



# *Our* Firm Foundat

## Parental Love in Action

Special Family Issue

Volume 16, Number 10

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The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

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The Sanctuary

# The Elijah Message

Malachi prophesied the work of the last-day Elijah message: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” Malachi 4:5–6. The final message to this dying world is to have a marked effect upon families—helping husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, to know their duty and how to perform it, and helping children to give their parents the honor that is due them.

“The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart.”<sup>1</sup>

Friends, let us ask ourselves, Are our families in good order? Do our marriages typify the relationship—described in Ephesians 5—that Christ is seeking with His church? Have we cultivated the Christian graces in our hearts so that our homes are a model of the heavenly family? What about *your* home?

We have a high regard for the truth. Most of us are confident that we are theologically correct in our positions. *We have the truth.* But what good is the truth if our homes are in disarray, if we have not applied the truth to our own lives? Is it any different than teaching a chemistry theory while failing to prove it in the laboratory? Could it be that our message of victory over sin has yet to convince many of our fellow church members because we have not gained the victory over self in our own home?

The editors of *Our Firm Foundation*—a magazine devoted to the

straight testimony—have dedicated this issue to the family. What is the straight testimony? Is it to point out the sins of the church? Is it the “right side” of a theological argument? Is it a message that points out *your* problem—but not mine? The straight testimony of the Faithful Witness of Revelation 3 is to startle us out of our lukewarm slumber, helping us to see our *own* shortcomings and our own great need of Christ’s righteousness.

Many of us in conservative circles have focused so much of our attention upon the heresies and sins of others that we have given little attention to our own problems. We may vividly recall the weaknesses and faults of our parents, but what about our own homes? Are we repeating our parents’ mistakes? Or are we daily gaining victories as we search the inspired counsels to know our duty as spouses, parents, and members of God’s family?

I am thankful that the Lord has been helping me to see the importance of my ministry in the family circle. I have learned that those of us who are involved in ministries of one kind or another face special challenges. “If properly carried on, the training of the children of a minister will illustrate the lessons he gives in the desk. But if, by the wrong education he has given his children, a minister shows his incapacity to govern and control, he needs to learn that God requires him to properly discipline the children given him before he can do his duty as shepherd of the flock of God.”<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps you are tempted to misjudge your priorities. Consider what God says:

“The circle of family and neighborhood duties is the very first field of effort for those who would work for the uplifting of their fellow men. There is *no more important field of*

*effort* than that committed to the founders and guardians of the home. No work entrusted to human beings involves greater or more far-reaching results than does the work of fathers and mothers.”<sup>3</sup>

The responsibility of mothers is particularly great:

“If mothers had always realized their responsibility, and made it their first purpose, *their most important mission*, to fit their children for the duties of this life and for the honors of the future immortal life, we would not see the misery that now exists in so many homes in our land.”<sup>4</sup>

Our work may seem discouraging at times, but the Lord has promised to help us if we will but seek Him with all our heart.

“In your work for your children take hold of the mighty power of God. Commit your children to the Lord in prayer. Work earnestly and untiringly for them. God will hear your prayers and will draw them to Himself. Then, at the last great day, you can bring them to God, saying, ‘Here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given me.’ See Hebrews 2:13.”<sup>5</sup>

Friends, will you take hold of God’s promises? My family and I have not “arrived” in this experience, but we are seeking it. Are you? Let us pray for each other—that all of us will be faithful in our “first work,” that our families will be a living testimony to the power of the gospel. ✨

Harvey Steck, Managing Editor

## References:

- <sup>1</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 304.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 353.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Ministry of Healing*, 351; all emphasis supplied. See also *ibid.*, 396
- <sup>4</sup> *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 141; all emphasis supplied.
- <sup>5</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 536.

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

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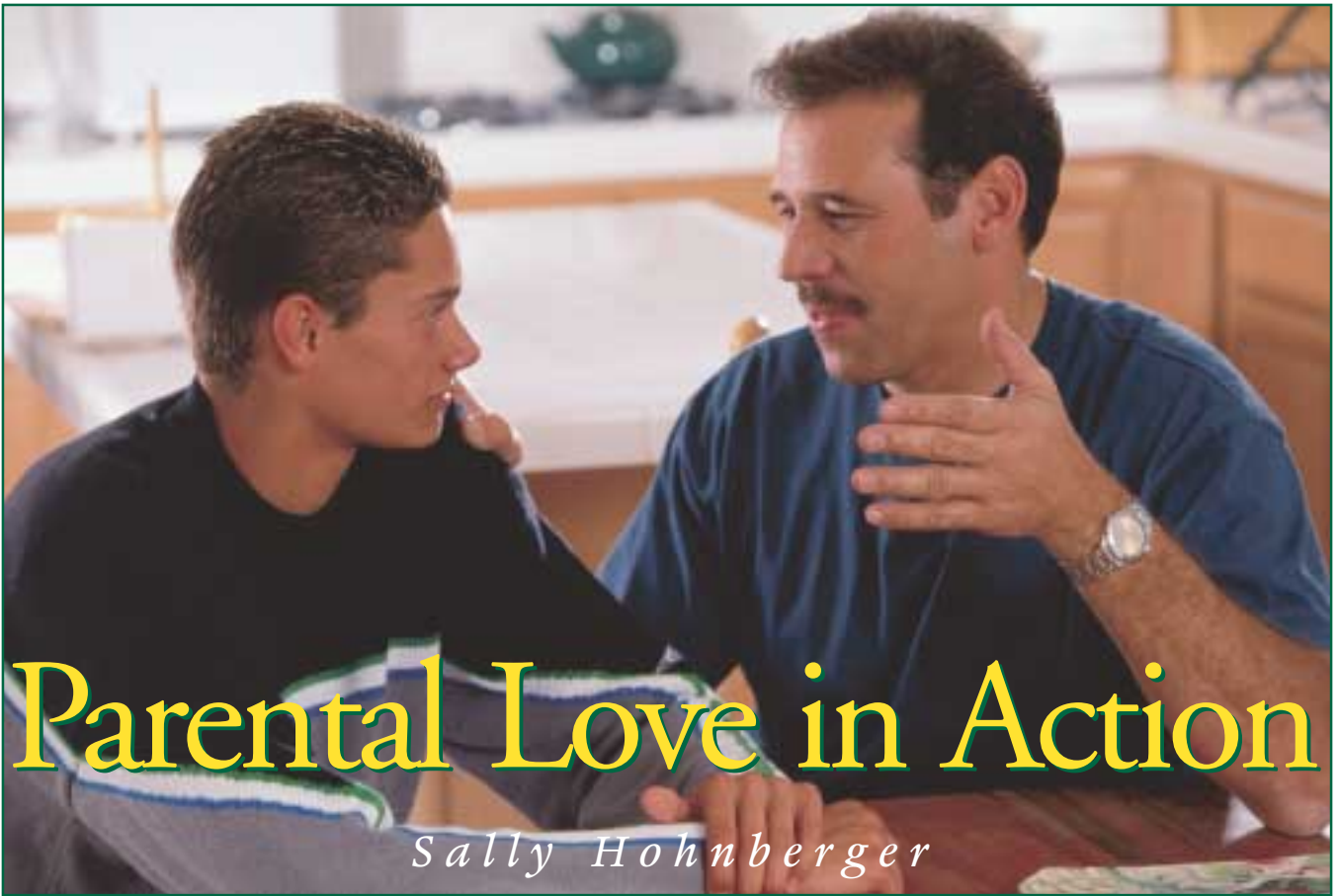
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# Parental Love in Action

*Sally Hohnberger*

**D**o you want better-behaved children? Do you want your infants to be content, and your children to be willingly helpful and cheerful? Do you want your youth to be respectful and to love God? Of course—we all do. But, how much? Are we willing to do what it takes to achieve these results? Are we courageous enough to do whatever is necessary to train up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord so that we *can* have teens following in the way of God? If so, then we must choose against worldly parenting, choose against self, and choose to do the will of God in His wisdom and power—not our own.

Parents all over the world desire contented infants, but they do not personally know the voice of God. They cannot hear Him directing them in the warfare against the enemy—selfishness. Many parents only know the voice of their flesh.

True love is not permissive. Many parents wrongly feel that it is unloving to be firm, to decisively deny their child's little wrongs, or to give

motivational consequences for outbursts of anger or passion. As a result, their infant's angry passions grow because of parents who lack proper firmness and knowledge of God's voice.

As children grow older, their selfish behavior grows with their physical growth and strengthens with their physical strength. Soon the little wrong habits grow into big, bad habits. They have not learned how to submit themselves to their parents—or to God. Yet, by worldly standards, they are considered “good” children.

As they mature into teenagers, any mention by their parents of standards—diet, dress, or otherwise—results in heated discussions and passionate, boldly defiant reactions in the home. They wrongly regard reading their Bible as a cruel punishment. Expectations of kindness or helpfulness are thought to be unreasonable. These youth are viewed as “good kids” because they do not smoke, drink, or use drugs—not yet. However, all in due time, the tree of permissive indulgence will yield its bitter fruit.

Their parents throw up their hands, saying, “Haven't we done everything right? Haven't we taken them to church, home schooled them or sent them to church school, and taught them their memory verses? I guess we'll just have to leave them in God's hands now.”

Your child may be one of these defiant youth. If so, you must face the fact that your child is largely a byproduct of your misdirected parenting, your misguided management, and your misapplied religion. You must face the magnitude of your own fault. You need to go to God for direction on how to get out of this mess and correct your wrong and indulgent practices. God has a way of escape for us when we err. However, He requires us to turn away from our former ways and look to Jesus for every step.

Children of all ages need parents who will direct and discipline them in the path of righteousness—led by God. They need parents who will make them a priority over all else in life. Our children need to be introduced to Jesus, taught how to recog-

nize His voice, and shown how to submit their will to divine power so that they can win the fight against selfish inclinations. They need to experience a transformation in their thoughts, their tastes, their desires, their feelings, their words, and their deeds through the intercession of a parent whose life is hid with Christ in God.

Parents, will you show your children the way? Are you ready to take up your work as parents—personally led of God, and no longer led of self and the flesh? Are your children worth fighting for?—Yes, yes! Are you ready to admit that your methods have been wrong, and correct them today? It will take much prayer, much time with God, and much effort to lay plans for your new direction. It will require that you study to know the will and way of God—to find in Christ the wisdom and fortitude to recognize and firmly deny your youth's wrong ways. It will take effort to learn how to cultivate the right and to replace the wrong ways of your children.

Most importantly, you must *gain their hearts* by taking them to Jesus. He will cleanse their lives, direct them in new ways of reacting and responding to trials, and give them divine power to oppose their former inclinations. If you gain the heart and put it into Jesus' hands, the blessings and changes will be wonderful! However, if you fall short of true surrender, and strive for right behavior apart from Christ, you will be sorely disappointed and wounded.

Do not fear the battle of regaining the hearts of your children from Satan's clutches—from the habits and lying thoughts that he has cultivated and exercised in them all these years. Teach them to love God and know His voice. Take up the battle firmly and courageously, for God has promised: "The LORD shall fight for you." Exodus 14:14. But first, you need to come to Jesus, take His hand, and spend much time on your knees. With pen and paper, and under God's direction, lay out your plans to redeem your child from Satan's service and to learn how to place your child in God's service.

I wish to share one family's story with the hope that it will inspire you to take this step of allowing God to lead you. Then you can lead your child from a life of sin and selfishness to the narrow path. See if you can relate to the following story and learn from their experience. Their letter is entitled, "The Fire":

My son had always been a relatively good kid. He didn't use drugs, was a good worker, and often surprised adults by his willing communication with them. I'd like to say that when he was seventeen we suddenly had problems, but the truth is that there were signs and symptoms throughout the years. We were not consistent in our home. The discipline of regular study in home school was lacking, and we were self-indulgent, setting the poorest possible example. When we did try to discipline, it consisted of doing the right thing and enforcing

born of conviction—if we are to be used of God to wrest our children from the hands of the destroyer. Are we fearless enough to examine our own attitudes and choose against worldly parenting? Are we committed to saturating ourselves with the counsel God has abundantly given us? Are we willing to deny self and to seek to do the will of God instead? Courage, firmness, and positive action are required to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We must resolutely resolve to no longer allow them to merely "come up" like weeds in the garden.

Too many of us have attempted to raise godly children using ungodly methods, or else using God's methods independent of Him. This always has and always will lead to failure, for "Without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. When we bring our children to a full heart surrender, then the Lord can remove that evil root of

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*We had created the problem, and now, if he were to have any chance at all, we were going to have to salvage it with God.*

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proper principles, while not being surrendered to God ourselves, and not being led of Him. We were the ones in charge—not God. We put forth only sporadic efforts to win our son's friendship, but gradually, as he became a teen, we felt him withdrawing from us. His music, his work, and his friends, both on the phone and over the computer modem, were consuming larger and still larger amounts of his time. He developed friendships that had less than positive influences on him. We noticed that he had started to sneak improper foods to eat, and he seemed to have an addiction to coffee.

You see, the parents knew. They saw the problems, but in spite of this knowledge, they were powerless. My friends, it takes more than knowledge. It takes real heroism, resoluteness, and sometimes even a reckless daring—

selfishness and implant in its place the good root of righteousness. It requires the combination of human effort and divine grace.

My wife was awakened one night at one a.m. While praying, she felt impressed that she should turn on the computer and read the e-mail my son had been sending. She did, and was shocked to realize the full extent of his rebellion. He spoke disparagingly of her, and it was clear that he was merely biding his time until he was of age. He told his friends how he really felt about life at home, and we were saddened to see his foul language and his stated desire to leave home as soon as possible. While we were hurt, we also realized it was our fault. We had created the problem, and now, if he were to have any chance at all, we were going to have to salvage it with God. That morning, he got into an argument with his mother and, with

out permission, took the car and drove off in a huff.

You can only *show* them the way, you know. Are you an overcomer of your selfish nature? Do you personally know Jesus' voice speaking to your conscience? Do you surrender to and cooperate with Him? God longs to hear and answer your prayers so that He can teach you how to teach *them*.

These parents had instructed their son, but he was not God's in his heart and life. We must come to see the distinction between teaching and training. Teaching is to tell, to instruct, and to make them aware of what is right. Teaching alone is not enough, for it deals only with the mind. Training deals with the will and sees

balance. Watch the firmness this family was impressed to use:

Later that day, after my son had returned home, his mother confiscated his keys and driver's license. We had to deal with these problems soon. There was less than one year left until his eighteenth birthday. We talked and earnestly prayed for wisdom, claiming the promise in James 1:5. But no answer was immediately forthcoming. As I took the trash out to the burn barrel, I suddenly knew what I was to do. I turned from the barrel to retrieve my splitting block and maul.<sup>1</sup>

With much continued prayer, I prepared for something that I didn't want to do, but felt that the Lord was calling me to

trace of their sin while being merciful to them as sinners."

Then I said, "Son, we thought we were being merciful and kind to you, trying to save you from the world. But, we see we were wrong." Then, laying the Bible aside, I reached into my pocket, pulled out some matches, and lit some paper under the dry tinder in the burn barrel. Next, I reached into the backpack, retrieving a pile of papers containing e-mail communications between my son and his friends. I started looking through the messages, and threw all but one into the fire. I began to read the message that he had composed that very morning just after his mom had confiscated his headphones while he was listening to a "Christian" rock music CD. It was a very angry letter written with much filthy language. I read it loudly (there was no one else within hearing distance) and with a vehement voice (even though I was not angry), as I imagined he would have wished to do. I read everything, including the vulgarities he used to talk about his Mother. Then I threw it into the fire. It flew right back out undamaged! Then I threw it in again, with the same results! So I wadded it up tightly in my fist, held it toward my son, and said with a loud voice, "Satan loves this! He loves it so much that he doesn't want to see it burn—like he's going to burn. I love you too much to let you join him there someday!" I threw it in the fire once more. This time it was consumed.

"Son, after forty years in the wilderness, the Israelites still had to fight the giants, but listen to what God said." I picked up my Bible and read the words from Deuteronomy 1:8, LBV: "I am giving all of it to you! Go in and possess it, for it is the land the Lord promised." Then I said, "Son, there are giants in your life, but we are going up to possess your land, because God has given us the victory!" With my splitting maul stuck in a chopping block directly in front of me, I read these words from Matthew 3:10: "The axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." I said, "Son, there are some trees in your life that are not bringing forth good fruit."

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*It may take extreme firmness to correct your too-soft, indulgent practices. Or, God may call for a cultivation of softness to the dictatorial, cold parent.*

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to it that they do what they know is right. While teaching reasons, which calls for a decision, and gives understanding, that is only the beginning. When teaching does not bring forth obedience, then you must go on to firmer measures. They *choose* a consequence when they choose to disobey. Training consults with God and gives whatever discipline or consequences (a lower motivation) necessary to bring their uncooperativeness to a true surrender. In that surrender, God can transform their thoughts, feelings, and dispositions while they do right. You need God to direct you in this warfare. God must gain our children's hearts in order to change them.

God may call for a firmness beyond what you have heretofore given. Will you follow Him for your child's sake? It may take extreme firmness to correct your too-soft, indulgent practices. Or, God may call for a cultivation of softness to the dictatorial, cold parent. In either case, all firmness must be given in the Spirit—not in the flesh. Let us find

do. Then, while the rest of the children were taking a nap, I said to my son and my wife, "Put on your coats and boots. We have some work to do outside." I slung a day-pack over my shoulder and led them across the lawn while praying in my heart, "Lord, I don't want to do this. Please help me! Please give me the right words. Give me strength. Thy will be done." I stopped at the burn barrel and pulled a Bible out of the daypack. I said, "Son, today we are going to have an object lesson that you are going to remember the rest of your life." I turned to Jude 21-23 and read these words from the Living Bible:

"Stay always within the boundaries where God's love can reach and bless you. Wait patiently for the eternal life that our Lord Jesus Christ in His mercy is going to give you. Try to help those who argue against you. Be merciful to those who doubt. Save some by snatching them as from the very flames of hell itself. And as for others, help them to find the Lord by being kind to them, but be careful that you yourselves aren't pulled along into their sins. Hate every



Reaching into the daypack, I brought out a small, hand-held, color TV that his mother found in his closet that morning, and set it on the chopping block. I said, "Son, this represents all the garbage in your life that Satan is using to destroy your soul." I raised my splitting maul and with one blow destroyed it. Pointing at the remains, I said in a loud, firm voice, "Throw it in the fire!" He obeyed.

Pulling out a plastic box containing sixteen so-called "Christian" rock CDs, I chopped them up and commanded once again, "Throw them in the fire!" As he consigned them to their fiery fate, he got a little too close to the fire and almost got burned. I said, "Son, if you continue to hold onto your sins, you're going to burn in hell someday, just like those CDs."

We went through the same routine with his expensive headphones and his ear buds while I said, "These could have been used for good, but you chose to use them for evil." The last item to be sacrificed was a small brick of aged cheddar cheese found in his jacket pocket. I said, "This represents all the garbage that you have been putting into your body." After I smashed it with the maul, he threw it into the fire.

Do you see how Jesus, the great Shepherd, will personally direct your steps to correct your present situation? Come to Him that you may have light and life. You need to spend much time with Him—not just time in His Word, but intimate time with Him when He can talk personally with you. He desires to get into your heart, your trials, and your struggles with sin. He wants to empower you to overcome even those besetting sins—those chronic troubles—and show your children the right way. This is truly the "great controversy." The choice truly is yours. Who are you choosing to serve today?

Laying the maul aside and picking up my Bible, I began to share God's plan of salvation with my son. With tears in my eyes, I said, "No one ever showed me how to walk with Jesus. No one ever helped me. I want to help you. Your



mother and I have made a lot of mistakes, but we love you and want to do everything possible to help you to have a saving relationship with Jesus. God is ready to give you the victory right now. The apostle Paul said, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57. Jesus has already conquered Satan, and Jesus gives us the victory as we claim it. Romans 6:11-12 says: 'Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.' If we are dead to a sin, we are

not going to be doing that sin. 'But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' Romans 13:14.

others have used as your key to success. Attempting to do what others have done, without God's presence guiding you, all too often ends in failure. There is no virtue in a method, apart from the guidance of an all-knowing God. Do not go with a method alone. Go with God and the method of following His leading for your family. Take courage. It is never too late to work with Jesus for your erring children. ✠

I made changes, as well, spending time with my son and making friends with him—something new for both of us! We went snow boarding the other day. While I felt like I had broken a couple of ribs getting off the lift, and muscles I hadn't used for a long time were sore for days, I wouldn't trade this new relationship with my son for anything! This is not the end of the story—just the beginning of a better one. My son is making progress, and is learning to submit to God and to his parents.

Firmness in Christ is the essential ingredient that brings our children away from wrong habits. Dear readers, depend upon Christ personally for your directions with your youth. *This is the key to success.* Do not copy the methods

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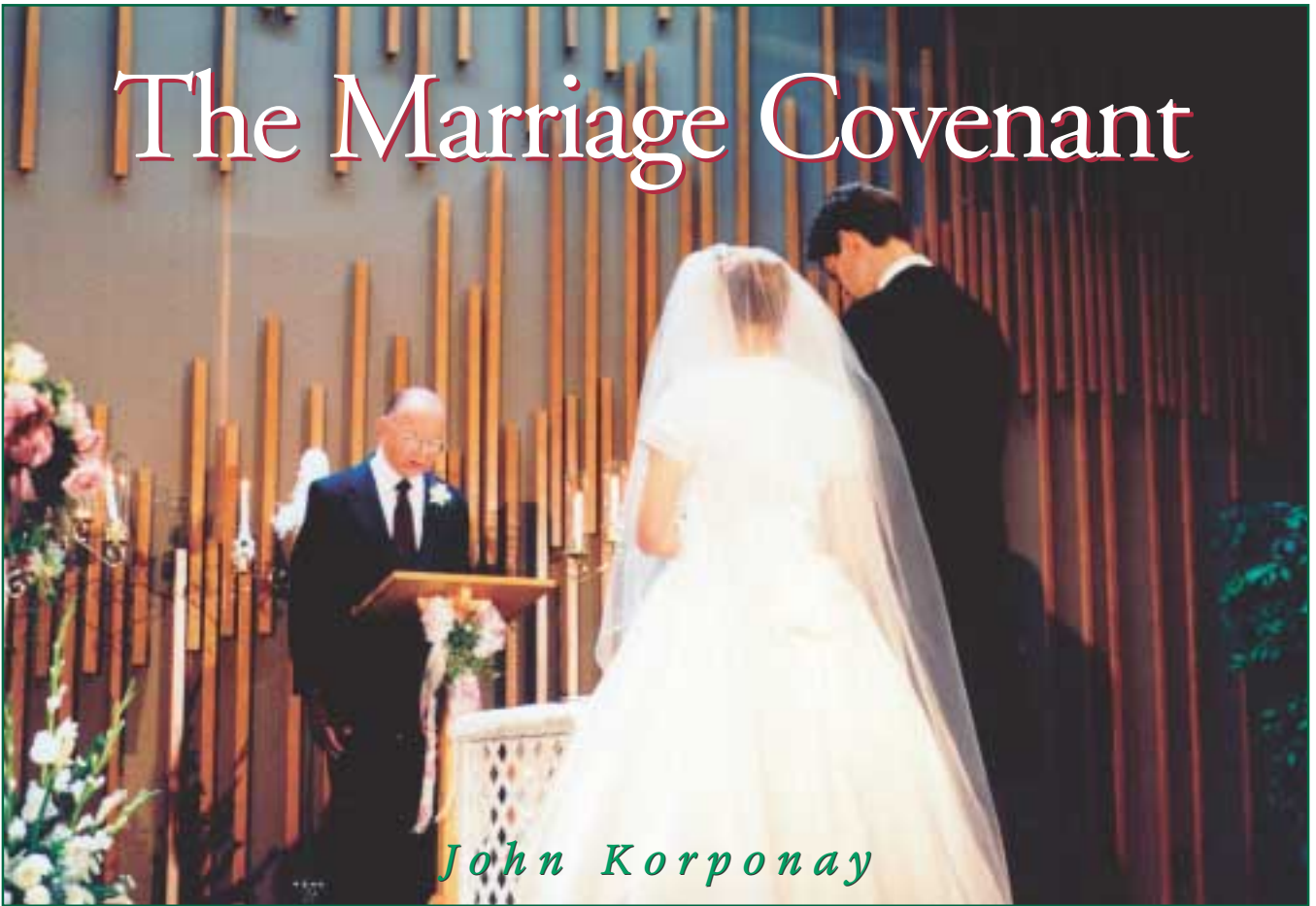
"Son, you have been mostly compliant with us, but you seldom submit yourself to God or to your parents, and now I am calling for true submission." Praise God, he chose submission, prayed with us, admitted his sins, and sought forgiveness.

Right away we had opportunity to test his submission, as I outlined the new program for our home. Besides sched-

References:

<sup>1</sup> *American Heritage College Dictionary*, 839. "A heavy long-handled hammer with a wedge-shaped head used for splitting logs."

# The Marriage Covenant



*John Korponay*

In Luke 17:26–27, Jesus gave a warning about the end of time. “As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”<sup>1</sup>

Jesus was not saying that the flood came because they were eating, drinking, and marrying, but their self-indulgence was evidenced by their lifestyle. People were so busy living for themselves that they missed the signs of the approaching flood.

The real reason for the destruction of the world is given in Genesis 6:5, 13: “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” In

other words, people reached such a low state of morals that there was no thought or intention of doing good or watching out for others—but only for personal happiness.

Sister White writes: “Neither the marriage relation nor the rights of property were respected. Whoever coveted the wives or the possessions of his neighbor, took them by force, and men exulted in their deeds of violence. They delighted in destroying the life of animals; and the use of flesh for food rendered them still more cruel and bloodthirsty, until they came to regard human life with astonishing indifference.”<sup>2</sup>

Because of these attitudes, the God of heaven, the Creator of the heavens and earth, who records everything that transpires in each person’s life, judged that the intents and thoughts were evil continually, and that the earth was filled with violence. Wherever they lived this attitude was all around them. They could not get away from the wickedness.

## “Evil” and “Violent” Antediluvians

These two verses, “every intent of the heart was only evil continually” and “the earth was filled with violence,” are very broad in their meaning.

What exactly do the two main descriptive words “evil” and “violence” mean in these verses? When many people hear the word “evil,” they envision a witch, a Satanic ritual, or a wicked, sinister person. But, if we are people of the Book as we should be, we will let God interpret His Word for us through His Word.

Just two passages of the many listed in the concordance for “evil” will give us an understanding of the meaning that God gives to this word: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” Isaiah 5:20. “Do they not go astray who devise



evil? But mercy and truth belong to those who devise good." Proverbs 14:22. In other words, according to God, anything that is not good in His eyes is evil because it connects us directly to the evil one. Therefore, if we think and wish for things and ways that are not God's things or ways, that are not His will, we will definitely grow further away from Him.

"A violent man entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good." Proverbs 16:29. "If you see the oppression of the poor, and violent perversion of justice and righteousness in a province, do not marvel at the matter; for high official watches over high official, and higher officials are over them." Ecclesiastes 5:8. The word "violence" is used by God not only to describe physical fierceness, but also doing and going to great effort, mentally and emotionally, to seek happiness or gain for ourselves at the cost of others.

As we observe the state of the world today, it is obvious that we are almost at that same degenerate state. All around us we find those who are seeking their own will with no regard for what God says, striving for happiness and selfish gain at the cost of others. The alarming thing is that these attitudes are not just in the world, but they also exist in God's last-day church. But what does this have to do with marriage and Jesus' warning to us to be prepared for the end times?

### **What does "Marriage" Mean Today?**

About twenty years ago the Lord called our family to work with Him in the colporteur literature ministry. It was a very valuable course of learning and witnessing. The work was much like I envision Jesus' work to have been when He was here on earth.

During the more than ten years we were in the work, I saw a change in the family makeup as I visited many homes each year. Toward the latter half of the 1980s, I realized that when I went into a home where there was a husband, wife, and

children, frequently one or both of the spouses had been married before, and they had children from that previous marriage.

There is no need to go into the mental and spiritual damage that divorce has on those involved, because it has already been widely studied and published. But the Lord, by His grace, gave me an opportunity to share with these families what His meaning of marriage is, which is what we need to be concerned with, and how we can live up to the standards it mandates—with His help and grace.

What alarms me though is that this situation exists not only out in the world, but also in God's church—the members of which like to refer to themselves as the "remnant" who are aware of and see the signs of Jesus' very soon return.

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*In the recent past, when someone said, "We are married," it was understood that they meant that they were together before, are together now, and will be together, by the Lord's grace, "till death do us part."*

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When we visit different Seventh-day Adventist Churches, we frequently meet couples who will introduce themselves as husband and wife. As we visit a little more, we sometimes find out that this is not the first marriage for at least one of them, and so an alarming percentage of the young people in our schools are from broken or patched homes.

In the recent past, when someone said, "We are married," it was understood that they meant that they were together before, are together now, and will be together, by the Lord's grace, "till death do us part." Today we see a change in the meaning of the word "marriage." Although people are not necessarily saying it, they seem to mean "This is the one I am with now. In the past I was married to someone else, but it didn't work out. We really don't know the future, but we're happy

now, and that's what matters." Sometimes they justify their situation by adding, "God wants us to be happy, you know."

### **Christ's Marriage Covenant**

You might have noticed that in our society a number of words have changed their meaning—such as gay, bad, sin, fear, perfection, love, and marriage, just to name a few.

The meaning of the word "marriage" is extremely important. God does not want to have just any kind of relationship with us, or for us to have just any kind of relationship with Him. He likens the terms of our relationship with Him to the marriage relationship: "'Return, O backsliding children,' says the LORD; 'for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to

Zion.'" Jeremiah 3:14. "'Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,' says the LORD." Jeremiah, 31:32. "For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." Isaiah 62:5.

The basis for the marriage relationship is the marriage covenant, in which a man and woman covenant with each other to give themselves completely for each other, whatever may come, until they are separated by death. So it is in our marriage with God. We are baptized to show that we have covenanted with Him to give Him our thoughts, words, and actions—our whole life—to Him exclusively.

Paul refers to our covenant with God in Romans 7:4: “Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.” This we promise until we go to sleep in the grave or until Jesus, our Groom, comes to take us home.

Brothers and sisters, as Jesus told Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” John 3:12. Let us consider the issue of the marriage covenant seriously, because unless

way you think you ought to be treated—and you are not happy. Are you going to follow the urgings of the flesh, which is encouraged by practically every form of media around us? Though it saddens me to say it, teachings that weaken the marriage covenant are coming not just from the media, but also from many of our church pulpits.

The man in Romans 7 finds himself in this predicament—knowing what is right, but doing what he wants to do instead. See verses 15, 19–20. This way of living might give a short time of peace from the carnal mind, but that way of thinking cannot produce the fruit

You covenanted with Him to give your all—to endure all, whatever comes—because you trust Him, even if you are threatened with death. The man in Romans 7 is miserable, defeated, and unable to keep his covenant with God. But as he decides to set his mind at all costs and *walks* in the way of the Spirit (see Romans 8:1, 3–5), he finds the freedom, peace, righteousness, and holy living which give him the strength from God to stay true and to fulfill his part of the marriage covenant here on earth with his mate, and with God in heaven. He will be clothed in white raiment so that he will not be found surprised and naked on that day.

### Troubling Changes

Probably most readers have heard that at the last General Conference Session, the small number of church delegates and leaders who were present at the final business session reversed the earlier vote of the majority of the delegates—employing morally reprehensible political moves—and made a change in the church manual that officially weakens the prohibition against divorce.<sup>4</sup>

Jesus recognized adultery as being the only grounds for divorce: “But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.” Matthew 5:32. In the Old Testament, particularly through the prophet Hosea, God showed that divorce is not a part of His solution. “But did He not make them one, having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth. ‘For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one’s garment with violence,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.’” Malachi 2:15–16. Repentance, humility, and forgiveness are the solutions to our difficulties.

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*We have gone to the world, modified their solutions a little to fit our picture of Jesus, and settled for less than what God expects.*

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we recognize what the issues are in God’s eyes, we will be found naked on that day. See Revelation 16:15. All the opinions and excuses will be seen for what they are: filthy rags. We need Jesus’ robe, which He places over us if we repent from our hearts of our selfishness, greed, and pride, and obey Him in full submission. The warnings Jesus gave were not to the world, but to us believers, so that we will be ready to receive Him when He comes to take His bride—the church—home. We are the church.

“I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.” Romans 7:21. “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Verse 23.

According to these verses, all of us have the seeds of sin in us. We know what we should do. We know that our marriages should be for life. In fact, we affirm it with our words. But the flesh lusts after new excitement and adventure. Your mate does not treat you right—or at least the

of righteousness and “holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14.

Brothers and sisters, we need to realize and admit that, instead of taking the solutions that God offers to the problems we face in our marriages and homes, we have gone to the world, modified their solutions a little to fit our picture of Jesus, and settled for less than what God expects. As a result, we end up breaking the marriage covenant—instead of trusting God “till death do us part.” Adventists are just a little, if at all, behind the world with our family and marriage statistics.

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy provide clear counsel for family problems such as physical abuse.<sup>3</sup>

When you obtain a divorce for reasons other than what Jesus recognized, you cheapen and dishonor your marriage covenant with God. The way you make decisions for yourself in this life is also the way you will make decisions about God in your life—for now and for eternity.

Now the new *Church Manual*, chapter 15, “Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage,” has added as grounds for divorce: “abandonment by an unbelieving partner,” citing for support 1 Corinthians 7:10–15. Given the state of the church and the influence that we accept so often from the world, it is open to interpretation what constitutes “abandonment,” or “unbelieving partner.” How these terms are defined is left to each individual. Such definitions are inherently very subjective. By failing to give these terms a scriptural definition, the addition to the church manual has opened the door to great danger. The majority of the delegates refused to approve this change earlier in the week at the general session, reportedly because of these concerns. Those conducting the meeting resorted to worldly, unchristlike political maneuvering so that the change could be approved. Isn’t this the kind of “deceit” that will not be found in the mouths of the 144,000 described in Revelation 14:5?

Some readers of this chapter in the *Church Manual* will notice that the husband’s leadership role as the head of the house is not addressed, and that, in fact, an equality of roles is promoted. This equalization makes it easier for women to modify—or perhaps even abandon—the scriptural role of the wife, and helps to at least weaken, if not break down further, God’s system of household organization and government, contrary to the plainest teachings of Scripture.

The Scriptures tell us that even before sin entered—while Adam and Eve were equals—one was given a role of leadership or authority: “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. . . . For Adam was formed first, then Eve.” 1 Timothy 2:12–13; see also Ephesians 5:22–25. “Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” Genesis 3:16. These scriptures make it clear that, especially after the Fall, God appointed one head for the family—man.



“Eve was told of the sorrow and pain that must henceforth be her portion. And the Lord said, ‘Thy

she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God’s plan. In their efforts to reach positions for which He has not fitted them, many are leaving vacant the place where they might be a blessing. In their desire for a higher sphere, many have sacrificed true womanly dignity and nobility of character, and have left undone the very work that Heaven appointed them.”<sup>5</sup>

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*In their efforts to reach positions for which He has not fitted them, many are leaving vacant the place where they might be a blessing.*

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desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.’ [KJV] In the Creation God had made her the equal of Adam. Had they remained obedient to God—in harmony with His great law of love—they would ever have been in harmony with each other; but sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other. Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband. Had the principles joined in the law of God been cherished by the fallen race, this sentence, though growing out of the results of sin, would have proved a blessing to them; but man’s abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter and made her life a burden.

“Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband’s side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves,

Dear reader, we pray that the Spirit of God has spoken to your heart that which you needed to hear—whether it be encouragement, affirmation, conviction of sin, or a call for repentance. Let the Holy Spirit do a complete work in you and for you. You have nothing to lose and a heaven to gain. Only an attitude of humble, zealous repentance (see Revelation 3:19) will obtain the wedding garment that we need, so that we will be ready to receive Him, our heavenly Groom. “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.” Revelation 22:12. ❀

#### References:

- <sup>1</sup> All scriptural quotations are from the New King James Version.
- <sup>2</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 92.
- <sup>3</sup> For further study, see *The Adventist Home or Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*.
- <sup>4</sup> For more details regarding this action at the 2000 GC Session, see Larry Kirkpatrick’s interview with Samuel Koranteng-Pipim entitled “Some Recent G.C. Actions: Ethical Questions, Principled Response,” in *Adventists Affirm*, vol. 14, no. 1.
- <sup>5</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 58–59.



# What Is Your “Cause”?

*Jean Schlittenhart*

I would like to share with you a recent experience of mine that has reaffirmed my spiritual goals, and I hope it will encourage others as well.

I am a nurse, and I work one day a week. This commitment to my profession and job requires that I keep up with continuing education. I generally attend at least three one-day seminars per year. I truly enjoy nursing as a career; therefore, I really enjoy the seminars I attend. I love learning new things and keeping up with current treatments.

Each time I go to a seminar I see in the people a real enthusiasm for the “cause” that they have taken up. To teach the material, I have realized that one must really know it well and enjoy teaching it to others. I often go home analyzing whether the seminar presented a “cause” that I would like to take up and promote. I always come away with things that I can utilize in my nursing practice, but I feel it is not a “cause” that I can embrace on a full-scale program.

In fact, this issue of a “cause” has troubled me during my whole career as a nurse. When I graduated as a nurse I was not sure which specialty I was interested in pursuing. My first job was in a small community hospital, and I was able to try out in many areas. This kind of an opportunity is good for a new nurse. Then we moved to Spokane, and I started studying for my B.S.N. degree, and working part-time in Newborn Nursery. I enjoyed the work, but I knew there was something more for me. As I worked on my B.S.N., I thought about the Pediatrics Intensive Care Unit, and the Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit, but I finally settled on the Neonatal

Intensive Care Unit where I have worked for 22 years. I enjoy my work, but I leave it at the hospital.

Still this “cause” issue has plagued me. When my sons were born I fell in love with teaching mothers how to nurse their babies. I taught parents about lactation in a formal parenting class for about 10 years. However, one thing was always before me, and that was the driving force in my life. That one thing is that my home, husband, and children come first. The commitment I made with God to raise my children for Him continues to be first in my life. You see, it is really hard to put your all into a “cause” and still have energy and time and commitment for the home and family.

A seminar I attended recently was about car seats. The laws are changing, and the regulations are becoming stiffer. About 95% of the parents in Spokane do not know how to properly secure their infants and children into their car with the child safety devices. The woman doing the teaching was really enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The “cause” was clearly set before us—a call to help promote safe rides for children. This “cause” I totally agree with, and I will do all I can when working at my job to apply the principles I learned to help save children’s lives and promote safety for all. But, as for this being the “cause,” I realized again that it is not for me to carry as an all-consuming torch.

What is my “cause” — my role, my torch? Again, I was reaffirmed in my commitment to my Lord and Saviour and to my home. My “own front yard” is my “cause.” My buds of young manhood and my groom

are where my interests lay and my energies are expended.

Then I am to encourage my dear friends with what the Lord has given me in my walk. I again realized that true fulfillment comes from doing the duty that “lies nearest.” I thank God for instilling this desire in my heart and continuing to bring it to me as I move through life.

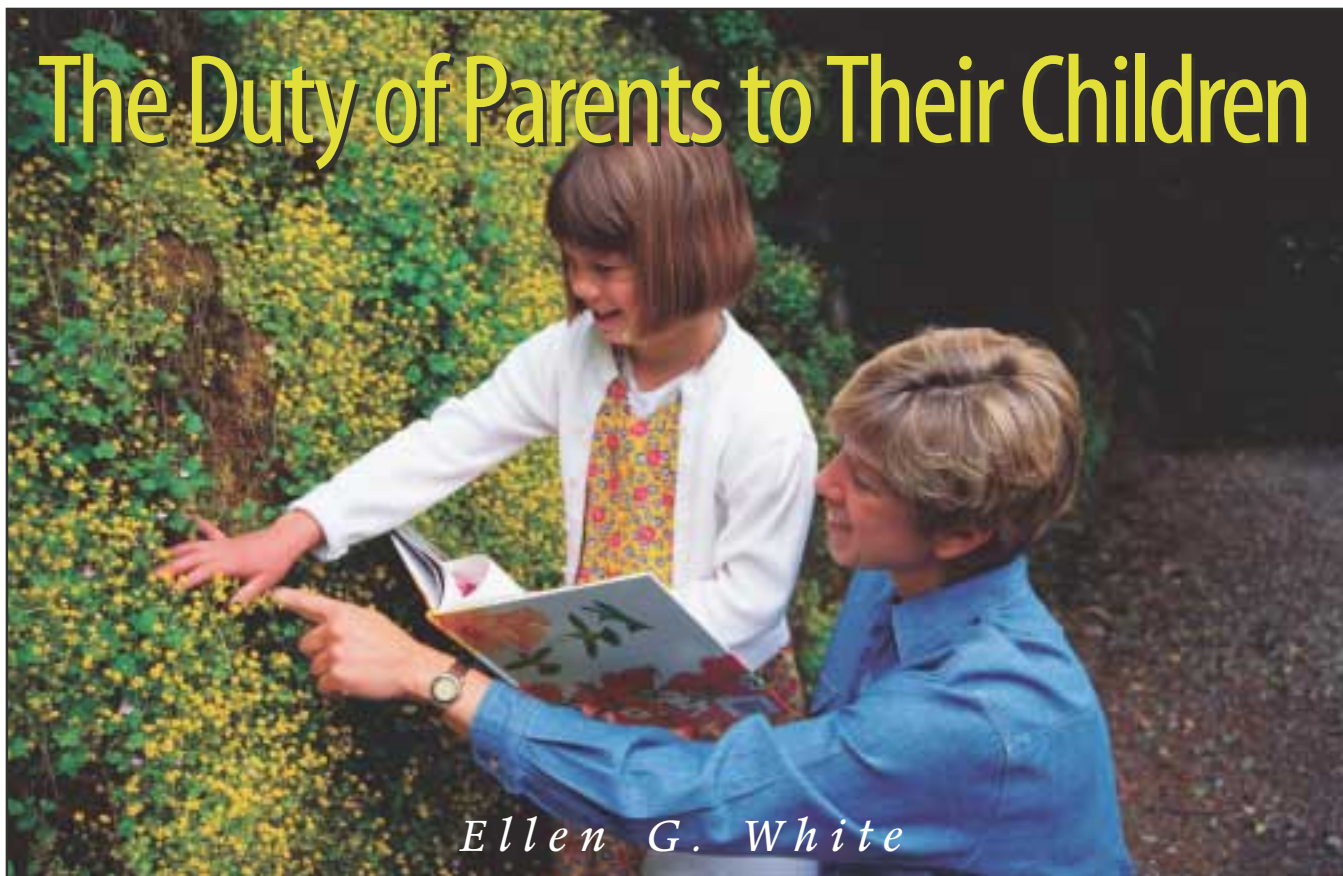
There is joy in talking with my young men after they have come home from college. They really want to share what has happened and how they feel about it. They miss me when I am gone, and we still share things when I get home from work at 9:00 at night. This brings me fulfillment to know that they still want to communicate with me — that they still need me here.

My groom wants my attention and gives me attention. Sometimes I feel like I have three men wanting my attention, but it only brings me joy and fulfillment! My groom and I take time to talk and share and work together. We have done more canning together this winter than in previous years. We canned large quantities of apple juice and apple sauce. Working together like this has given us time to talk. We are adjusting to the fledglings’ flapping wings.

I am thankfully committed to my “own front yard.” I know with assurance that it is my place and my “cause.” The Lord is coming soon! I want to be ready when He comes to take me home, and I want my “flower garden” to be ready to come along too. ✨

Jean Schlittenhart writes from Newport, Washington.

# The Duty of Parents to Their Children



*Ellen G. White*

One of the signs of the “last days” is the disobedience of children to their parents. See 2 Timothy 3:2. And do parents realize their responsibility? Many seem to lose sight of the watch care they should have over their children, and suffer them to indulge in evil passions, and to disobey them. They take but little notice of them until their own feelings are raised, and then punish them in anger.

Many parents will have to render an awful account at last for their neglect of their children. They have fostered and cherished their evil tempers by bending to their wishes and will, when the wishes and will of the children should bend to them. They have brought God’s frown upon them and their children by these things. Parents, have you forgotten that which was written in the Holy Word: “He that spareth his rod hateth his son” (Proverbs 13:24)? Children are left to *come up*—instead of being *trained up*. The poor little children are thought not to know or understand a correction at ten or twelve months old, and they begin to show stubbornness very

young. Parents suffer them to indulge in evil tempers and passions without subduing or correcting them, and by so doing they cherish and nourish these evil passions until they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength.

The house of God is often desecrated, and the Sabbath violated by Sabbath-believers’ children. In some cases they are even allowed to run about the house, play, talk, and manifest their evil tempers in the very meetings where the saints should worship God in the beauty of holiness. And the place that should be holy, and where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness, and humility, is made to be a perfect Babylon, “confusion.” This is enough to bring God’s displeasure, and shut His presence from our assemblies. His wrath is kindled for these things, and He will not, while these things exist, go out with Israel to battle against their enemies. The enemies of our faith will be suffered to triumph on account of God’s displeasure.

Parents stand in the place of God to their children, and they will have to render an account, whether they have been faithful to the little few committed to their care. Parents, some of you are rearing children to be cut down by the destroying angel, unless you speedily change your course, and be faithful to them. God cannot cover iniquity, even in children. He cannot love unruly children who manifest passion, and He cannot save them in the time of trouble. Will you suffer your children to be lost through your neglect? Unfaithful parents, their blood will be upon you, and is not your salvation doubtful with the blood of your children upon you?—children who might have been saved had you filled your place, and done your duty as faithful parents should.

God says: “I know him [Abraham], that he will command his household after him” (Genesis 18:19), and God gave him the honor of being the father of the faithful. Parents, it is your duty to have your children in perfect subjection, having all their passions and evil tempers subdued. And if children



are taken to meeting[s], they should be made to know and understand where they are, that they are not at home, but where God meets with His people. And they should be kept quiet and free from all play, and God will turn His face toward you, to meet you and bless you.

If order is observed in the assemblies of the saints, the truth will have better effect upon all who hear it. A solemnity which is so much needed will be encouraged, and there will be power in the truth

Proverbs 19:18), and His Word is to be heeded in these things.

It certainly must bring displeasure upon parents when they leave Him to do what He has left and commanded them to do. God corrects us when we disobey, and go astray from Him; and parents are bound by the Word of God to correct their children when they disobey them, and show evil temper. Check the very first manifestation of passion. Break the will (but do it with feelings of tenderness, and

enced the cleansing power of Jesus, and the evil angels have access to these children; and some parents are careless and suffer them to work with but little restraint. Parents have a great work to do in this matter, by correcting and subduing their children, and then bringing them to God and claiming His blessing upon them. By the faithful and untiring efforts of the parents, and the blessing and grace entreated of God upon the children, the power of the evil angels will be broken, a sanctifying influence is shed upon the children, and the powers of darkness must give back.

When the destroying angel was to pass through Egypt, to destroy the first-born of man and beast, the command to Israel was to gather their children and families into their houses with them, and then mark their doorposts with blood, that the destroying angel might pass by their dwellings, and if they failed to go through this process, there was no difference made between them and the Egyptians.

The destroying angel is soon to go forth again, not to destroy the first-born alone, but "to slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women" (Ezekiel 9:6) who have not the mark. Parents, if you wish to save your children, separate them from the world, keep them from the company of wicked children; for if you suffer them to go with wicked children, you cannot prevent them from partaking of their wickedness and being corrupted. It is your solemn duty to watch over your children, to choose the society at all times for them. Teach your children to obey you, then can they more easily obey the commands of God, and yield to His requirements. Don't let us neglect to pray with and for our children. He who said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me" (Matthew 19:14), will listen to our prayers for them, and the seal, or mark, of believing parents will cover their children, if they are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. ❀

*Review and Herald*, March 28, 1893.

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*By the faithful and untiring efforts of the parents, and the blessing and grace entreated of God upon the children, the power of the evil angels will be broken.*

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to stir up the depths of the soul, and a deathlike stupor will not hang upon those who hear. Believers and unbelievers will be affected. It has seemed evident that in some places the ark of God has removed from the church; for the holy commandments have been violated, and the strength of Israel has been weakened.

Parents, correct your children. Begin while they are young, when impressions can be more easily made, and their evil tempers subdued before they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength.

You should correct your children in love. Do not let them have their own way until you get angry, and then punish them. Such correction only helps on the evil, instead of remedying it. After you have done your duty faithfully to your children, then carry them to God, and ask Him to help you. Tell Him that you have done your part, and then in faith ask God to do His part, that which you cannot do. Ask Him to temper their dispositions, to make them mild and gentle by His Holy Spirit. He will hear you pray. He will love to answer your prayers. Through His Word He has enjoined it upon you to correct your children, to "spare not for their crying" (see

with discretion), and your children will be far happier for it, and you will be happier. Your effort will be remembered of God, and He who is so particular as to observe the falling of the sparrow — He who noticed and commended Abraham's faithfulness, will not pass by your efforts. He who never slumbers nor sleeps will be ready to aid you with His Spirit and grace, and will reward your feeble efforts.

Parents, above everything, take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not allow them to violate God's holy day by allowing them to play in the house or out-of-doors. You may just as well break the Sabbath yourselves as to let your children do it, and when you suffer your children to wander about, and suffer them to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as Sabbath-breakers. Your children, who are under your control, should be made to mind you. Your word should be their law. Will not parents wake up to their duty before it is too late, and take hold of the work in earnest, redeem the time, and make unsparing efforts to save the children?

Children are the lawful prey of the enemy, because they are not subjects of grace, have not experi-





## How to mark your Bible and be ready to share your faith

“Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”  
1 Peter 3:15. We need to be able to give an answer for our faith. Marking your Bible can give you the edge you need. It takes work, but the rewards are worth all the effort.

We pray that you will be blessed by these studies. As you mark them, may you be encouraged to spend more time in God’s Word and to search out the hidden things of God. Always be sure to look for opportunities to share them with others.

The Editors

### Bible Marking Directions

- On a blank page in the front or back of your Bible, write the study title, the code, and the first reference. This month’s entry would appear as follows: *Parents and Children (PC)*  
*Psalms 127:3.*

- Turn to the first verse and write the code, the comment (if you wish to use the comments), and the next reference beside it. If the comment is long, you can write it at the top or bottom of the page, with an asterisk or the code of the study to refer you to it.

- Turn to the next text and repeat the process until you come to the end. Beside the last text, write the study code and “End.”

- Go through the study to check for broken links.

- Share the study with someone!

In this issue of *Our Firm Foundation*, several of the articles are on or related to parenting. We pray that parents will find this study helpful, as a reminder of what they are to be and do in regard to their children.

### Study Title: Parents and Children — Code: PC

#### **Psalms 127:3.**

Parents are responsible for a precious heritage.

#### **Matthew 19:14.**

Jesus wants to draw not only adults, but also little children to Himself.

#### **1 Corinthians 13:11.**

We should not expect little children to think like adults.

#### **Ephesians 6:1.**

Children are to obey their parents when such obedience does not conflict with their duty to God.

#### **1 Timothy 3:4.**

Children are to be subject to their parents.

#### **Luke 2:51.**

Even Jesus was subject to His parents.

#### **Genesis 18:19.**

Fathers should be the spiritual leaders in their homes, like Abraham was.

#### **Deuteronomy 11:18-19.**

We are to teach our children the Word of God.

#### **2 Timothy 3:15.**

Even children are able to understand the Scriptures.

#### **Proverbs 22:6.**

#### **Proverbs 29:15.**

No harm is done when correction is given kindly and firmly; rather, harm results when punishment is withheld.

#### **Proverbs 22:15.**

We should not tolerate idle foolishness in children.

#### **Colossians 3:21.**

Do not act in a way that will discourage your children.

#### **Ephesians 6:4.**

Instead, nurture and admonish them.

#### **Titus 2:4.**

Show your love in words and actions.

#### **Hebrews 2:13.**

What a privilege to have our children in the kingdom of heaven with us! ✠

For more information on Bible marking, or for a greater selection of studies, go to <http://www.biblemarking.com> or refer to “Mark Your Bible!” in the August 2001 issue of *Our Firm Foundation*.

# Marriage, the Family, and the Body of Christ



*Cynthia Gaye Clark*

Scripture often compares familiar things in our lives with spiritual things so that we can better understand. In Ephesians 5:21–33 the apostle Paul makes a comparison between the love that should exist between a husband and wife and the love that members of the body of Christ should have for one another:

“Submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without

blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”<sup>1</sup>

How is the church to be subject to Christ?—John 15:10–11 says, “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” We will find joy as we subject ourselves in obedience to Christ.

## **A Relationship of Love, Submission, and Respect**

In these verses the relationship that the church has to Christ is compared with the intimacy of marriage. The love that Christ has for the church is compared with the husband’s love for his wife. The attitude that the church should show to Christ as its Head is to be demonstrated in the marriage relationship by the wife’s submission and respect to her husband as the head of the family.

Must the wife give up her own God-given intelligence and individuality and blindly follow her husband?—No: “Neither the husband nor the wife should attempt to exercise over the other an arbitrary control. Do not try to compel each other to yield to your wishes. You cannot do this and retain each other’s love. Be kind, patient, and forbearing, considerate, and courteous. By the grace of God you can succeed in making each other happy, as in your marriage vow you promised to do.”<sup>2</sup>



“Few have correct views of marriage. They make light of this Heaven-appointed institution, and after it has been entered into thoughtlessly, without a true sense of its sacredness, the obligations it imposes are often shamefully disregarded. Ignoring the personal rights of women, the husband becomes unkind and authoritative. The individuality of the wife is submerged in that of the husband. She becomes the slave of his caprice and passions, as though she had naught to do but to obey his whims. He quotes texts of scripture to show that he is the head, and that he must be obeyed in all things, claiming that his wife must have no will separate from his. He acts the tyrant. But the same Bible that prescribes the duty of the wife prescribes also the duty of the husband. He is to be kind and affectionate, to love his wife as a part of himself, and to cherish her as Christ does His church.”<sup>3</sup>

This relationship is only possible when both husband and wife are fully submitted to the Lord first and foremost. This same principle is true in the church, for no one in the church is to lord it over another. Love begets love. Christ commands with love—not force or coercion.

It is much easier for the wife to respect and submit to the husband who loves her and is always looking out for her best good. Neither is it difficult for church members who are consecrated to God to submit to servant leaders who are clearly working for the interests of the church family. Then Christ’s army can become a working unit with Christ as the Head and a servant leader helping to bring order and discipline to the body of willing soldiers.

According to Ephesians 5, we see that when a husband loves and cares for his wife, he is actually caring for his own body. We can understand this when we see that strengthening the marriage relationship serves the best interests of both husband and wife. By acts of kindness, thoughtfulness, and love, the husband is actually caring for himself as well as for his wife.

The same is true in the church. When we love one another unselfishly in the church we are strengthening the church, and thus we all benefit. We are to love one another as we love our own body, for we are all joined to Christ and are part of the same body. Christ as the Head has demonstrated this self-sacrificing love, and we are to study His example and become changed into His likeness.

### Adultery and Divorce

Those who are married know the challenges of blending two lives together. Two people with different likes and dislikes, different food

be “divorced” from one another—that of spiritual adultery. When our brother or sister has forsaken the faith and turned to a love of the world, or, if he or she has turned from the truth to fables, then we are told in Matthew 18:15–17 the steps we are to take. Discipline is just as necessary in the church family as in our individual families.

We find very specific guidelines in Matthew 18 for dealing with open sin among us: “Christ’s instruction as to the treatment of the erring repeats in more specific form the teaching given to Israel through Moses: ‘Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in

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*It is much easier for the wife to respect and submit to the husband who loves her and is always looking out for her best good.*

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tastes, different interests, different time schedules, different ways of handling money, and different ideas about how the workload should be divided, have a multitude of areas for potential conflict. The binding together of two different persons from two different backgrounds commonly causes strains.

Here, too, we see a spiritual parallel. When immaturity and selfishness reign, there can be many battles. Sometimes these relationships become more and more strained until love is choked out and the marriage becomes loveless. Angry words are spoken, and sometimes there is a painful split. In Matthew 19:9 we are given Jesus’ own counsel concerning the only situation in which a divorce is justified: “I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

If we, as part of the church, are bound together as husband and wife are bound, then we have only one instance when it is justified for us to

any wise rebuke thy neighbour, that thou bear not sin for him.’ Leviticus 19:17, margin, KJV. That is, if one neglects the duty Christ has enjoined, of trying to restore those who are in error and sin, he becomes a partaker in the sin. For evils that we might have checked, we are just as responsible for as if we were guilty of the acts ourselves.

“But it is to the wrongdoer himself that we are to present the wrong. We are not to make it a matter of comment and criticism among ourselves; nor even after it is told to the church, are we at liberty to repeat it to others. A knowledge of the faults of Christians will be only a cause of stumbling to the unbelieving world; and by dwelling upon these things, we ourselves can receive only harm; for it is by beholding that we become changed. While we seek to correct the errors of a brother, the Spirit of Christ will lead us to shield him, as far as possible, from the criticism of even his own brethren, and how much more from the censure of the unbelieving world. We ourselves are erring, and need Christ’s pity and



forgiveness, and just as we wish Him to deal with us, He bids us deal with one another.”<sup>4</sup>

We are to go and labor with our brother or sister, first in private, then accompanied by another brother or sister, and if the sinner refuses to heed the counsel of God’s servants, we are admonished to take the matter to the entire local body of Christ. If he will not hear, we must disfellowship the person, that his influence may not leaven the church. But we need to ask ourselves, How then are we to treat that former brother or sister?—We are to be kind

divorce: “If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.”

Few are they who can receive God’s instruction regarding divorce, for it involves the sacrifice of human selfishness to learn to get along and to spend a lifetime with one spouse. It also demands total self-denial to get along with our brethren so that we can spend an eternity in heavenly bliss together.

In heaven we will not avoid one another’s company, nor will we live

lifetime. The most damage is done when one of the parents tries to destroy the love of the child for the other parent. Here we can see parallels, for the church, too, has children—those young in the faith who are the fruits of her joint efforts with Christ. Souls are always lost or discouraged when we separate from our former brethren, and there is discord and strife. And, as in a fractured marriage relationship, when the parties in a church dispute try to destroy the reputation of their opposition, the result is a greater loss of souls and more damage to Christ’s body. We are to know a depth of love and intimacy with Christ that is revealed in such a beautiful character that it will attract the unbeliever and draw hurting humanity like bees to nectar.

We are told that discord always leads to the loss of souls. “Jesus knew that they [the leaders in Israel] would spare no effort to create a division between His own disciples and those of John. He knew that the storm was gathering which would sweep away one of the greatest prophets ever given to the world. Wishing to avoid all occasion for misunderstanding or dissension, He quietly ceased His labors, and withdrew to Galilee. We also, while loyal to truth, should try to avoid all that may lead to discord and misapprehension. For whenever these arise, they result in the loss of souls. Whenever circumstances occur that threaten to cause division, we should follow the example of Jesus and of John the Baptist.”<sup>5</sup> Let us seek to uphold the truth, and to resolve our differences without creating unnecessary conflict and discord. In this way we are protecting “the little ones” in our church.

### **Enlarging the Family**

We are all orphaned children, and when we are adopted into Christ’s family we are called to seek other orphans to enjoy the same benefits that we cherish. We are God’s messengers here to tell the orphaned children, whose lives have been broken by sin, that there is a home with Jesus and that we can

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and courteous and loving toward him—as we would treat anyone whom we were hoping to win to the truth.

We must also ask ourselves some other questions: Is it spiritual adultery to have a difference of opinion on some point of doctrine that is not a central pillar of the truth? Is it spiritual adultery to have a difference of opinion as to how the church should be operated in some particular? Is it spiritual adultery to have a difference of opinion regarding the distribution of funds—or the evangelistic outreach of the church? Is it spiritual adultery to make a mistake in our dealings with one another? Could it be that at times we are too quick to accuse others of spiritual adultery?

If our brothers or sisters have not turned from the truth, then they are not guilty of spiritual adultery, and we are not to turn away from them. Instead, we are to learn how to settle our differences and work together. This is a great struggle! In Matthew 19:10–11, KJV, we read what the disciples said to Christ when He gave the instruction concerning

in separate cities or go to different churches; every Sabbath we will all come to worship God together. We will come from the four corners of the earth and from the outskirts of the city and even from the distant realms of the universe. We will be one in our devotion to our Father and to His Son, and nothing will destroy our happiness.

The devil has been able to successfully thwart the work in many places by working through the feelings and weaknesses of the brethren, and causing strife and division. We must remember who our enemy really is. We must remember where the battle really is. We must learn *here* how to work out our differences and how to work for the glory of God—rather than for our own interests. We are to learn this difficult lesson in our own families and then in our church family.

### **Results of Strife and Divorce**

We need to consider the results of divorce on the children. Research reveals that the trauma and effects of divorce on the children last a

begin to know its pleasures as we join with the church family today. The care and nurture of the babes in the faith requires self-sacrifice—devoting time and energy to finding the lost, helping them to grow spiritually, and bringing them into the church family. Just as the adoption agency today seeks evidence of a stable, caring family to entrust with the care of society’s orphans, so God can only trust a stable, caring church body with the nurture of His babies.

Why are we not bringing more converts into the Christian family? Consider this: “If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one. But, though professing to be converted, we carry around with us a bundle of self that we regard as altogether too precious to be given up. It is our privilege to lay this burden at the feet of Christ and in its place take the character and similitude of Christ. The Saviour is waiting for us to do this.”<sup>6</sup>

When we find that our weaknesses and feelings have contributed to discord and strife in the church, or when we have experienced division, we need to know that God is a God of miracles. He is able to heal wounds and bring about unity when we are willing to allow Him to work His miracles in our hearts. He is waiting for us to lay at His feet

the burden of the bundle of self that we carry around. What peace, comfort, and unity we could experience if we would take it all to Him and leave it there!

It is only when we have learned to esteem others more highly than ourselves that God will be able to give us the blessing of the outpouring of His Spirit—and then multitudes of the lost who are anxious to know true love will link up with us.

“Harmony and union existing among men of varied dispositions is the strongest witness that can be borne that God has sent His Son into the world to save sinners. It is our privilege to bear this witness.

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*It is only when we have learned to esteem others more highly than ourselves that God will be able to give us the blessing of the outpouring of His Spirit.*

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But, in order to do this, we must place ourselves under Christ’s command. Our characters must be molded in harmony with His character, our wills must be surrendered to His will. Then we shall work together without a thought of collision. . . .

“The heart of the Saviour is set upon His followers’ fulfilling God’s purpose in all its height and depth. They are to be one in Him, even though they are scattered the world

over. But God cannot make them one in Christ unless they are willing to give up their own way for His way.

“When Christ’s prayer is fully believed, when its instruction is brought into the daily life of God’s people, unity of action will be seen in our ranks. Brother will be bound to brother by the golden bonds of the love of Christ. The Spirit of God alone can bring about this oneness. He who sanctified Himself can sanctify His disciples. United with Him, they will be united with one another in the most holy faith. When we strive for this unity as God desires us to strive for it, it will come to us.”<sup>7</sup>

When this experience becomes a reality, a God-inspired love of the truth and a God-given love for one another will create a force for good that cannot be stopped. ✨

References:

- <sup>1</sup> All verses from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Ministry of Healing*, 361.
- <sup>3</sup> *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, 312.
- <sup>4</sup> *The Desire of Ages*, 441.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.
- <sup>6</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 189-190.
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# A Father's Desire

Jeff Bell

**C**an we, as fathers, be the fathers our heavenly Father wants us to be? By God's grace, through the power of Jesus Christ, we can.

Even if you are not a father, you will find principles in this article that you can apply to yourself. Wives should know what to expect and how to mentor their husbands. Sons will learn how to behave when they get married. Daughters will find a guideline of what to look for in a life companion. Even those who are single and do not expect to be married can learn much from the principles in this article. Being a father carries many responsibilities: I need to support my family; I need to be a proper example for my children; I need to be a witness to others in the community. With all these things to do, I decided to find out what my priorities should be. Let us look at some of these first.

## Our Family to Be an Example

The first responsibility I will discuss is the responsibility we have for our family to be an example to others:

"The world is not so much in need of great minds as of good men who will be a blessing in their homes."<sup>1</sup>

"One well-ordered, well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached. Such a family

gives evidence that the parents have been successful in following God's directions, and that the children will serve Him in the church. Their influence grows; for as they impart, they receive to impart again. The father and mother find helpers in their children, who give to others the instruction received in the home."<sup>2</sup>

"The best test of the Christianity of a home is the type of character begotten by its influence. Actions speak louder than the most positive profession of godliness."<sup>3</sup>

## Responsibility to His Household

A father also has a responsibility to his family:

"A father must not be as a child, moved merely by impulse. He is bound to his family by sacred, holy ties. Every member of the family centers in the father. His name, 'house-band,' is the true definition of husband. He is the lawmaker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues—energy, integrity, honesty, and practical usefulness. The father is in one sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. . . . I saw that but few fathers realize their responsibility. They have not learned to control themselves, and until this lesson is learned they will make poor work in governing their children. Perfect self-

control will act as a charm upon the family. When this is attained, a great victory is gained. Then they can educate their children to self-control."<sup>4</sup>

You cannot educate your children to self-control, if you do not have it yourself.

"Parents, your own home is the first field in which you are called to labor. . . .

"You have before your own door a little plot of ground to care for, and God will hold you responsible for this work which He has left in your hands."<sup>5</sup>

Do not shirk your responsibilities. Plead for God to help you with your responsibilities.

What is the key to carrying out your God-given responsibilities in the home?

"To the man who is a husband and a father, I would say, Be sure that a pure, holy atmosphere surrounds your soul. . . . You are to learn daily of Christ. Never, never are you to show a tyrannical spirit in the home. The man who does this is working in partnership with satanic agencies. Bring your will into submission with the will of God. Do all in your power to make the life of your wife pleasant and happy. Take the Word of God as the man of your counsel. In the home live out the teachings of the Word. Then you will live them out in the church and will take them with you to your place of business. The



principles of Heaven will ennoble all your transactions. Angels of God will cooperate with you, helping you to reveal Christ to the world.”<sup>6</sup>

Whatever we do, we should be cooperating with the holy angels. We must be sure always to cooperate with them.

“You have not felt that it was wrong, displeasing to God, to allow your mind to be fully engrossed with the world, and then bring your worldly perplexities into your family, thus letting the adversary into your home. It is very easy for you thus to open the door, but you will find it not so easy to close; it will be very difficult to turn out the enemy when once you have brought him in. Leave your business cares and perplexities and annoyances when you leave your business. Come to your family with a cheerful countenance, with sympathy, tenderness, and love.”<sup>7</sup>

### Responsibility to His Wife

We must not forget our dear wives in all our responsibilities. “The husband and father is the head of the household. The wife looks to him for love and sympathy and for aid in the training of the children; and this is right.”<sup>8</sup>

“Let the husband aid his wife by his sympathy and unflinching affection. If he wishes to keep her fresh and glad, so that she will be as sunshine in the home, let him help her bear her burdens. His kindness and loving courtesy will be to her a precious encouragement, and the happiness he imparts will bring joy and peace to his own heart.”<sup>9</sup>

We all want our wives to be the sunshine of the home. We may think we have a “lemon,” but was she a lemon when we married her? Most of us probably thought of our wife as a “peach” when we married her. God is able to make her a peach again! He can also make you the apple of her eye.

“The husband and father who is morose, selfish, and overbearing, is not only unhappy himself, but he casts gloom upon all the inmates of his home.”<sup>10</sup> Though in Ellen White’s time the word *inmate* did not have the same connotation as today,

the idea of a prison fits well in this passage!

### Responsibility to His Children

“The average father wastes many golden opportunities to attract and bind his children to him. Upon returning home from his business, he should find it a pleasant change to spend some time with his children.

“Fathers should unbend from their false dignity, deny themselves some slight self-gratification in time and leisure, in order to mingle with the children, sympathizing with them in their little troubles, binding them to their hearts by the strong bonds of love, and establishing such an influence over their expanding minds that their counsel will be regarded as sacred.”<sup>11</sup>

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*Let the husband aid his wife by his sympathy and unflinching affection. If he wishes to keep her fresh and glad, so that she will be as sunshine in the home, let him help her bear her burdens.*

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I have girls, and sometimes it is hard for me to get interested in what they like. The other day we were studying about Eve wandering off from Adam to a place of strong temptation. I asked my girls, “Are there places where you are more tempted than in others?”

Janet answered, “I can think of one place.”

I said, “Where? In your bedroom? You are always playing around there when you are supposed to be doing other things.”

“No,” she said, “it’s in the closet—because I like playing with Mommy’s shoes.”

I could not understand that. It was ridiculous to me—so nonsensical! I do not have any temptation over shoes or any clothes. But still, we are to be interested in their little troubles.

“The father’s duty to his children cannot be transferred to the mother. If she performs her own duty, she has burden enough to bear. Only by

working in unison can the father and mother accomplish the work which God has committed to their hands.”<sup>12</sup> It is a team effort. Both have separate roles to play, but they must be one in their goals.

The following quotation tells what is the special work of the father: “The father, as the head of his own household, should understand how to train his children for usefulness and duty. This is his special work, above every other. During the first few years of a child’s life the molding of the disposition is committed principally to the mother; but she should ever feel that in her work she has the cooperation of the father. If he is engaged in business which almost wholly closes the door of usefulness to his family, he should

seek other employment which will not prevent him from devoting some time to his children. If he neglects them, he is unfaithful to the trust committed to him of God.”<sup>13</sup> This may mean changing jobs—and maybe even careers. But I say, “So be it.”

“The father may exert an influence over his children which shall be stronger than the allurements of the world. He should study the disposition and character of the members of his little circle, that he may understand their needs and their dangers and thus be prepared to repress the wrong and encourage the right.”<sup>14</sup>

Do we know our children? I am always “repressing the wrong,” but do I “encourage the right”? Sometimes I feel that I have enough to do with just repressing the wrong. It seems like a waste of energy to give encouragement when they are already doing the right thing. But I am learning that if I encourage the

right, I will have less repressing of the wrong to do.

“Many a husband and father might learn a helpful lesson from the carefulness of the faithful shepherd. Jacob, when urged to undertake a rapid and difficult journey, made answer:

“The children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. . . . I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure.” Genesis 33:13–14.

“In life’s toilsome way let the husband and father ‘lead on softly,’ as the companion of his journey is able to endure.”<sup>15</sup> Life is hard

good will predominate and the evil lose its influence. The evil will increase faster than the good. It is possible that after many years the evil they have learned may be eradicated; but who will venture this?”<sup>17</sup> Who wants to take that chance?

“When our own homes are what they should be, our children will not be allowed to grow up in idleness and indifference to the claims of God in behalf of the needy all about them. As the Lord’s heritage, they will be qualified to take up the work where they are. A light will shine from such homes which will reveal itself in behalf of the ignorant, leading them to the Source of all knowledge. An influence will be

We are just as responsible for evils that we might have checked in others by exercise of parental or pastoral authority as if the acts had been our own.”<sup>20</sup> Sometimes we allow our children to wear us down. We become tired of dealing with the same situation time after time, and thus let the behavior go unchecked. In this case firmer measures should be taken.

Here is another reason parents may have for a lack of correction: “They think they know a better way of training their children than that which God has given in His Word. They foster wrong tendencies in them, urging as an excuse, ‘They are too young to be punished. Wait till they become older, and can be reasoned with.’ Thus wrong habits are left to strengthen until they become second nature. The children grow up without restraint, with traits of character that are a lifelong curse to them and are liable to be reproduced in others.”<sup>21</sup>

### **The Family As a Missionary Entity**

“It is necessary to the best education that we give the students time to do missionary work, time to become acquainted with the families among whom they live. They should not be loaded down with all the studies they can carry, but should be given time to use the knowledge they have acquired. They should be encouraged to do faithful missionary work, by becoming interested in those in the darkness of error, taking to them the truth where they are. With all humility of heart, seeking knowledge from Christ, praying, and watching unto prayer, they may make known to others the truth that is placed before them day by day.”<sup>22</sup>

“Not all can go as missionaries to foreign lands, but all can be home missionaries in their families and neighborhoods. There are many ways in which church members may give the message to those around them. One of the most successful is by living helpful, unselfish Christian lives. Those who are fighting the battle of life at great odds may be refreshed and strengthened by little attentions which cost nothing. Kindly words simply

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*Those who . . . through indolence or lack of interest make no earnest effort to purify the family or the church of God, are held accountable for the evil that may result from their neglect of duty.*

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enough for adults, but it is even harder for children. If we are always on the go, we get tired. But the children not only get tired, but confused.

We can learn a lot from the chapter in *Patriarchs and Prophets* on Eli: “[Eli] had not corrected their [his sons’] want of reverence for his authority, had not checked their disrespect for the solemn services of the sanctuary; and when they reached manhood, they were full of the deadly fruits of skepticism and rebellion.”<sup>16</sup> The most important thing to teach your children is reverence for God! If you do not teach them that, they will have no respect for holy things. This is the scourge of our youth today. They put no difference between the holy and the profane, because they have not been taught that there is a difference.

What about the idea that young people need to know wrong in order to appreciate right? “The young should not be suffered to learn good and evil indiscriminately, with the idea that at some future time the

exerted that will be a power for God and for His truth.”<sup>18</sup> With both the father and mother working, idleness has become a major problem with the youth of today’s society.

### **Correcting the Bad Habits of Children**

While encouraging the good in our children, we cannot neglect reproofing the wrong:

“Some parents have suffered their children to form wrong habits, the marks of which may be seen all through life. Upon the parents lies this sin. These children may profess to be Christians; yet without a special work of grace upon the heart and a thorough reform in life, their past habits will be seen in all their experience, and they will exhibit just the character which their parents allowed them to form.”<sup>19</sup>

“Those who have too little courage to reprove wrong, or who through indolence or lack of interest make no earnest effort to purify the family or the church of God, are held accountable for the evil that may result from their neglect of duty.

spoken, little attentions simply bestowed, will sweep away the clouds of temptation and doubt that gather over the soul. The true heart expression of Christlike sympathy, given in simplicity, has power to open the door of hearts that need the simple, delicate touch of the spirit of Christ.”<sup>23</sup>

“In the closing scenes of this earth’s history many of these children and youth will astonish people by their witness to the truth, which will be borne in simplicity, yet with spirit and power. They have been taught the fear of the Lord, and their hearts have been softened by a careful and prayerful study of the Bible. In the near future many children will be endued with the Spirit of God and will do a work in proclaiming the truth to the world that at that time cannot well be done by the older members of the church.”<sup>24</sup>

### The Help That Is Available and Necessary

We cannot carry out our duties and responsibilities without help. “Wrong habits are not overcome by a single effort. Only through long and severe struggles is self mastered. This self-training must be taken up by the individual members of the church, and the rubbish which has accumulated around the door of the heart must be removed, ere they can serve God with singleness of purpose, adorning their profession by a well-ordered life and a godly conversation. Then, and not until then, can they teach sinners the truth and win souls to Christ.”<sup>25</sup>

“In the daily life you will meet with sudden surprises, disappointments, and temptations. What saith the Word? ‘Resist the devil,’ by firm reliance upon God, ‘and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.’ James 4:7-8. ‘Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.’ Isaiah 27:5. Look unto Jesus at all times and in all places, offering a silent prayer from a sincere heart that you may know how to do His will. Then when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard for you

against the enemy. When you are almost ready to yield, to lose patience and self-control, to be hard and denunciatory, to find fault and accuse – this is the time for you to send to Heaven the prayer, ‘Help me, O God, to resist temptation, to put all bitterness and wrath and

“Parents, your own home is the first field in which you are called to labor. The precious plants in the home garden demand your first care. To you it is appointed to watch for souls as they that must give account. Carefully consider your work, its nature, its bearing, and its results.”<sup>28</sup>

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*Look unto Jesus at all times and in all places, offering a silent prayer from a sincere heart that you may know how to do His will.*

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evilspeaking out of my heart. Give me Thy meekness, Thy lowliness, Thy long-suffering, and Thy love. Leave me not to dishonor my Redeemer, to misrepresent the words and motives of my wife, my children, and my brethren and sisters in the faith. Help me that I may be kind, pitiful, tenderhearted, forgiving. Help me to be a real house-band in my home and to represent the character of Christ to others.”<sup>26</sup>

“The physical, mental, and moral powers are the endowments of God, and are to be appreciated and cultivated. We are here on probation, in training for the higher life. All Heaven is waiting to cooperate with those who will be subordinate to the ways and will of God. God gives grace, and He expects all to use it. He supplies the power if the human mind feels any need or any disposition to receive. He never asks us to do anything without supplying the grace and power to do that very thing. All His biddings are enablings.”<sup>27</sup>

### Priorities

Now I will share with you some priorities that I discovered from my research. The first thing I do every morning is pray: “Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.” Psalm 119:133. It is so important that we let the God of all knowledge set our priorities!

But the second step should always be to read what God has to tell us. After all, it does say, “in thy word.” What is the counsel given?

### Your Duty Is Love

Remember what 1 Corinthians 13 tells us about love? Love bears all things (responsibilities), believes all things (God’s promises), hopes all things (that our efforts for the salvation of ourselves and others – especially our families – will be successful), and endures all things (that come up to test and tempt us). Let us love enough and care enough to ask God to help us with our many responsibilities. ✝

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#### References:

- <sup>1</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 38.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.
- <sup>3</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 579.
- <sup>4</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 547.
- <sup>5</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 200.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 213-214.
- <sup>7</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 695.
- <sup>8</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 211.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ministry of Healing*, 374.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>11</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 220.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 221. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
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- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.
- <sup>20</sup> *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 578.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 578-579.
- <sup>22</sup> *Spalding and Magan’s Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies by Ellen G. White*, 125.
- <sup>23</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 485.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 489.
- <sup>25</sup> *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 612.
- <sup>26</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 214-215.
- <sup>27</sup> *Review and Herald*, November 9, 1897.
- <sup>28</sup> *The Adventist Home*, 200.





This month we share with you the next in a series of articles that discuss how we can cultivate Christian character traits in the hearts of our children. “The Garden of the Heart,” in the February 2001 issue of *Our Firm Foundation*, laid the foundation for this series. It is available upon request.

The Editors

**I**n this study we will consider the character trait of meekness, or humility. Most people think that to be meek or humble you must be a doormat—that no matter what happens, or what others might do, you must “lie down” and let everyone walk over the top of you. This is not Biblical, godly meekness.

Let us consider the example of meekness given in Numbers 12:3: “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.” Here we have a scriptural definition of meekness summed up in the life experience of Moses, God’s fearless leader.

Was Moses a doormat for others? Was he a coward?—No, he was the leader of more than a million rebellious, stubborn, hardhearted people who were often whining and fussing. Yet he dealt with them firmly and kindly, and many times he rebuked them for their disobedience to God.

Moses, the meekest man upon the face of the earth, always stood up for the right, but he stood up in an excellent spirit. That is true meekness! He did not hold himself up above others or draw attention to himself—even though he was the leader chosen by God.

Meekness always stands up for the right. It does not vacillate. It is not indecisive. Neither is it prideful,

boastful, or arrogant. Those who are meek do their job quietly, unobtrusively, and diligently, without complaint; and they do it to the best of their ability—regardless of whether or not they are recognized. This understanding is vital to help our children experience true meekness.

Here is an example of one way we have cultivated meekness in our family: A friend calls, saying, “Allison, come here! I want to tell you something.” However, before her friend called I had already told Allison that I wanted her to stay with me.

She does not say, “No, I can’t; my mom won’t let me.” Such a response puts Mother down. Nor does she say, “I don’t want to.” This response shows indifference to her friend. Neither of these typical responses show true meekness. Instead, she says, “No, I can’t come right now. My mother has asked me to stay with her. But if you would like to talk to me, you can come over here, and we can talk.” This response upholds her mother’s request in a positive way while she still shows an interest in her friend. She chose the right way in obeying her mother, yet she was kind to the other child.

### Another Example

We have a little saying in our home: “Those who boast the most,

fuss the most!” Many parents are allowing their children to develop a self-driven, demanding spirit. As a result, the children often become controlling, strong, and boastful in the home while they appear to be shy in public.

Then there is the child who loves to be the center of attention and who constantly turns the conversation to focus on himself—his abilities, his accomplishments—thus boasting about the littlest of things. We have found that the children who are very boastful and proud are often the ones who fuss the most over the least little things.

We have worked with this weakness in our own family and with many other families. I remember one boy in particular who was extremely boastful—to the point of being obnoxious. He controlled the whole family by always seeking to be the center of attention—doing things his way and in his time. When he came to our home he had something to say about everything, and he tried to dominate the conversations. He wanted everyone to know how good he was at everything he did. Yet, he was the first one to give up and complain when he was given something to do that was challenging or difficult, or that he did not want to do.

His parents told us, “We don’t know how to deal with this prob-

# Meekness

lem. What should we do?" We recommended that they begin by showing their son whose spirit it was that he was manifesting in these situations. Lucifer said, "I will be like the most High. I will put my throne above the most High." See Isaiah 14:13-14. When their son exhibited this proud attitude, he was following after Satan's way, which would never bring him true satisfaction, peace, self-respect, or happiness. We talked with him about his attempts to dominate everyone and everything, giving him examples from his own experience earlier in the day. He could see that his own boastful and controlling ways did not make him happy.

Next, we contrasted his behavior and attitude with the meekness of Christ and told him we would help him. He could choose to surrender his way to God and find the strength and joy of a complete victory.

As we and the parents were sensitive to God's still small voice, He gave us wisdom on how to begin to root out the unwanted controlling and boastful attitude, and to begin to plant and nurture meekness. One of the first steps was not to allow the boy to talk at mealtime except to ask for the food he wanted passed to him, and to show appreciation for what was given him. For the entire meal he was to listen only, giving others the opportunity to talk about their interests. This was very helpful as it gave him some quiet time to think about others and to see that they, too, have important and interesting things to share.

Another way we began to cultivate meekness in him was by asking one of his siblings what he wanted to play during family recreation, or by having someone else pick the story for family reading time—instead of letting this boy dominate by his quick and forward way. Again, we explained to him why we were choosing someone else's desires and that he would be treated fairly and have his turn when he was asked. But, if he spoke out to put his wants before he was asked, he would forfeit his turn.

As we sought God for His wisdom and guidance in how to help our little friend learn meekness, God impressed upon our minds these methods as well as others. He knew what was needed to gain the heart of this child.

It was thrilling to see the immediate results, and we have continued to see the growth that has come about in this boy as his parents have continued to work diligently with him to develop the character trait of meekness. He is still enthusiastic and energetic, yet he speaks respectfully and thoughtfully. He no longer dominates the conversations or draws attention to himself. He still gets excited about things he has to share, but he has learned to be patient and to take turns with others. He is a happy youth, possessing self-dignity and meekness!

There are many ways we can develop meekness, but only as we seek God's will can we have the wisdom we need to work with the intricacies of the human heart. My prayer is that every one of us will begin and continue on with the work of heart surrender to God, allowing Him to manage us and our children in our daily lives. ✠

Next month we will discuss how to cultivate patience.



## Cultivating Christian Character in Children

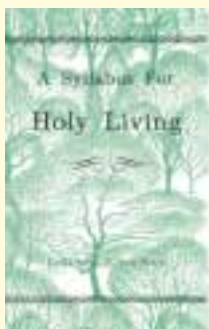
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At first it might appear that the past Presidents Reagan and Clinton had little in common. President Reagan was categorized as a conservative Republican and President Clinton as a center-to-liberal Democrat. In many ways their ideology, and, therefore, their presidencies stand in stark contrast. Yet, in one critical sphere, that of international criminal justice, they have thrust America, and by extension, the world, into the perilous amphitheater of global tyranny. Their actions are separated by twelve years, but, significantly, in the dying embers of their administrations, after the elections of 1988 and 2000, respectively, they both attached their signatures to dangerous global initiatives that have the potential to rob the whole world of the most elemental principles of liberty and freedom.

President Reagan signed the Genocide Treaty. President Clinton signed the Treaty of Rome, designed to establish the International Criminal Court. Let us look at these treaties separately and then evaluate what they could mean to Bible-believing Christians.

After the Second World War there was much guilt and overwhelming consternation at the efforts of Hitler's Nazis to focus upon the Jews especially, and also upon the Gypsies, in an effort to eliminate these races. The conscience of the world was stirred and shocked that in the "enlightened" twentieth century there could still be such barbaric actions. Out of this situation rose the Genocide Treaty, proposed by the United Nations Organization. The Genocide Treaty was designed to establish a global unity of nations that would take decided and determined action against anyone, or group, or nation, or groups of nations which would seek to annihilate a specific group—whether it be for national, ethnic, racial, language, social, or religious reasons. What true Christian could ever deny the need to support such

a concept? My own nation of Australia signed on to the Genocide Treaty in 1949.

With far more perceptive insights, beginning with President Harry Truman and ending with President Jimmy Carter, seven successive presidents of the United States refused to sign the Genocide Treaty. It was not that they had support for genocide, but that they saw the deeper dangers in the Genocide Treaty. They could foresee that it was possible that this treaty could be used to stifle free speech by interpreting some statements as statements of hate or vilification. Those seven presidents believed that the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, and the freedom of peaceable public assembly were all too precious to be surrendered—even to the noble goal of opposing ruthless genocide.

However, in January of 1989, President Reagan, greatly desirous of having a couple of his pet initiatives passed by the Democratically controlled Congress, made a deal with the Democrats in which they agreed to give passage to his initiatives in return for his signature on the Genocide Treaty. Reagan refused to mandate the death penalty as a maximum penalty, making rather life in prison the maximum penalty. But within two years Congress had added the ultimate judicial penalty to the Genocide Treaty.

Let us fast forward to the year 2000. In spite of the fact that the United States Senate had already refused to consider the International Criminal Court, President Clinton attached his signature to this treaty ratification. The reader must understand that international treaties are free of the protections of national constitutions. All the guarantees, like those afforded by the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the United States, carry no protection whatsoever to the citizens of a sovereign nation, and, therefore, its citizens are effectively robbed of their unalienable rights.

Delegates representing 160 countries established the International Criminal Court Treaty in 1998 in the city of Rome. The judges, without any clear specific boundaries, could call for the arraignment of any person before the International Criminal Court. Citizens, having no right to invoke the constitutional guarantees of their own nation, would be at the uncertain mercy of the International Criminal Court. While it might be argued that such courts could use their authority to prosecute major crimes against society, nevertheless, a little introspection leads one to understand that the domains and reach of the International Criminal Court could ultimately know no bounds. Some of the areas to which it could reach have been outlined by Alan Keyes, a presidential candidate in 1996 and 2000, who is heading a crusade to seek to urge President Bush to reverse the decision made by President Clinton. Of course, no one really knows what the reach of the court will be. However, Keyes suggests that it could go as far as to include the following:

1. Unapproved religious activities;
2. Spanking a child;
3. Failure to register children in a government-approved educational institution;
4. Displaying inappropriate patriotism;
5. Participating in any pro-life activities.

While at this time this list is speculative, there are, however, most disturbing aspects of this treaty which are very evident:

1. As soon as sixty nations—hardly more than one-quarter of the nations of the world—sign onto this treaty, it will become operative—involving all of the citizens of the world, irrespective of whether or not those sovereign nations have agreed to accept the treaty.

2. Judges will be chosen from all over the world, and only one from



any given nation. That will permit judges to be chosen from known totalitarian and reactionary nations, from Communist nations, from Mohammedan nations — from nations where brutality is not infrequently practiced.

3. The cases will be brought before a three-judge panel.

4. There will be no jury trial. Therefore, the accused will be in the hands of the thinking and training processes of those judges — no matter from where they come.

5. There is no appeal process from the decision of the judges.

6. Those condemned can be sent to prisons in any part of the world. There is no guarantee, or even likelihood, that those who are found guilty will be placed in a jail in their own homeland. I full well know the standard of jails in non-Western countries, having visited a number of them.

7. Countries have the opportunity to apply to take such international prisoners. It is almost certain that those countries applying will be from the poorer countries of the world, for they will be able to make a profit from the keeping of prisoners much more readily than could a Western country. They also would be much less likely to experience strong protests and demonstrations for such a decision than would any Western nations.

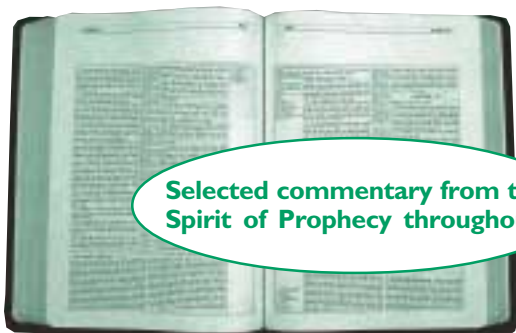
Seventh-day Adventists, understanding the persecution and ruthless efforts to repress the spread of the three angels' messages at the end of time, know that this is a most dangerous situation in which President Clinton has placed us. I recommend that each of the readers write a letter to President Bush urging him to make it plain to the International Criminal Court Treaty authorities that he is abrogating the

signed statement of President Clinton. I would also send copies of this letter to your two State Senators and to the Representative for your area.

Some may desire to get further information from Alan Keyes. His address is: The Declaration Foundation, National Processing Center, P. O. Box 131973, Houston, Texas 77219-1973. Also you might want to give encouragement to Congressman Ron Paul. He has proposed a bill, HCR 23, which calls upon President Bush to repudiate promptly, publicly, and permanently the International Criminal Court and all the anti-United States Constitution and anti-Declaration of Independence globalism for which it stands.

Above all, let us pray earnestly for God's intervention, and also let us "work [for the saving of souls] while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." John 9:4. ❀

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# God's Word, the Parent's Guide

*Holy Bible*

*Ellen G. White*

**O**ur great enemy is constantly seeking to make men believe themselves wiser than their Creator. Like Eve, many follow the dictates of human wisdom, in preference to the commands of the Omniscient One. Such was the sin of Eli; and terrible indeed were its results—disaster and death to himself, ruin to his wicked sons, and ruin to thousands in Israel.

Yet there are many today, standing like Eli in holy office, who are making the same mistake. They read his mournful history, but fail to profit by the warning. In their self-confidence they think they know a better way of training their children than that which God has given us

in His Word. The earnest, anxious prayer does not ascend from their hearts, Teach us, "How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him?" Judges 13:12. With all their learning and intelligence, the results of their training show the vaunted wisdom of these persons to be but folly. Fond, indulgent parents, they allow their children to grow up from babyhood without restraint; and thus their forward, selfish, disagreeable ways become confirmed habits, rendering them unloving and unlovable.

God Himself established the family relations. His Word is the only safe Guide in the management of children. Human philosophy has

not discovered more than God knows, or devised a wiser plan of dealing with children than that given by our Lord. Who can better understand all the needs of children than their Creator? Who can feel a deeper interest in their welfare than He who bought them with His own blood? If the Word of God were carefully studied and faithfully obeyed, there would be less soul-anguish over the perverse conduct of wicked children.

Eli was quick to see and rebuke the sins and errors of the people, sometimes, as in the case of Hannah, even administering unjust reproof; but the sins of his own sons seemed to him less

offensive than the sins of others. In his undue affection he was ever ready to find excuses for their perverse course. All this was dishonoring God and misleading the people. To just such an extent as he permitted or excused sin in his children, did he become a partaker in their guilt. As sons of the high priest, they were connected with the work of God, and thus the evil and the sin were greatly heightened.

It is very natural for parents to be partial to their own children. Especially if these parents feel that they themselves possess superior ability, they will regard their children as superior to other children. Hence much that would be severely censured in others is passed over in their own children as smart and witty. While this partiality is natural, it is unjust and unchristian. A great wrong is done our children when we permit their faults to go uncorrected. Many foster wrong traits of character in their children, urging as an excuse, "They are too young to be punished. Wait until they become older, and can be reasoned with. They will outgrow many of these evil tendencies." Thus their wrong habits are left to grow and strengthen until they become second nature. Sometimes the father and mother are united in this error. Sometimes one would gladly pursue a wiser course; but when that one attempts to enforce obedience, the other takes the part of the child, and will not allow it to be brought into submission. The sad results of such a course can be fully seen only in eternity. They can never be estimated in this life.

But great as are the evils of parental unfaithfulness under any circumstances, they are tenfold greater when they exist in the family of those who stand in Christ's stead, to instruct the people. Ministers of the gospel, who fail to control their own households, are, by their wrong example, misleading many. They sanction the growth of evil, instead of repressing it. Many who consider themselves excellent judges of what other children should be and what

they should do, are blind to the defects of their own sons and daughters. Such a lack of divine wisdom in those who profess to teach the Word of God, is working untold evil. It tends to efface from the minds of the people the distinction between right and wrong, purity and vice.

When ministers and people will exchange their natural pride of heart and independence for a childlike, teachable spirit; when, instead of trusting to their own understanding, and conforming to the maxims and customs of the world, they will sit at the feet of Jesus, and earnestly inquire, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" then His wisdom will

indispensable, so also are sympathy and tenderness. Parents, remember that you deal with children who are struggling with temptation, and that to them these evil promptings are as hard to resist as are those that assail persons of mature years. Children who really desire to do right may fail again and again, and as often need encouragement to energy and perseverance. Watch the workings of these young minds with prayerful solicitude. Strengthen every good impulse, encourage every noble action. The Lord, through an apostle, admonishes parents, "Provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Colossians 3:21. The Word of God is

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*Many who consider themselves excellent judges of what other children should be and what they should do, are blind to the defects of their own sons and daughters.*

---

direct them, His Spirit work with their efforts, and we shall see the youth who now drift into the ranks of Satan, serving under the banner of the Prince of Life.

Oh that the Elites of today, who are everywhere to be found pleading excuses for the waywardness of their children, would promptly assert their own God-given authority to restrain and correct them. Let parents and guardians, who overlook and excuse sin in those under their care, remember that they thus become accessory to these wrongs. If, instead of unlimited indulgence, the chastening rod were oftener used, not in passion, but with love and prayer, we would see happier families and a better state of society.

We have no sympathy with that discipline which would discourage children by hard censure, or irritate them by passionate correction, and then, as the impulse changes, smother them with kisses, or harm them by injurious gratification. Excessive indulgence and undue severity are alike to be avoided. While vigilance and firmness are

your Guide, Christian parents. Depart not from it to gratify any impulse of passion or of affection.

If parents desire to teach their children self-control, they must first form the habit themselves. The scolding and faultfinding of parents, encourages a hasty, passionate temper in their children. Love and justice should stand side by side in the government of the household. Let prompt obedience to parental authority be invariably enforced. God has given parents their work, to form the characters of their children after the Divine Pattern. By His grace, they can accomplish the task; but it will require patient, painstaking effort, no less than firmness and decision, to guide the will and restrain the passions. A field left to itself produces only thorns and briars. He who would secure a harvest for usefulness or beauty must first prepare the soil and sow the seed, then dig about the young shoots, removing the weeds and softening the earth, and the precious plants will flourish and richly repay his care and labor.



The work of parents is continuous. It should not be laid hold of vigorously for one day, and neglected the next. Many are ready to begin the work, but are not willing to persevere in it. They are eager to do some great thing, to make some great sacrifice; but they shrink from the unceasing care and effort in the little things of everyday life, the hourly pruning and training of the wayward tendencies, the work of giving instruction, reproof, or encouragement, little by little, as it is needed. They wish to see children

gance in dress, to an unnecessary outlay of time and money in the preparation of food, and to needless indulgence in many other forms. The demands of fashion so fully engross the time and attention that little room is left for communion with God, self-discipline, or the training of children. Thus too many parents let slip from their shoulders the responsibility of family government. It requires earnest heart-work to repress evil tendencies, strengthen weak principles, develop good and lovely traits of character, and direct

By precept and example, let the young be taught reverence for God and for His Word. Many of our youth are becoming infidels at heart, because of the lack of devotion in their parents. The law of God should be the law of the household. Let fathers and mothers kindly and patiently instruct their children, both from the inspired Word and from the book of nature, leading them to understand the character of God. Let them show in their own lives that they are continually seeking to know and to do His will. To secure the approval of their Heavenly Father is the great motive to be ever kept before the minds of children. The service of God should be presented, not as an irksome task, but as a precious privilege, by which they may enjoy an honored, useful, and happy life here, and infinitely greater honor, usefulness, and joy in the life hereafter.

*The demands of fashion so fully engross the time and attention that little room is left for communion with God, self-discipline, or the training of children.*

correct their faults and form right characters at once, reaching the mountaintop at a bound, and not by successive steps; and because their hopes are not immediately realized, they become disheartened. Let all such persons take courage as they remember the words of the apostle, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:9.

Satan has prepared his snares for parents, tempting them to extrava-

all the powers of mind and body in the right channel. Fathers and mothers, will you not lay hold of your work with energy, perseverance, and love? Sow the precious seed daily, with earnest prayer that God will water it with the dews of grace, and grant you an abundant harvest. The Son of God died to redeem a sinful, rebellious race. Shall we shrink from any toil or sacrifice to save our own dear children?

God has permitted light from His throne to shine all along the path of life. A pillar of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night, is moving before us as before ancient Israel. It is the privilege of Christian parents today, as it was the privilege of God's people of old, to bring their children with them to the Promised Land. ✠

*Signs of the Times*, November 24, 1881.

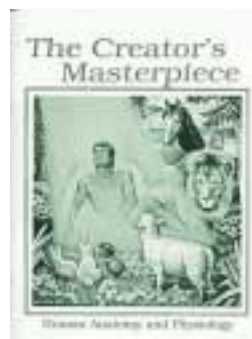
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*Our Firm Foundation*

# letters to the editor

## Have a letter to share?

contact [editor@hopeint.org](mailto:editor@hopeint.org) or see page 3 for our mailing address.



I appreciate that your publication carries truth in an easy to understand format, uses the Spirit of Prophecy writings, and refuses to print jokes and "funnies."

Another impressive trait in your magazine is that you apparently do not banter back and forth on issues that should have a straight forward "thus saith the Lord."

*CM, Washington*

Dear Friends: I must let you know how many blessings we have received from reading the magazine "Our Firm Foundation." I have read and reread some of the most timely articles.

God bless you and keep you ever close to Him.

*C&GS, USA*

### Letters From Overseas

I would just like to say how much my wife and I both enjoyed reading your articles. Thank you. It has helped us gain a clearer understanding of certain matters.

*D&CB, via e-mail*

I hereby want to express my sincere appreciation for the books and tabloids you sent to me in May 1999. Glory and thanks I give to the Almighty God for the miracle He showed to me!

Some books you sent me were revival and reformatory material. These have helped me to grow spiritually. The Bibles aided me to do my work.

Many people I have handed the texts and tabloids to have expressed appreciation and thanks, which is for the Almighty God.

*JM, Zambia*

Brethren, Greetings! Please let me thank you for your kindness in sending Adventist message to all the world now. This gospel sheds light on everything; and thanks brethren, for standing up by faith when most of the religious world seems to be bored with the whole thing.

*MS, Zambia*

I would like to greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We feel much more than happy to express to you that we learnt a lot from the book that you sent us. The book is entitled *Christ's Object Lessons*, written by Ellen G. White. The book is full of heavenly treasures. Yes, the book is very much educative and informative. We are now desperately in need of more such books because we discovered that the contents of such books enables us to grow up in faith.

Christian friends, would you be kind enough to send us some more scriptural books? We kindly ask for your assistance in this regard.

*OM, Zimbabwe*

Recently I received some of *Our Firm Foundation* magazines from Hope. Thank you so much for this. I really appreciate your thinking of me, especially at this time when all seems lost in this country. Things are becoming so serious in Zimbabwe politically that even our lives are being threatened by the President.

Your magazines have helped me tremendously and the friends that read them. There is no doubt that our Lord is doing a work in the area where we live. People are accepting the truth about the Sabbath and are hungry for truth.

*LS, Zimbabwe*

This serves to humbly ask for a possible supply of church literature, especially *Our Firm Foundation* magazine, if you have any to spare.

I have implicit trust that the truth contained therein will enhance my understanding of Scripture whereupon my aspiration to enter the service of the church may prove a dream come true.

Thanking you in anticipation of an early supply.

*LS, Zambia*

May God bless you for your excellent literature! I am an ex-Catholic

baptized into the SDA church in 1999. Ever since, I was searching for Adventist Bibles, and found none in these areas.

I read your ad in *Our Firm Foundation*. I desperately need your Bibles. I can't afford to pay anything right now due to a severe domestic crisis.

I need your magazine too, but since the Bible is priority, I don't dare to ask for both. I am ashamed to carry the Protestant study Bible, which commentaries teach wrong doctrines.

*P, India*

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I'm twenty-one years old, and if I say I have not been touched by your wonderful magazines it would not be true.

I am requesting for a gift subscription to your magazine *Our Firm Foundation*. If this is possible, may you please help me.

I am also asking for assistance in obtaining any Spirit of Prophecy books that may help me and family and friends in these end times we are living in.

Your ministry is in my prayers and I would like you to be encouraged the more for the work that you are doing.

*TB, Zambia*

I am a Seventh-day Adventist Christian and have a keen interest in the study of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. I am working in the Lord's vineyard as a literature evangelist, distributing literature, and conducting Bible studies.

I am not very much acquainted with the health reform message. For this reason, I would be most grateful if you would send me some tracts on health, vegetarian menu plans, cook-books, and other materials on health.

May the Almighty God help you as you make known to others the importance of preserving our soul temples to the glory of God.

*CS, Zambia*



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Russell Standish**

**A V**

Roundtable: The Latter Rain    
(4-Part Set; Audio=\$12, Video=\$30)

**Agatha Thrash**

Can We Survive the    
Final Health Crisis?

Is Mental Preparation or Physical    
Preparation for the Time of Trouble  
Most Important?

Elijah and John the Baptist Had    
the Same Food

**Ray DeCarlo**

The Marriage of the Lamb, Part 1

The Marriage of the Lamb, Part 2

**Russell Standish**

The Certainty of the    
Time Prophecies

Sister White, Protestantism,    
and the Papacy

**Colin Standish**

The Praise of Christ    
or the Praise of Men?

The Pastor or the Bible?

**A=Audio Cassette**

**V=Video Cassette**

Name

Address

Phone:

**Dr. Sung Min Im**

**A V**

Exodus

What Is Your Identity?

**Hal Mayer**

Methods Used to Promote Error

**Bill Humeniuk**

Cooking Seminar (Bill and Becky)

Laodicea, Do You Really    
Know God?

**Ron Spear**

Will the Real SDA

Please Stand Up?

**Cody Francis**

Are SDA's Preparing

for the Mark of the Beast?

**Clark Floyd**

The Person in Romans 7 and You

All Who Live Godly in Christ

Jesus

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