led to the development of a powerful Methodist movement.

Yet now one of their leaders is speaking as if evangelism is almost a crime. Here are some of Bishop Sprague’s words as quoted in the

article: The Southern Baptist campaign “smacks of a kind of non-Jesus-like arrogance. I am always fearful when we in the Christian community move beyond the rightful claim that Jesus is decisive for us, to the presupposition that non-Christians . . . are outside God’s plan for salvation.”

In contrast to Sprague’s assertions, Christianity has the only answer to hate. All true Christians follow Jesus’ admonition: “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Matthew 5:44.

Sprague’s statement plainly demonstrates that he has no true concept of the fact that Christianity is the only message for every human being on this planet. We must accept the reality that though God can save those who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ, it is God’s will that before Jesus returns “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14. Sprague’s statement denies the everlasting gospel which Inspiration declares is to be preached “unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” Revelation 14:6. This gospel will go to every inhabitant of the world. Jesus put it in the imperative mood when he said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature.*” Mark 16:15; emphasis added by author.

Sprague spends much time seeking to explain that the focusing of evangelism upon Jews, Moslems, and homosexuals is to treat them as second-class citizens and not equal to Christians. Surely this is a spurious assumption. When the founders of the United States upheld that all men are created equal, Christians understand this to mean that every individual is a blood-bought heritage of Jesus Christ. He died for all—irrespective of nationality, race or any other distinguishing characteristic. But the

Scripture is plain. Jesus is the only way to salvation: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12.

Only those at the end of time who acknowledge Christ as their Lord and Saviour will be saved in the kingdom of heaven. Jews consider Jesus as an imposter; Moslems as a prophet; but Christians acknowledge Him as the Son of God—the Redeemer of the earth. Yet Sprague argues, “This sets them [homosexuals] up for the deranged and demonic to go after them. We have example after example of gay and lesbian Christians being treated less than lovingly by virtue of that kind of mentality.”

Loving Christians will follow the counsel of the Lord: “When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.” Ezekiel 33:8-9.

The tragedy of tragedies is that not only will Bishop Sprague condone men and women in a lifestyle that will deprive them of eternal life but he himself will be deprived of eternal life if he continues on in this way. The depths to which some in the Methodist Church have gone away

If ever there were a hate crime, surely it is this—that we give assurance of salvation to willful, practicing sinners when indeed they are headed for eternal destruction.

True Christians cannot treat the sinner as a second-class citizen, for they themselves are sinners reclaimed by Christ. Like Christ, they are willing to eat with “publicans and sinners.” But they know that the loving burden of their hearts is to lead these precious souls away from their sins and to the kingdom of salvation.

At least six times in the Bible we see the evidence that practicing homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. See Romans 1:26-27; Leviticus 20:13; Leviticus 18:22; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Romans 1:31-32; 1 Timothy 1:10. What kind of love is it when so-called preachers of the gospel encourage practicing homosexuals to believe that they have a saving connection with Jesus Christ?— That is not love. If ever there were a hate crime, surely it is this—that we give assurance of salvation to willful, practicing sinners when indeed they are headed for eternal destruction.

from the plainest words of Scripture is provided in a statement written by the Women’s Division of the United Methodist Church in 1988:

“An example of giving societal permission to engage in violence against gay and lesbian people is a recent media campaign with the misleading slogans of ‘Truth in love’ and ‘Hope, not hate.’ Such slick campaigns, though couched in seemingly kind and Christian words, promote bigotry. Christian groups like the one sponsoring this campaign have consistently waged campaigns of fear and misinformation.”

The Women’s Division of the Methodist Church was referring to advertisements placed by the well-known conservative Christian organization Focus on the Family as well as by The Family Research Council, another conservative religious organization, according to *World Net Daily*. True Christians will see with horror such pseudo-

Christianity as that portrayed by this Methodist Women's Division.

It is heartening, however, to realize that not all Methodists believe this way. In the same article Faye Short, a conservative Methodist, asks, "Are we fast approaching the point within our society when Christians can no longer make public statements that convey principles of Biblical morality? Will we be disallowed from upholding the Biblical model of marriage and the family," she said in *Good News Magazine*, "and, shall we, as women of the church, allow ourselves to be co-opted into unwittingly supporting public opinion and homosexual advocacy opposing Christian organizations that dare to proclaim the Biblical standard?"

those whom you believe need to be saved is a 'hate crime.' " Land went on to say, "I think it is instructive that those who criticize Southern Baptists' efforts to evangelize cities or groups always preface their criticism by acknowledging Southern Baptists' right to express our beliefs. It seems they affirm our right to express our beliefs as long as we agree not to do so."

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, made another poignant comment: "To link New Testament evangelism with hate crimes is cowardice posing as compassion. This is political posturing, not a serious argument. It saddens me to see so many supposedly Christian leaders who are determined to

witnessing a rising level of bigotry against people of faith, especially Christians." Representative Armeiy focused on the Justice Department's relatively new program in the middle school curriculum entitled "Healing the Hate" which he declares suggests to school counselors that children may be dangerous if they grow up in a "very religious" home. Then he perceptively adds, "This, without one shred of evidence showing any linkage between Christians and any of these terrible acts of violence that our nation has faced."

It is alarming to know that the Justice Department has established its middle school curriculum with the goal to "reshape attitudes and beliefs." This is surely an attempt to de-Christianize America and to raise a new generation of children and youth who have little respect or dedication to God, His Son Jesus Christ, to the ministry of the Holy Spirit and to the Word of God. In the "Healing the Hate" curriculum there is a disturbing quote from President Clinton, "Prejudice and contempt, cloaked in the pretense of religious or political convictions, are not different . . . they fuel the fanaticism of terror." This is surely an uncorroborated assumption that fails to recognize that of all the ideologies in the world, Christianity alone, built upon the love of Jesus Christ, can heal the hate that is so evident in our world. Rather than Christian evangelism increasing the incidence of hate crimes, it is the one hope to greatly reduce such crimes.

The *World Net Daily* also reports on a very disturbing situation in Canada. The article quoted *Newsweek* as supporting the concept that Christian morality can lead to condemnation, which in turn can lead to death. The writer, Jonathan Alter, claimed that, "Discerning clergymen and moralists can hate the sin and love the sinner, but by the time the homophobic message reaches the angry guy sitting in the bar, that distinction has been lost."

However, I recall when I was President of the West Indies College in Jamaica, a major crusade was

. . .of all the ideologies in the world, Christianity alone, built upon the love of Jesus Christ, can heal the hate that is so evident in our world.

I acknowledge that there are those who have developed a religion of hate. We have seen that in the Protestant-Roman Catholic issues of Northern Ireland. We have seen it in the Jewish-Moslem conflicts. We have seen it in India in the Moslem-Hindu conflicts. And we have also seen bitter conflicts within particular religious persuasions. However, the gospel of Christ that faithful Christians present to the world is a gospel of love.

I thought the statement of Dr. Richard Land, President of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, expressed a very potent warning: "To say that Southern Baptists should refrain from an evangelistic campaign because it might, as the council said, 'contribute to a climate conducive to hate crimes,' is not a far step away from them claiming that the act of witnessing itself to

avoid evangelization at all cost." Ibid.

The *World Net Daily* proceeds to point out that it is strange that when Christians are targeted for hate crimes, those crimes are frequently not portrayed by the press that way. Examples given were the shooting at the Wedgewood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, last year when a number of young people were killed, and the targeting of Christians at the Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, and the shooting of praying students in Paducah, Kentucky. Gary Bauer, former Republican presidential candidate, pointed out: "In fact, there has been almost no media coverage pointing out that these were anti-Christian acts of violence against sincere believers."

His viewpoint is seconded by the House Majority Leader Dick Armeiy, who in a September 29, 1999, speech said, "We are

held in Kingston in an area where the crime rate was extraordinarily high. But during this crusade there was a dramatic drop in the crime rate, and when the evangelist declared that he was soon to conclude the crusade, the police department pleaded with him to continue the crusade!

Not only in the United States are these misrepresentations being seen. James Dobson, of Focus on the Family, reported that, "In Canada certain portions of Scripture can no longer be read on radio or television. If broadcasters chose to elaborate on Romans 1 [Romans 1:26–27 strongly condemns homosexual activity], for example, or other Scriptures that address the subject of homosexuality, they would be charged with unethical practices because officials would interpret the comments as hateful. Focus [on the Family] couldn't even cite certain medical information related to AIDS on a recent broadcast because, again, it might have offended the homosexual community. That's where I believe gay and lesbian activists in this country are taking us."

All of this is taking place at a time when there is increasing persecution and murdering of

Christians in non-Christian countries around the world. As Seventh-day Adventists we should clearly read these warning signals. We have only a sliver of time in which to take this gospel to the world in times of relative peace and safety. Soon anti-hate legislation and anti-vilification laws will condemn proselytizing converts from any other religion. The pointing out of errors in a particular church or non-Christian community will become a crime, it being claimed that it disrupts the unity of society. Books, pamphlets or leaflets that are written that are deemed to be against another religious community will be seen not as loving efforts of fellow Christians to enlighten those not of their faith, but as hate literature.

It will take little imagination to predict where *The Great Controversy* would stand under those circumstances. I reflect upon books such as those that my brother and I have written, *Antichrist Is Here* and *The Pope's Letters and Sunday Laws*. Surely those books will be seen as hate literature when, indeed, the only motivation for which these and other such books are written is to invite men and women to leave those churches upon which the

wrath of God will be poured. It is following the very Scriptural injunction to call people out of Babylon into the marvelous light of the Seventh-day Adventist faith. The words of a loving God are, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4.

Seventh-day Adventists need to be alert all over the world to this rapid effort to close down any form of evangelism. At the same time there seems to be vastly less effort to close down the evangelism of certain Hindu and Moslem groups. While I believe that they have the right to evangelize, certainly I believe that Christianity with its only true message of faith and hope must never be stifled. The question arises that if we are not now witnessing this wonderful message to men and women around the world, what are we going to do when the times of restrictions, punishments, and persecution come upon us. If ever there were a time for Seventh-day Adventists to wake up, it surely is now!

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4. ✨

A Better Marriage

(continued from page 7)

space and time when that was necessary. All in all, led of God, we learned the art of communication. Communing with God before communing with your spouse is an excellent discipline to a better marriage.

Jim summarizes our ground rules for communication on a cassette tape entitled "Reasoning One With Another," in the series entitled "Liberty One to Another." If you want more details in this area, write for the set.

Swing time was a difficult and emotional experience in the beginning while we were learning the art

of it. But in due time, the rewards began to grow and blossom. It was well worth the effort to learn to speak or be quiet, to express oneself honestly, to really listen, and to die to self. Today our marriage relationship is far better, far higher, than I ever dreamed or imagined possible. The freedom we experience between us—husband and wife—is Heaven born and lovely. This freedom to love and be loved is available to you—to anyone who seeks God and learns to cooperate.

Swing time is not just for expressing concerns; it is also a time for having fun—expressing sweet

little nothings, reminiscing, laying plans for vacation trips, laying plans for child training, planning family councils, or the how-tos of helping a neighbor. All are good positive discussions that give balance to our swing time.

A better marriage, better communication in the marriage, a sweeter atmosphere in the home, is available to all who will seek God and let Him lead you and be your Lord in this life. What will you do? God awaits your cooperation to bestow this great transforming blessing of Christ into your marriage. ✨

The Christian Home

How to mark your Bible and know God's Word better

We present this study with the desire that it will encourage you, our readers, to pursue a deeper examination of God's Word. The warning has been given us that "none but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict." *The Great Controversy*, 593–594. It is our suggestion that you use this study personally, in group settings, or with your family. We also encourage you to add other Scriptural references to this study as you proceed in your own personal, attentive scrutiny of God's Word.

The Editors

Bible Marking Directions

1. In this month's study our Bible marking key letters are *CH*, which represent "*The Christian Home*."
2. On the blank flyleaf at either the beginning or the end of your Bible, write in the key letters followed by the first Scriptural text. This month's beginning entry should appear as follows: *1CH: Genesis 2:18-21, 22, 24*.
3. Turn to the first reference and, in the margin near it, write the second reference. Then turn to the second reference and, in the margin near it, write the third reference, and so on to the end of the lesson. When you come to the last reference write "*End CH*."

1CH: Genesis 2:18–21, 22, 24.

After God had created Adam, He created Eve from Adam's rib. This symbolized that Eve was not to be Adam's slave nor his master, but his equal, his companion throughout life. The joining of Adam and Eve in the bonds of marriage was to last for their entire lives in this world. See also Matthew 19:6.

2CH: 2 Corinthians 6:14.

Since marriage is for a lifetime, it is essential that much thought and prayer are given to this matter before entering into the relationship. It is of great importance that the husband and wife are equally yoked together as followers of Christ.

3CH: Ephesians 5:22–23, 25.

God made the husband to be the *head* of the household, not to be a dictator, but as one who fulfills his role as the spiritual leader, protector, and provider for the families' needs. The wife is the *heart* of the family as she dedicates herself to her several duties in the spiritual and physical needs of the family.

4CH: Genesis 12:8.

Abraham was a good husband and father. He not only saw to the physical needs of the family, but he led his family to worship the only true God.

5CH: Deuteronomy 6:6–7.

The teaching of God's Word to our children should not be confined

to those precious moments of family worship. The day offers ample opportunities to learn and relearn lessons and principles from the Bible. Only as we pray more and speak more often of God's wonderful love, will our children learn to walk with God moment by moment.

6CH: Luke 12:15.

A happy home does not consist in the abundance of material things. Happiness comes with knowing God. So often we try to buy happiness in the home. However, sadness, envy, and strife come from the unconverted human heart. Therefore, happiness must come from a new heart and a renewed mind.

7CH: Proverbs 31:26.

It cannot be overestimated that teaching the truth to our children must be mixed with kindness and love. Too often instruction comes with anger instead of love. Too often condemnation falls from our lips instead of healing. What we need is the Holy Spirit to give us the graciousness of Jesus. Not only should our words be sweetened with incense, but our countenance should express the image of the Divine.

Perhaps you have been cold and harsh toward family members. However, with Jesus' help, you can cultivate love. Instead of casting a shadow, you can be as sunshine. Instead of being selfish and impatient, you can have goodwill toward all. With Jesus, you can weep with

those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. See Romans 12:15.

8CH: Deuteronomy 10:17–19.

No Christian home is complete without opening your home to those in need. A great good can come to every family member if we remember those who are so often forgotten. The widow, the orphan, and the poor should be ministered unto. There is no greater witness than a loving and well-ordered Christian home. See also Leviticus 19:34; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9; James 1:27.

9CH: Matthew 6:12, 14–15.

Many Christian homes have been destroyed by an unforgiving spirit. Wherever unforgiveness reigns, so does selfishness. Therefore, selfishness must be replaced with the humility of Jesus. With Christ's humility we will seek peace and restoration. We will be willing to pay the price of the wrong done unto us. See Matthew 5:44.

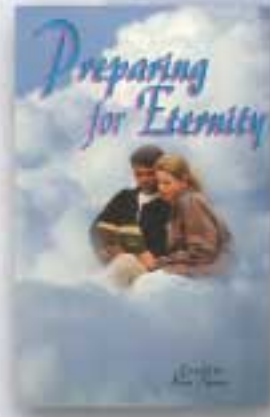
When God forgives the repentant sinner, He restores him to the same state of favor that he had previously enjoyed. But God had done something before this—He

wooed the sinner back to Himself. God does not want us to be estranged from Him. God seeks peace and restoration.

Our prayer is that you and your family will receive His love and manifest it abundantly for one another. Speak often of His life and teachings. Be kind in your speech always. Keep the coals of the family altar glowing. Do good unto one another. Invite the lame, the blind, the widow, the orphan, and the poor to your home. And lastly, forgive others as God has forgiven you. ✠

Preparing for Eternity

Compiled by Ron Spear



on sale for
only
\$5.95

please see page 3 for
shipping and tax information

This book deals with a most important subject that we all should be familiar with. *Preparing for Eternity*—there is nothing more important!

Preparing for Eternity is a compilation of priceless passages from the Spirit of Prophecy. In these twenty-eight short chapters you will find encouragement, correction, instruction, reproof, caution, motivation, direction and challenge. You will find the inspired message of God's attempt to bring sinful man back into harmony with his Creator and Redeemer. If you read this message and heed it, if you do in fact *prepare for eternity*, we are sure you will meet with us in the land of pure delight—where there will be no more tears, sorrow, pain, or death—to be with Jesus forevermore!

We know of nothing closer to Elder Ron Spear's heart than the vision of a people prepared to meet their Lord. Read these words of encouragement yourself—and then share them with someone else!



The Proper Attitude in Prayer

Ellen G. White

I have received letters questioning me in regard to the proper attitude to be taken by a person offering prayer to the Sovereign of the universe. Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God? One who has been educated for about five years in Battle Creek was asked to lead in prayer before Sister White should speak to the people. But as I beheld him standing upright upon his feet while his lips were about to open in prayer to God, my soul was stirred within me to give him an open rebuke. Calling him by name, I said, "Get down upon your knees." This is the proper position always.

"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed." Luke 22:41.

"Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up." Acts 9:40.

"They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus,

receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Acts 7:59-60.

"When he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all." Acts 20:36.

"When we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed." Acts 21:5.

"At the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God, and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens." Ezra 9:5-6.

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker." Psalm 95:6.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 3:14.

And this whole chapter [of Ephesians] will, if the heart is receptive, be as precious a lesson as we can learn.

To bow down when in prayer to God is the proper attitude to occupy. This act of worship was required of the three Hebrew captives in Babylon. At the dedication of the golden image, representing the king of Babylon, and which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, a herald cried aloud, "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up." Daniel 3:4-7.

This act of bowing the knees to the great image was understood to be an act of worship. But such an act was homage to be rendered to God alone—the Sovereign of the world, the Ruler of the universe; and these three Hebrews refused to give such honor to any idol even though composed of pure gold. In doing so, they would, to all intents and purposes, be bowing to the king of Babylon. Refusing to do as the king had commanded, they suffered the penalty, and were cast into the burning fiery furnace. But Christ came in person and walked with them through the fire, and they received no harm.

Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God.

At the dedication of the Temple, Solomon stood facing the altar. In the court of the Temple was a brazen scaffold or platform, and after ascending this, he stood and lifted up his hands to heaven, and blessed the immense congregation of Israel, and all the congregation of Israel stood. “Then said Solomon, The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. But I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever. And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying, Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel: but I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel. Now it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of

Israel. But the LORD said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart: notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but thy son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name. The LORD therefore hath performed his word that he hath spoken: for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, that he made with the children of Israel.” 2 Chronicles 6:1–11.

“For Solomon had made a brazen scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of

“And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess.” Luke 18:9–12. Mark you, it was the self-righteous Pharisee who was not in a position of humility and reverence before God; but standing in his haughty self-sufficiency, he told the Lord all his good deeds. “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself” (verse 11); and his prayer reached no higher than himself.

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house

Men and women, do not dishonor God by your irreverence and pomposity. Do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God.

Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.” Verse 13.

The lengthy prayer which he then offered was appropriate for the occasion. It was inspired of God, breathing the sentiments of the loftiest piety blended with the deepest humility.

I present these proof texts with the inquiry, “Where did Brother J obtain his education?” – At Battle Creek. Is it possible that with all the light that God has given to His people on the subject of reverence, that ministers, principals, and teachers in our schools, by precept and example teach young men to stand erect in devotion as did the Pharisees? Shall we look upon this as significant of their self-sufficiency and self-importance? Are these traits to become conspicuous?

justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Verses 13–14.

We hope that our brethren will not manifest less reverence and awe as they approach the only true and living God than the heathen manifest for their idol deities, or these people will be our judges in the day of final decision.

I would speak to all who occupy the place of teachers in our schools. Men and women, do not dishonor God by your irreverence and pomposity. Do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God. Mistrust your own strength. Depend not in it; but often bow down on your knees before God, and worship Him.

And when you assemble to worship God, be sure and bow your knees before Him. Let this act testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to the Spirit of truth. Who have searched the Word closely for examples and direction in this respect? Whom can we trust as teachers in our schools in America and foreign countries? After years of study shall students return to their own country with perverted ideas of the respect and honor and reverence that should be given to God, and feel under no obligation to honor the men of gray hairs, the men of experience, the chosen servants of God who have been connected with the work of God through almost all the years of their life?

I advise all who attend the schools in America or in any other place, Do not catch the spirit of

tianity, but very little practice. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. Who will prove themselves wise virgins? Who are the foolish virgins?—Those who have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. Shall it be as represented—half wise, and half foolish?

We are living in perilous times. Seventh-day Adventists are professedly the commandment-keeping people of God; but they are losing their devotional spirit. This spirit of reverence for God teaches men how to approach their Maker—with sacredness and awe through faith, not in themselves but in a Mediator. Thus man is kept fast under whatever circumstances he is placed. Man must come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the footstool of mercy. And as he receives daily mercies at the hand of God, he is ever to

giving expression of the love, the mercies, and the goodness of God. Let the words be sincere, simple, earnest, intelligent, the heart burning with the love of God, the lips sanctified to His glory to make known the mercies of God not only in the assembly of the saints, but to be His witnesses in every place. The inhabitants of the earth are to know that He is God, the only true and living God.

There should be an intelligent knowledge of how to come to God in reverence and godly fear with devotional love. There is a growing lack of reverence for our Maker, a growing disregard of His greatness and His majesty. But God is speaking to us in these last days. We hear His voice in the storm, in the rolling thunder. We hear of the calamities He permits in the earthquakes, the breaking forth of waters, and the destructive elements sweeping all before them. We hear of ships going down in the tempestuous ocean. God speaks to families who have refused to recognize Him, sometimes in the whirlwind and storm, sometimes face to face as He talked with Moses. Again, He whispers His love to the little trusting child and to the gray-haired sire in his dotage. And earthly wisdom has a wisdom as it beholds the unseen.

When the still small voice which succeeds the whirlwind and the tempest that moves the rocks out of position, is heard, let all cover their face, for God is very near. Let them hide themselves in Jesus Christ; for He is their Hiding Place. The cleft in the rock is hidden with His own pierced hand while the humble seeker waits in bowed attitude to hear what saith the Lord unto His servants. ❀

Manuscript Releases, vol. 21, 59–63. (Portions of this manuscript have appeared in the *SDA Bible Commentary*, vols. 1 and 3, and *Selected Messages*, book 2. For further study, see also *Selected Messages*, book 3, 266–270.)

The light reading of the Scriptures makes my heart ache. Whilst I am writing I groan in spirit as I see how superficial is the understanding of the Scriptures.

irreverence. Be sure you understand for yourself what kind of education you need, that you may educate others to obtain a fitness of character that will stand the test that is soon to be brought upon all who live upon the earth. Keep company with the soundest Christians. Choose not the pretentious instructors or pupils, but those who show the deepest piety, those who have a spirit of intelligence in the things of God.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. This is the only safe knowledge that students can obtain.

The light reading of the Scriptures makes my heart ache. Whilst I am writing I groan in spirit as I see how superficial is the understanding of the Scriptures. There is an abundance of profession of Chris-

cherish gratitude in his heart, and give expression to it in words of thanksgiving and praise for these unmerited favors. Angels have been guarding his pathway through all his life, and many of the snares he has been delivered from he has not seen. And for this guardianship and watchcare by eyes that never slumber and never sleep, he is to recognize in every prayer the service of God for him.

All should lean upon God in their helplessness and daily necessity. They should keep humble, watchful, and prayerful. Praise and thanksgiving should flow forth in gratitude and sincere love for God.

In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation should they praise the Most High God. All who have a sense of their vital connection with God should stand before the Lord as witnesses for Him,

Al Gore: A Constitutional Threat

News Item: Cal Thomas in *World*, March 18, 2000, raised an alarm regarding what presidential candidate Al Gore intends to do, if he is elected president of the United States, that would undermine the Constitution of this country. While in a debate Al Gore was asked about what kind of Supreme Court justices he would appoint if he were president. Vice President Gore replied: "I would look for justices of the Supreme Court who understand that our Constitution is a living and breathing document, that it was intended by our Founders to be interpreted in the light of the constantly evolving experience of the American people."

Al Gore went on to note that new rights could be read into the Constitution, such as abortion, and that the Constitution must evolve—such as happened in the cases of the abolition of slavery and the right of women to vote.

Summarizing from the remainder of the article: While it is true that the Constitution evolves, the Constitution itself mandates this to be through the legal process of amendments—not through the opinions of a super-elite group of unelected justices.

The specter of judicial lawmaking would enable laws that could not otherwise have survived the democratic process to be made or reinterpreted according to the bias of justices. This would amount to exercising kingly authority. Our Founders intended the Constitution to control judges and to be a bulwark, making laws difficult to change—not easy, according to the whims of politicians, such as Al Gore.

It is interesting to note that candidate Bush says that he believes that the Constitution should be taken as written—inviolable.

Prophetic Perspective: The lamb-like beast of Revelation 13 will speak like a dragon. The principles of our Constitution will be repudiated before the Sunday law can come.

Ten Commandments in Schools

News Item: "Thou shalt display the Ten Commandments in schools—at least if some lawmakers have their way. Legislation is pending in 10 states that would either require or permit the tablets to be posted. Supporters claim such a move would help stem school violence, a national fear in the wake of last year's horrific Columbine High School shooting. But opponents say it violates the separation of church and state." *U.S. News & World Report*, February 28, 2000.

Summarizing from the rest of the article: The article also related that the state of Indiana recently passed a bill allowing schools to post the Ten Commandments as a historical display. The following states have similar bills pending: South Dakota, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, and Oklahoma. A Georgia bill would even cut state funding from schools that refuse to post the Ten Commandments.

Proponents claim that the issue is civics—not religion. However, the group Americans United for Separation of Church and State vows to fight any bill that becomes law.

Although the Supreme Court has ruled that requiring schools to display the Ten Commandments is unconstitutional, current legislation is seeking to circumvent this principle by passing them off as historical exhibits.

Prophetic Perspective: Pressure will increase upon lawmakers until finally the wall of separation between church and state will crumble. Then the Commandments

will be defined according to the Catholic form.

The World's Eyes Are on the Pope

News Item: The Pope has been much in the limelight lately, captivating the attention of the media and the world. After commenting about the Pope's visit to the Middle East, a writer from *U.S. News & World Report*, March 6, 2000, says, "For now, this much is clear: The 79-year-old pontiff's speech may be slurred and his hands may tremble. But he remains a powerful messenger." It became routine for the Pope's activities to be reported during news broadcasts and for news magazines to feature his pilgrimage. In *Time*, April 3, 2000, we find: "... the Pope is not just a religious pilgrim. He is one of the world's great moral authorities, whose support or very presence (or even the brush of his lips on a proffered pot of soil as he visits a new land) can lend validity to states, policies and causes."

Prophetic Perspective: "And his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Revelation 13:3. Increasingly, the Pope is looked up to as the leader of all Christianity and as the moral leader of the whole world. In his overtures of peacemaking between peoples of various religions he is gaining credibility as the head of all religion.

The Pope's "Apology"

News Item: On March 12, 2000, the Pope offered a historic apology to the world for the sins of the past. We see in *Time*, March 27, 2000: "As head of the Roman Catholic Church, John Paul has one foot in the dimension of history (where mess, error, violence, fanaticism and stupidity flourish merrily) and the other in the dimension of eternity (where, he must insist, the holiness and infallibility of the church as the mystical body of Christ remain



Have a news item of interest?

contact newswatch@hopeint.org

To mail or fax us a copy, see page 3

intact). It is awkward: How does infallibility own up to its fallibilities and yet remain infallible? The Pope's solution: by being vague about the actual sins and by attributing them, in any case, to men and women who are Catholics and not to the Catholic Church itself."

The article continued on: "The global jury is still deliberating on what to make of the apology." It also related that in the sacrament of penance a Catholic must be specific regarding the sin—"about how often he committed an offense, against whom, with what premeditation." Additionally, "He must declare his remorse and [have] a determination not to commit the sin again. He must, if possible, make restitution to the injured. Only then may forgiveness and absolution come. It is not enough to say, 'Bless me, Father. Mistakes were made.'"

In *U.S. News & World Report*, March 27, 2000, the writer referred to the Vatican's effort as "the strongest and most solemn to date," but he also complained that the apology was too vague, was in the passive voice, lacked "plain talk," lacked candor, and avoided real responsibility.

Prophetic Perspective: Many in the world question the sincerity of the papal confession. Papal infallibility and repentance are indeed mutually exclusive.

The Papacy, we are told, does not change. This was not a real confession. It does not even meet their own criteria. It avoids any admission of real guilt or responsibility. The Papacy is attempting to silence the voice of the blood of the past millions of martyrs that cries out for justice.

Will this apology be used against us when we obey the Scriptures and identify the Papacy as being Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and

call God's people out of her? Will we be called unforgiving and be accused of hate crimes?

"The defenders of the Papacy declare that the church has been maligned, and the Protestant world are inclined to accept the statement. Many urge that it is unjust to judge the church of today by the abominations and absurdities that marked her reign during the centuries of ignorance and darkness. They excuse her horrible cruelty as the result of the barbarism of the times and plead that the influence of modern civilization has changed her sentiments. . . .

"The papal church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restraints now imposed by secular governments be removed and Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution." *The Great Controversy*, 563-564.

Congress Defends the Vatican?

News Item: "The effort to muzzle the Vatican's voice at the United Nations is meeting a new potential roadblock: Congress.

"Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., introduced a Senate resolution Feb. 24 condemning the efforts of pro-abortion groups that want to remove the Holy See from its status as a permanent observer at the United Nations." *National Catholic Register*, March 12-18, 2000.

The article also relates that a second resolution has been introduced. Both resolutions commend the "unique contributions" made by the Vatican to the United Nations. The article says, "U.N. activist Austin Ruse

called the resolutions 'historic.' Such a defense of the Pope 'has never come before the U.S. Congress before,' he said."

Prophetic Perspective: Separation of church and state is poised to crumble further. This defense of the Papacy may also be a step toward strengthening the position of the Papacy in this country and in the eventual forming of the image of the beast of Revelation 13.

Catholic House Chaplain for Congress

News Item: "Last week, House Speaker Dennis Hastert took his turn trying to quell questions that have popped up in parishes by appointing the Rev. Daniel Coughlin, 65, of Chicago as House chaplain, marking the first time a Catholic has filled the post." *U.S. News & World Report*, April 3, 2000.

Catholics and ELCA Lutherans Together

News Item: "More than 800 Catholics and Lutherans gathered Sunday at the Cathedral of St. Matthew to celebrate a historic move toward unity—to forgive the arguments, misunderstandings and grudges of more than 500 years when the Reformation divided the Christian world.

"In effect, through the leadership of Bishop John M. D'Arcy, Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and Bishop James R. Stuck of the Lutheran Indiana-Kentucky Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), clergy and parishioners of both denominations acknowledged they want to build a stronger friendship in the common bonds they share as Christians.

"To that end, together they prayed, sang, renewed baptismal vows and were blessed by both

(continued on page 21)

God's Remnant Church in the Last Days



Ron Spear

Do you believe that we are in the last days of probation on this earth? What is God's message for His remnant church in these final hours? Although God's messenger Ellen White is sleeping in Jesus, awaiting the resurrection, let us see what light the Spirit of Prophecy has to help us to be prepared for the crisis just ahead.

1. What is the source of Sister White's writings?

"God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 671.

"There are some in these last days who will cry: 'Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.' Isaiah 30:10. But this is not my work. God has set me as a reprover of His people; and just so surely as He has laid upon me the heavy burden, He will make those to whom this message is given responsible for the manner in which they treat it." *Ibid.*, 679.

2. Is it true that the earth is to experience great devastation?

"The same destructive power exercised by holy angels when

God commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere." *The Great Controversy*, 614.

"When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (see Revelation 14:9-10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. . . .

"These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals." *Ibid.*, 627-629.

3. What is the greatest sign of the end of the great controversy and the close of our probation?

"When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a

Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 451.

4. God gave Sister White light regarding the impending Sunday laws. What are we told about this coming crisis?

"There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. The controversies of the past are to be revived; new controversies will arise. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not yet even dreamed of. Satan is at work through human agencies. Those who are making an effort to change the Constitution and secure a law enforcing Sunday observance little realize what will be the result. A crisis is just upon us." *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 753.

"Our land is in jeopardy. The time is drawing on when its legislators shall so abjure the principles of Protestantism as to give countenance to Romish apostasy. The people for whom God has so marvelously wrought, strengthening them to throw off the galling yoke of popery, will by a national act give vigor to the corrupt faith of Rome, and thus arouse the tyranny which only

waits for a touch to start again into cruelty and despotism." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 410.

5. What deception of Satan will prove to be an overmastering delusion for God's faithful people?

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . . In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. See Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: 'Christ has come! Christ has come!' . . . In gentle,

angel cried out with awful solemnity, 'Get ready! get ready! get ready! for the fierce anger of the Lord is soon to come. His wrath is to be poured out, unmixed with mercy, and ye are not ready. Rend the heart, and not the garment. A great work must be done for the remnant.'" *Early Writings*, 119.

7. What is God's standard of righteousness for His remnant people?

"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Matthew 5:48. This command is a promise. . . . Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil,

time, we need it more today." *Our High Calling*, 155.

"The measure of the Holy Spirit we receive, will be proportioned to the measure of our desire and the faith exercised for it, and the use we shall make of the light and knowledge that shall be given to us. We shall be entrusted with the Holy Spirit according to our capacity to receive and our ability to impart it to others." *Review and Herald*, May 5, 1896.

9. Do the Testimonies warn us of apostasy in God's remnant church?

"I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leavening the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God's peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord's displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 75-76.

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. . . . And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.

"The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. . . . The Testimonies are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His Word and from the Testimonies, and both have been slighted and disregarded." *Ibid.*, 217.

Think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God.

compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion." *The Great Controversy*, 624.

6. Has God given Sister White a special message for our people living in this final hour of the great controversy?

"I saw that the remnant were not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Stupidity, like lethargy, seemed to hang upon the minds of most of those who profess to believe that we are having the last message. My accompanying

and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning. . . .

"There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

8. We are told that as we enter into the final scenes of the great controversy, God's faithful and obedient people will receive the seal of God and then the latter rain. How important is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

"May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1055.

"We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that

10. What is one of the greatest signs in the church that probation is soon to close?

"The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. . . .

"The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a

blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working." *Selected Messages*, book 2, 36.

11. How long will this final apostasy in Adventism last?

"One thing it is certain is soon to be realized—the great apostasy,

earlier events of our experience until the present time. . . . If we needed the manifest proof of the Holy Spirit's power to confirm truth in the beginning, after the passing of the time, we need today all the evidence in the confirmation of the truth, when souls are departing from the faith and giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of

Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing.

which is developing and increasing and waxing stronger, and will continue to do so until the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout. We are to hold fast the first principles of our denominated faith, and go forward from strength to increased faith. Ever we are to keep the faith that has been substantiated by the Holy Spirit of God from the

devils. There must not be any languishing of soul now." *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, 57.

We praise God for the Gift of Prophecy to God's remnant church. The end is not near—it is here! Let us remember what the angel said, "Get ready! get ready! get ready!" Let us now take heed and get ready while probation still lingers. ✨

news watch

[\(continued from page 18\)](#)

bishops who reminded the congregation of believers that it was truly a joyful day.

"I call it a miracle. A miracle we have come this far. What separated us 500 years ago and separated us for 500 years no longer separates us," Bishop Stuck said in his homily." *The Christian News*, March 20, 2000.

ELCA Lutherans and Roman Catholics rejoice in the wake of the historic signing of a doctrinal accord between the two churches last October—500 years after the Reformation.

Prophetic Perspective: "Protestants have tampered with and patronized popery; they have made compromises and concessions which papists

themselves are surprised to see and fail to understand. Men are closing their eyes to the real character of Romanism and the dangers to be apprehended from her supremacy. The people need to be aroused to resist the advances of this most dangerous foe to civil and religious liberty." *The Great Controversy*, 566.

"The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." *Ibid*, 588.

Lutheran Protestants!

News Item: "Ebenezer Lutheran Church members voted

overwhelmingly Sunday to drop their affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.

"But the members of the 102-year-old congregation here don't see themselves as the ones who are leaving.

" 'Sometimes I feel the church has left, not me,' Marlys Kunz said. 'I'm still here, believing the same thing. But the church has left.'

" 'It's time,' Ebenezer members said, 'to leave an organization that has grown too liberal, has strayed too far from traditional teachings and is meddling in congregations' affairs. . . .'

" 'The last straw for the congregation was the controversial ecumenical agreement—"Called to Common Mission"—to join communion with the Episcopal Church,' said Schram and others." *Christian News*, March 20, 2000. ✨



Separation of Church and State **UNDER ATTACK**

Philip Garber

The Founding Fathers of our nation possessed an irrepressible love for liberty. The influence of Roger Williams, combined with the intellect of such men as Washington, Madison, and Jefferson united to bring forth a government more grand, more in accordance with human rights, more in harmony with the principles of Christ, than any government the world has ever known.

However, today we are seeing a determined effort to interpret the principles as laid down by our Founding Fathers in the Constitution in such a way as to totally undermine the most basic elements of religious liberty. Yet these same people, while doing this work, profess to be staunch adherents of religious liberty.

It is the purpose of this little work to address the issues at stake in such a way as to show how to give a clear and concise answer to those who would threaten our religious freedom.

Biblical Principles of Religious Liberty

During the early years of Israel, Jehovah ruled as both King and Priest under the divine theocracy. "The government of Israel was

administered in the name and by the authority of God. The work of Moses, of the seventy elders, of the rulers and judges, was simply to enforce the laws that God had given; they had no authority to legislate for the nation."¹ In contrast to pagan kingdoms, in which the king was also the head of the national religion, Israel's earthly offices of priest and ruler were held by separate individuals. During Israel's entire history there were very few exceptions to this rule.

Let us now focus on some of the numerous Biblical accounts that demonstrate how God views the principle of the separation of church and state.

King Saul Rejects God's Way—In 1 Samuel 13:8-14 we have the example of King Saul who,

while dressed in the armor of the state, impatiently offered a sacrifice for the church when the prophet Samuel did not show up as quickly as he had expected him. King Saul used the sphere of religion to advance his political agenda, but he was reproved by God through His prophet Samuel. In God's order, king and priest were two separate powers which were not to infringe the one upon the other.

King David's Noble Stand—King David, on the other hand, when facing a civil war instigated by Absalom, chose not to use the great symbol of the Jewish religion for political gain, but told the priests to take the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. David, as the ruler of Israel, was under a solemn responsibility to seek the glory of God and the good of the nation—not his own personal, political interest. As a result of his choice, God blessed David. See 2 Samuel 15:24–25.

Uzziah Attempts to Join Church and State—King Uzziah, as head of state, was stricken with leprosy when he tried to usurp priestly responsibilities by attempting to offer incense upon the altar. See 2 Chronicles 26:16–21.

“The case of Uzziah the king reveals how God will punish the sin of presumption. . . . The Lord has ordained men to certain positions in His church, and He would not have them step out of the places to which He has appointed them. When the Lord gives them a measure of success, they are not to become lifted up, and think themselves qualified to do a work for which they are not fitted, and to which God has not called them.”²

Christ's View on Church and State

Perhaps in the life of Jesus Christ, more than in the life of anyone else, is illustrated to a greater degree the divine principles of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. Now we will examine these principles as exemplified in His life.

Christ Viewed As a Threat From His Birth—When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wise men from the east came to worship Him as “King of the Jews.” Matthew 2:2. King Herod, upon hearing of this fact, feared that Jesus was to set up a political kingdom that would obviously overthrow his kingdom. Seeing Jesus as a threat, he ordered all the children in Bethlehem who were two years of age and younger to be put to death.

As we shall see, Jesus was followed throughout His earthly ministry by the all-important question of whether He would use the power of the state to enforce His kingdom. But He consistently refused to succumb to this temptation.

The Temptation—After Christ's baptism, He went into the wilderness where He was tempted by Satan. In one of these temptations, Satan offered Christ all

with His disciples, attempted to take Him by force to make Him King. Christ's response was immediate and decisive. He commanded the multitude to disperse and, using an authority never before assumed, commanded His disciples to get into a boat to depart. The disciples reluctantly obeyed. See John 6:15; Matthew 14:22.

In this instance Christ set a very strong precedent against the erroneous concept that the church may use the state to build up its kingdom.

Christ Not a Civil Arbitrator—Another subtle temptation came to Christ when a man asked Him to act as a judge and arbitrator in a case of fraudulently withheld inheritance. See Luke 12:13–15. However, Jesus refused to be ensnared in this argument, although doubtless there had been a wrong committed. It was not Christ's

Perhaps in the life of Jesus Christ, more than in the life of anyone else, is illustrated to a greater degree the divine principles of religious liberty and the separation of church and state.

the power of the political kingdoms of this world if He would only fall down and worship him. However, Christ rejected Satan's offer with the words: “Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Luke 4:8. Satan was offering Christ a kingdom based on the union of church and state, but Jesus emphatically refused the offer. Of course, the only way that Satan could have given all the kingdoms of this world to Christ would have been through the use of fear and force and at the point of the sword. This would have pleased the Pharisees, for that was the sort of messiah that they were looking for.

The People Attempt to Make Christ King—When Christ had fed the five thousand, the people, along

mission to become involved in questions of legality which it was the job of the state to enforce.

Christ Rebukes Peter for Using the Sword—At the close of His ministry, when Christ was being arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter wielded the sword in an attempt to protect Him. However, Jesus told Peter, “Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Matthew 26:52. Over the many centuries of the history of the church there have been many “Peters” who have attempted to advance the kingdom of God by the power of the sword; and, as Christ foretold, they have, or shortly will, come to naught.

There is a place for the sword, and that is with the civil rulers. The sword belongs to Caesar's kingdom,

and it should not be used in an attempt to advance Christ's kingdom. See Romans 13:4. These two kingdoms are to be kept separate and distinct, and each is to function in its own respective arena.

Christ Falsely Charged With Meddling in the Affairs of State—

“Charges of meddling with the affairs of Caesar's kingdom and setting Himself up as a rival to Caesar incited the crucifixion of Jesus. The Jewish authorities cried before Pilate: ‘We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.’ Luke 23:2.

“The greatest crime in the eyes of Rome was treason against the state, and therefore merited the heaviest penalty. Pilate's immediate challenge to Christ was on this charge: ‘Art thou the King of the Jews?’ John 18:33. Jesus answered in the affirmative, but at the same time defined the

“Then scoffed the cynical Pilate, ‘What is truth?’ for he trusted only in the coercive power and authority of the sword and could not understand a kingdom established by the spiritual weapons of truth and love.

“And so on to judgment, where—after pondering over the charge that Christ was meddling in the affairs of Rome—he at last said, ‘I find in him no fault at all.’ Verse 38. Pilate was certain of this, at least, that no spiritual power of truth could pose any threat to Caesar's rule. He concluded that Jesus would not try to use political or physical power to establish His kingdom, and *those* were the types of opposition that Caesar feared most.

“But the Jews, stubbornly asserting that Jesus had entered into the political sphere and so was a rival to Caesar, cried out to the Roman governor, ‘If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's

Rome. The Pharisees were opposed to the political reign of Rome, and they wanted to lead a political rebellion against Rome. The irony of these two groups joining together can only be explained in the light of the intense hatred both groups held for Christ.

The Tribute Money Trap—

Before Christ's death, these two groups had tried to entrap Jesus with a political question, asking Him, “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?” Matthew 22:17. Christ's answer was clear, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.” Verse 21. Jesus plainly refused to become involved in political questions. He had not come to earth to be a political messiah, but to save a world ensnared in sin.

The Greatest Crime—The crucifixion of Christ was the supreme crime and the most heinous sin in the history of the world, and it was made possible only when church and state had united. This awful fact alone should be sufficient to place an eternal condemnation upon any such union of church and state, anywhere, at any time.

Jesus plainly refused to become involved in political questions. He had not come to earth to be a political messiah, but to save a world ensnared in sin.

implication of His affirmation, saying, ‘My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.’ Verse 36.

“Pilate could not conceive of a king without a military force and immediately asked, ‘Art thou a king then?’ Jesus answered, ‘Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.’ Verse 37. Christ's weapon was the force of truth rather than the force of military might—not by the coercive power of the sword, but by the persuasive power of the truth, would His Kingdom be established.

friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.’ John 19:12. This veiled threat settled things in short order. Pilate forthwith commanded the death of Christ, not because he was at all convinced of the truth of the charges against our Lord, but because he was afraid of the political threats of the Jews. And so Christ was crucified on the false charge of meddling with the civil affairs of Caesar's kingdom.”³

Two Opposite Ideologies

Unite—It is of interest to note that in the death of Jesus, two opposing ideologies joined forces—the Pharisees and the Herodians. See Mark 3:6. The Herodians were a part of Herod's political party. Herod, being appointed by Rome, would make the Herodians, in effect, apologists and partisans of

Conclusion

Thus we see, contrary to the popular opinion of our day, the Christian's duty lies, not in the political realm, but in the spiritual realm. Instead of using political arm-twisting, we should heed the admonition of the great apostle Paul who wrote: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” 1 Timothy 2:1-2.

Here is the true secret of how to effect real change in the political world—through prayer! ✨

References:

¹ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 603.

² *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, 1132.

³ J. Marcellus Kik, *Church and State*, 11-12.

Sharp Thrusts and Christian Politeness

D. E. Robinson & E. G. White

Because of a growing campaign by religious and political leaders to legislate laws of a religious nature – including the posting of the Ten Commandments in public buildings, Sunday laws, and so forth – we believe it is increasingly important that Seventh-day Adventists understand how to respond to Sunday laws and how to relate to civil authorities. The following article was the second of an eight-part series by Dore E. Robinson, one of Ellen G. White’s secretaries. The series was published in 1911, from March 9 through April 27, in the Review and Herald and was entitled “A Study of Principles.”

The Editors

During the period from 1895 to 1897, Mrs. White wrote several communications, warning our brethren engaged in the advocacy of religious liberty against the danger of manifesting harshness in their teachings and writings. The following is a letter written from Australia, January 30, 1895, prefaced by three paragraphs from *The Ministry of Healing*, pages 489–490:

“If we have a sense of the long-suffering of God toward us, we shall not be found judging or accusing others. When Christ was living on the earth, how surprised His associates would have been, if, after becoming acquainted with Him, they had heard Him speak one word of accusation, of faultfinding, or of impatience. Let us never forget that those who love Him are to represent Him in character. . . .

“The Lord Jesus demands our acknowledgment of the rights of every man. Men’s social rights, and their

rights as Christians, are to be taken into consideration. All are to be treated with refinement and delicacy, as the sons and daughters of God. Christianity will make a man a gentleman. Christ was courteous, even to His persecutors; and His true followers will manifest the same spirit. . . .

“A thoroughgoing Christian draws his motives of action from his deep heart love for his Master. Up through the roots of his affection for Christ springs an unselfish interest in his brethren. Love imparts to its possessor grace, propriety, and comeliness of deportment. It illuminates the countenance and subdues the voice; it refines and elevates the whole being.

“I am very much pained as I see how readily those who write for our papers make unkind thrusts and allusions that will certainly do harm, and that will hedge up the way, and hinder us from doing the work that we should to reach all classes, the Catholics included. It is our work to speak the truth in love, and not to mix in with the truth the unsanctified elements of the natural heart, and speak things that savor of the same spirit possessed by our enemies.

“All sharp thrusts will come back upon us in double measure when the power is in the hands of those who can exercise it for our injury. Over and over the message has been given to me that we are not to say one word, not to publish one sentence, unless positively essential in vindicating the truth, that will stir up our enemies against us, and arouse their passions to a white heat. Our work will soon be

closed up, and soon the time of trouble such as never was will come upon us, of which we have but little idea.

Learn in the School of Jesus

“Writers and speakers among us will have to learn that the highest obligations of the Christian life involve the giving of careful attention in heeding the messages that God has sent to us. It is essential that we have a knowledge of our own motives and actions in order to have constant self-improvement. I long to see men in responsible positions feeling the burden in regard to themselves, so that they will exercise Christian politeness, and speak and write in a courteous manner. The Lord wants His workers to represent Him, the Great Missionary Worker. The manifestation of unchristlike zeal and rashness always does harm.

entrusted with the sacred responsibility to watch for souls as they that must give an account, study to work in harmony with the truth, and in accordance with the wisdom which is from above, which ‘is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.’ James 3:17-18.

Our Obligation

“I am pained when I see the sharp thrusts which appear in the [American] *Sentinel*. I speak to my brethren who are communicating with the people through that paper: It is best for you to be as wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves. We should carefully and severally examine our ways and our spirits, and see in what manner we are

world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Matthew 18:7. But because offenses will come, we should be careful not to stir up the natural temperament of those who love not the truth, by unwise words and by the manifestation of an unkind spirit. The truth works by love, and purifies the soul.

“It is the privilege and duty of every child of God to have spiritual apprehension. If we are children of the light, we should walk in the light as Christ is in the light, and testify before the world, before angels and men, that the truth has power to transform human character, and to cause men to represent Christ. With David our testimony should be, ‘Thy gentleness hath made me great.’ Psalm 18:35. O that we might have divine perceptions, and be able to appreciate the holy, sacred efficiency of the truth which fell from the lips of Christ! O that a permanent impression might be made upon the hearts of all!

“The words Christ has spoken, the spirit He has revealed in all His lessons to His disciples, are as the Bread of life, the flesh and blood of the Son of God. He said, ‘The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.’ John 6:63. But all He has said is contested by the confederacy of evil; nevertheless precious truth must be presented in its native force. The deceptive errors that are widespread, and that are to lead the world captive, are to be unveiled. Every effort that is possible is being made to ensnare souls with subtle reasonings, to turn them from the truth to fables, and to prepare them to be deceived by strong delusions. But while these deceived souls turn from the truth to error, do not speak to them one word of censure. Seek to show these poor, deluded souls their danger, and to reveal to them how grievous is their course of action toward Jesus Christ; but let it all be done in pitying tenderness.

“By a proper manner of labor some of the souls who are ensnared

We should be careful not to stir up the natural temperament of those who love not the truth, by unwise words and by the manifestation of an unkind spirit.

“The proprieties essential for Christian life must be learned daily in the school of Christ. He who is careless and heedless in uttering words or in writing words for publication to be sent broadcast into the world, is disqualifying himself to be entrusted with the sacred work that devolves upon Christ’s followers at this time. Those who practice giving hard thrusts are forming habits that will have to be repented of. To discharge every duty that devolves upon those who are entrusted with sacred responsibility, in the right manner, calls for humble prayer, and a close study of the life of Christ.

“A surgeon, a physician, a teacher, a guide, needs to study carefully and attentively the way in which to do the work which is entrusted to his hands; and how much more should those who are

doing the work given us of God, which involves the destiny of souls. The very highest obligation is resting upon us. Satan is standing ready, burning with zeal to inspire the whole confederacy of satanic agencies, that he may cause them to unite with evil men, and bring upon the believers of truth speedy and severe suffering. Every unwise word that is uttered by our brethren will be treasured up by the prince of darkness.

“How dare finite human intelligences speak careless and venturesome words, that will stir up the powers of hell against the saints of God, when Michael the Archangel durst not bring against Satan a railing accusation, but said, ‘The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan?’ Zechariah 3:2. It will be impossible for us to avoid difficulties and suffering. Jesus said, ‘Woe unto the

by Satan may be recovered from his power. But do not blame and condemn them. To ridicule the position held by those who are in error will not open their blind eyes, nor attract them to the truth. The followers of Christ may receive divine illumination daily, and have clear conceptions of the great mercy and love of God toward us poor sinners. As we behold the love of Christ, we shall begin to reflect it. 'God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' 2 Corinthians 4:6. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. How are they hid?— Under the veil of humanity and deep humiliation. The abundance of His knowledge covers all the treasures of wisdom; for in Christ all fullness dwells.

The Example of Christ

"When men lose sight of Christ's example, and do not pattern after His manner of teaching, they become self-sufficient, and go forth to meet Satan with his own manner of weapons. The enemy knows well how to turn his weapons upon those who use them. Jesus spake only words of pure truth and righteousness. It was He who inspired prophets and holy men of old, and they spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit. But Christ was superior to the prophets, in that He is the Author of eternal salvation, the Originator of all that they have written and spoken, and in His example, He has left us a perfect model for faith and practice.

"If ever a people needed to walk in humility before God, it is His church, His chosen ones in this generation. We all need to bewail the dullness of our intellectual faculties, the lack of appreciation of our privileges and opportunities. We have nothing whereof to boast. We grieve the Lord Jesus Christ by our harshness, by our unchristlike thrusts. We need to become complete in Him. It is true that we are commanded to 'cry aloud, spare

not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' Isaiah. 58:1. This message must be given; but while it must be given, we should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have. We should not go out of our way to make hard thrusts at the Catholics. Among the Catholics there are many who are most conscientious Christians, and who walk in all the light that shines upon them, and God will work in their behalf.

"Those who have had great privileges and opportunities, and who have failed to improve their physical, mental, and moral powers, but who have lived to please themselves, and have refused to bear their responsibilities, are in great danger, and in greater condemnation before God than those who are in error upon doctrinal points, yet who seek to live to do good to others, corresponding to the light which they have. Do not censure others, do not condemn

them. As free moral agents under the government of God, our responsibility and obligation are not limited by the knowledge we actually possess, but by the knowledge we might and ought to have had if we had advanced in faith, and obtained the rich Christian experience that would have corresponded with our advantages. We should improve our faculties, and we shall be held accountable for their improvement. They are a sacred trust, and if we do not use them properly, if we do not educate ourselves to trust in God, to believe and practice His Word, we shall be held accountable. If we allow selfish considerations, false reasonings, and false excuses to bring us into a perverse state of mind and heart, so that we do not know the ways and will of God, we shall be far more guilty than the open sinner. We need to be very cautious, in order that we may not condemn those who before God are less guilty than ourselves." ✨

Review and Herald, March 16, 1911.

Immortality of the Soul and Spiritualism

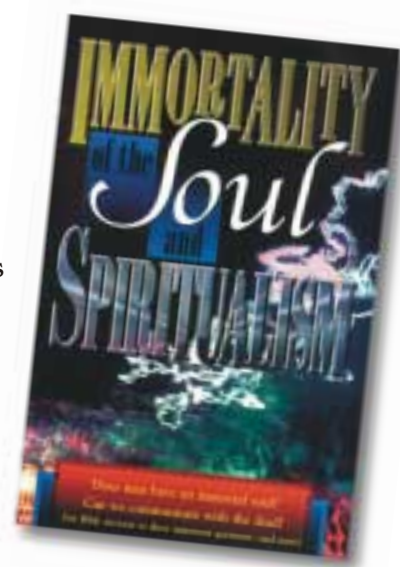
While the belief in the immortality of the soul seems to be an innocent philosophy, it lays the foundation of a whole false religion—spiritualism. This 32-page booklet is just right to hand out—in quantity! It is also a good follow-up for communities that have already received other material.

Quantity Pricing:*

- 1-10 books: 65¢ each
- 11-299 books: 55¢ each
- 1-7 cases (300 per case): 40¢ each
- 8 or more cases: 30¢ each

Bulk mail price: 45¢ each (shipping included)

***Please see page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.**



Abstemiousness



And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:16-17.

"Abstemiousness" is a rather strange word which the dictionary defines as being sparing or moderate in eating and drinking. We have all heard the motto, "Moderation in all things." Usually it is understood that this refers only to "good things." Surely we cannot endorse the moderate use of heroin, moderation in adultery, or being moderately disposed to negative attitudes like hate, bigotry or deceit. A precise definition of abstemiousness would be "moderation (avoiding extremes) in those things that are good, and avoiding or totally abstaining from those things that are harmful."

In the introductory scripture God gives us the principle of abstemiousness upon which the right to enjoy eternal life is based. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God and had no disposition toward selfishness or self-gratification and so would naturally practice self-control or temperance. They had no tendencies toward the extremes. They were to practice moderation in their free eating of every tree in the garden. However, they were not to eat from one certain tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God wanted them to experience only good.

Satan suggested that they ought to find out what a little evil would be like too. Tragically, they distrusted God and ate of the forbidden fruit. They broke the health principle of abstemiousness and

decided to go beyond the moderate use of those things that are good and also to throw in a little of the bad. Their disregard caused a change to take place in their very natures. Once giving in to a selfish desire, they then opened the floodgate of intemperance and eventual death. God had warned them, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

If God in His great love and mercy had not intervened, their situation would have been hopeless. God had a plan already in store just in case such an emergency should arise. This plan to save not only Adam and Eve from eternal death but all their descendants as well, is the main theme of the entire Bible. It is God's way to restore to the human race perfect self-control, just as Adam and Eve had in the beginning. That Way is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:11-12. The evidence that a person has received the Spirit of God in Christ is described in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

We can summarize what has been said up to this point as follows:

1. Abstemiousness is the moderate use of those things that are good, while abstaining from those things that are harmful.

2. This abstention requires self-control or temperance.

3. Temperance is a gift from God that comes to us only as we receive Christ.

Temperance, then, is required in order to build a lifestyle that is in balance physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. After all, without self-control we could not put into practice the knowledge that we have. Unless we have the power to carry out all our good intentions, they are not of much use.

Once we have the power of God working in us, we can practice moderation in those things that are good. We will avoid extremes—the "over/unders."

Overeating leads to stomach-upset and/or obesity. Under-eating leads to malnutrition or starvation.

Overworking leads to exhaustion or injury. Underworking leads to atrophy and weakness.

Over-resting leads to weakness and laziness. Under-resting breeds mental confusion and exhaustion.

We also need a balanced intake of air, water, and sunlight—not too much and not too little.

Abstemiousness should regulate not only our physical health habits, but the mental and social aspects of life as well. Too much reading, too much talking, too much thinking, too much entertainment, too much sports, too much television, materialism, and fashion—all of these things, if not properly regulated, can overtax the mental powers and even lead to physical breakdown somewhere in the body. It could even be said that they are, in a way, intoxicating when carried to excess. We are familiar with the expressions "glued to the TV" or "sports fan" (short for fanatic). These examples serve to illustrate how one's

entire life can become unbalanced and the mind somewhat intoxicated or warped by overstimulation. The Bible teaches us, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8. This antidote would certainly be effective for many of society's mental and social ills.

Alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine, as commonly used (excluding rare medicinal usages), do no good whatsoever and have been proved to trigger many harmful side effects, depending on the pattern of use. Each one has its place to some degree in the lineup of prime suspects contributing to the epidemic of the degenerative diseases—atherosclerosis, osteoporosis, cancer, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and so on. They also play a role in violent behavior, accidents and fires. There is almost always some degree of dependence involved in their use. Aside from the physical harm done, this dependency is detrimental mentally and socially, as the user is subconsciously conditioned to use them as crutches. The development of important problem-solving skills and everyday coping skills is retarded to the extent that the chemical crutch is used as a substitute. All that the user needs to do to discover the extent of their dependency is to stop their use.

Illegal drugs should be rejected for the same reasons, besides which they carry the additional drawback of moral guilt and possible civil punishment. Even over-the-counter and prescription drugs should be avoided, for there are always side effects from them. Many times they do not work as they should, and usually there are safer alternative remedies that could be used instead.¹

Yet sometimes strong medications are the lesser of two evils, and in such cases their use is justified. Until something better is found, their use may be necessary.

While we need to practice moderation in the eating of any food, we need to be more moderate in the use of some foods than in others. The U.S. Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs in 1977 issued these recommendations to all Americans:

1. Eat less sugars and sweets.
2. Eat less fat and cholesterol.
3. Eat less salt.
4. Eat more fruits, vegetables and starches.
5. Keep your weight normal.

In practical, everyday language these guidelines mean that we need to eat less refined, processed foods, and less animal products of all kinds. A basically vegetarian diet composed mostly of natural, simple foods eaten in quantities to maintain a healthy body weight is ideal.

Some food additives, irritating spices, condiments, vinegar, baking powder and soda should also be avoided, as they are upsetting to the stomach and/or the nervous system.

Temperance and abstemiousness foster safety as well. Most accidents are caused by either law-breaking, human error (miscalculation), or unsafe conditions. Almost all automobile accidents and injuries could be prevented if alcohol were eliminated, seat belts worn, laws obeyed, and vehicles maintained.

Around the home the main danger areas are gardens, paths, steps, roads, machinery, and water. Inside the home consider toys, flammable clothing, fires, electricity, medicine, chemicals, and kitchen appliances and implements as potential threats. The old adage certainly is true, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

One of the differences between people and animals is the way that they acquire behavior patterns. Most of the things animals do, they do because of instinct. This knowledge and behavior is inherited by the animal. The capacity to learn or be taught anything varies considerably, depending on the type of animal.

In contrast, man has very few instincts, although tendencies are inherited. Most of what we do, we do because we learned it somewhere. Through various learning processes we acquire habits. Habits are convenient, since once we have them, we no longer have to deliberate about every little thing we do. They can also be a nuisance if we do not like them or try to change them. Some habits are hard to get rid of. It is easier to learn good habits in the beginning than to unlearn bad ones.

Every time we do or think something, a specific nerve pathway is activated in the brain. These pathways become permanent fixtures in the brain and are strengthened the more they are activated. In breaking a habit we need to deactivate the nerve pathway. This is done in two ways: by saying "NO" to the habit, causing inhibitory nerve fibers to begin to form on the old pathway which tend to weaken the strength of the habit; and then by substituting something else in place of the old habit, a new pathway is formed which acts as kind of an alternative route over which the strength of the old habit can be directed. Even though it may be deactivated, the old pathway is still there, making it easy to reactivate if we revert back to it even once.

To break a habit, then, one must be decisive. Do not be ambivalent or indecisive. This tends only to excite both the inhibitory and excitatory nerves at the same time. Instead, be firm. Starve that old habit and begin feeding a new one. Concentrate on a positive substitute, and you will not have to expend as much energy fighting the negative one. For example, substitute deep breathing or water drinking for smoking. Every time you have an urge to smoke, do some deep breathing or get a drink of water instead. But the most important thing is to make up your mind. Strengthening any positive lifestyle habit always tends to weaken the negative ones. For example, a good exercise program is one of the best

antidotes to smoking. Good habits tend to foster more good habits, and bad habits to promulgate more bad habits. As they say, "Birds of a feather flock together."

When attempting to eliminate a habit, anticipate trouble spots. Be prepared for the time when you are likely to experience that old habit clamoring for attention. Plan ahead. Rehearse in your mind how you will successfully overcome it. Try to avoid situations in which the habit will be aroused. Do not make exceptions. Remember, one exception reactivates that dormant habit.

Be honest about your weaknesses. Acknowledge them, but do not dwell on them. Dwell on the positive and practice often the good habits you wish to keep and strengthen.

It must be remembered that genuine self-control is a gift from God that we can receive only in Christ. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. Often in this life we find ourselves at the end of our rope. But in God we

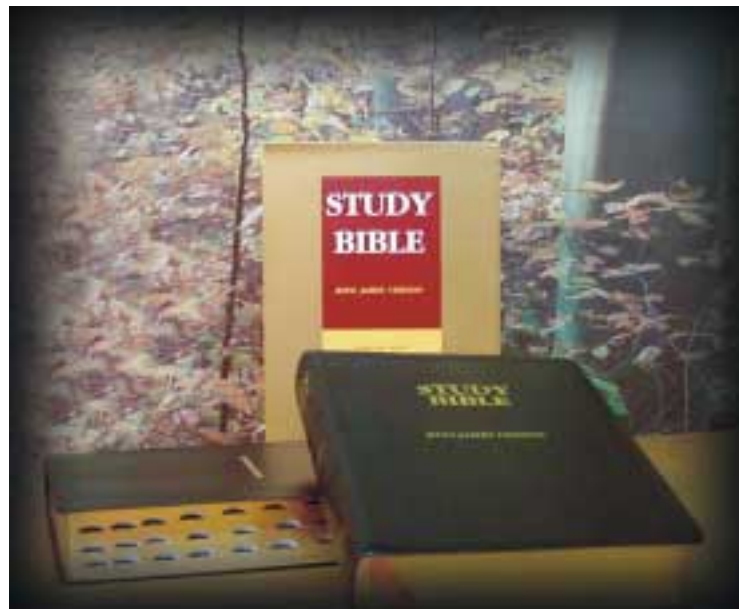
have an infinite store of resources—so much so that the apostle Paul could say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13. ✨

Compiled by Kurt Unglaub, M.P.H.

¹ Three books that describe dozens of ailments—from abscess to whooping cough—and the use and application of simple and safe alternative remedies to drug therapy are *Home Remedies*, *Natural Remedies*, and *More Natural Remedies*. Each of these books is by Phylis Austin and Drs. Agatha and Calvin Thrash. They may be purchased from Hope International by calling 1-800-468-7884.

Bible Blow-Out Sale!

The Study Bible



Selected commentary from the Spirit of Prophecy throughout!

The small edition of the Study Bible includes these features:

- Insightful comments from the Spirit of Prophecy throughout
- Standard marginal references
- Spirit of Prophecy Scripture Index
- Bible concordance
- Subject index to Bible commentary
- Genuine bonded leather cover
- The Fourfold Gospel narrative
- Chronological tables and over 65 maps
- Bible studies and book introductions
- Tabs for easy referencing of books

The perfect companion for the serious Bible student

Small Edition
(black bonded leather only)

**HURRY! LIMITED SUPPLY
ORDER TODAY!**

Please see page 3 for ordering and tax information.

Regular Price: \$64.⁹⁵

Now only

\$39⁰⁰!

Including Shipping!

letters to the editor

Have a letter to share?

contact editor@hopeint.org or see page 3 for our mailing address.



I received the latest issue of *Our Firm Foundation* today and took it with me to the hospital to read as I was waiting to see my surgeon. As it turned out, I lost the magazine when I was only half through reading it. I pray that whoever finds it will be richly blessed by reading it.

Your magazine is my favorite subscription, and I always read it from cover to cover. I have kept every issue since the beginning of my subscription 7 years ago, and I re-read some of the articles from time to time. *TK, Tennessee*

God bless you in your work. I enjoy *Our Firm Foundation* and have shared it with a dear sister in our church here. *CA, Florida*

We appreciate the dedication you all have in proclaiming the third angel's message. May God continue to bless you! *HP, Wisconsin*

Your wonderful gem of wisdom—with Jesus' wisdom—has been coming to me for several years. Your pearls with their Christ-centered messages and articles have helped me to gain understanding and knowledge, along with our loving Father's Word. I have been so very blessed and thankful to our loving Redeemer for this precious magazine. It first came as a gift subscription, and later my husband (who is not in the faith of Jesus as of yet) agreed to pay for it after I asked him.

I have thoroughly appreciated receiving this beautiful magazine, which tells of God's Word and His Way, Truth, and the way to our eternal home and life with Him in the heavenly Eden.

EN, Minnesota

From Overseas

Thank you for *Our Firm Foundation*; it has been a help to us. It has

encouraged and strengthened us when all around us the standards have been falling in our beloved church. We do appreciate the good work you are doing. We are enclosing a donation to help you with the costs. *RB, England*

Sir, the main theme of writing to you is to request your institute to allow me to get free Bible studies. This resulted when I happened to get one of your most touching magazines entitled *Earth's Final Warning*. I have gone through this magazine, and I have found it very much interesting and life touching.

I have come to learn that surely we are living in the last days, and the end will come soon. I am deeply heaven bound, but where to get assistance has been a problem for me. That is why I got hold of this magazine and on page 15 of it I found that you offered free Bible studies.

Sir, let me be one of your free Bible correspondence students. To this may the Almighty rest His merciful hands on you and your Bible missionary institute. *SS, Kenya*

They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. Psalm 125:1.

I would like to send warm gratitude to the entire staff of Hope International for their unselfish hearts toward me. Especially seeing they have sent me Spirit of Prophecy books, plus the King James Version Bible. Thanks again for sending me the *Our Firm Foundation* magazine.

The work you are doing outweighs the church's work because you are a small organization as compared to the church, but you are managing to feed the flock of God with the present truth of the 1888 Message, plus other vital information of which the church cannot. I am not ashamed to say

this. Your efforts are really blessed of God; it is you now who God is using—presenting the message to do His will—never give up—keep going on.

Keep on enlightening God's children around the globe, seeing that the Laodicean Church is blind, naked, miserable, and wretched. Brethren in different places are seeing marvelous things from your publications that are not presently being taught by the church or by any other denomination. May God richly bless you all! *EA, Kenya*

Thank you indeed for the books I received. Those books have played great roles in my spiritual growth, especially *Will the Real Seventh-day Adventist Please Stand Up*, by Ron Spear. The Lord has chosen me as an elder in our chapel.

We are hungry and thirsty for spiritual food, such as the Spirit of Prophecy library, Sabbath tracts, and literature for our school, of which the students are 95 percent Sundaykeepers. *DK, Sudan*

I am a Seventh-day Adventist who attends a little company which has recently been established. The members are therefore still new in the faith, and they are desperately in need of spiritual enrichment. However, the biggest problem we face is the lack of spiritual reading material. On behalf of my fellow church members, I am therefore kindly requesting Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, and any other religious material that would enhance our spiritual understanding. Your generosity toward this cause will be gratefully appreciated.

HK, Zimbabwe

We wish to express our appreciation for the donations marked "Literature Assistance." we have received. Please continue to support this fund as the Lord blesses you. You will be richly rewarded in heaven. —EDITORS



Come to Camp Meeting!

July 25–30, 2000

First meeting begins Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

Do you sense the nearness of Christ's return? Are you seeking to do all you can to prepare yourself, your family, and others for the crisis just ahead? Do you find encouragement as you fellowship with others who like you are striving to serve the Lord with all their hearts?

Don't miss the special sale pricing on all publications purchased at camp meeting!

If your answer is Yes, then please plan now to join us in worship and fellowship.

If you plan to attend our camp meeting in Eatonville, and wish to stay on our grounds, you are more than welcome. Water, restrooms, and limited showers will be available, but hookups for water, sewer, and electricity are not available. Please plan on a real *camp* meeting.

As usual, there will be no charge for staying on our campus, but we cannot provide either lodging or food. Please do not take it for granted that we will be able to provide special services for those who need them. If you have special needs, please call and let us know—we will do our best to accommodate all who desire to attend.

If you do not plan to stay on our grounds, the following list of motels may be helpful:

- **Mill Village Motel**—2 miles south of Hope International. (360) 832-3200.
- **Motel Puyallup**—25 miles north of Hope International. Call (800) 921-2700.
- **Northwest Motor Inn**—25 miles north of Hope International. Call (800) 845-9490.
- **Eagle's Nest**—10 miles south of Hope International. Call (888) 877-2533

Speakers will include: Ron Spear, Danny Vierra, Ellen Dana, Raphael Perez, Ron and Gwen Reeves, Jeff Wehr, David Kang, Ray DeCarlo, Colin Standish, Russell Standish.



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Eatonville, WA
Permit No. 8

Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328
Change Service Requested

