



# *Our* Firm Foundation

## *The Purification of God's Church*

Volume 17, Number 8

August 2002

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary



# The Day of the Lord Cometh

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. . . . Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the LORD be jealous for his land, and pity his people.” Joel 2:1-3, 15-18.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, We are surely living in the very last hours of the world’s and the church’s history. It is time we awaken out of our Laodicean condition! Blow the trumpet in Zion (the remnant church), call a solemn assembly, gather the people together, for we are now facing the end of all things, and the coming of our Lord. Let us now weep between the porch and the altar for our backsliding and apostasy.

Sunday laws are now ominously on our horizon—only awaiting an international crisis to be ushered in and become law. One more bomb on American soil will prepare the American people in fear for such legislation. We see men’s hearts failing them for fear of the future.

“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of

heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.” Luke 21:25-27.

The signs of the end are now ominous. Jesus said, “Many are called, but few are chosen.” Matthew 22:14. So very few of the remnant people are now making the character preparation that will carry them through the time of trouble.

Probation will soon close suddenly, unexpectedly. See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 989. God through Inspiration reveals to us what is just ahead in the time of trouble.

“In the day of the Lord, just before the coming of Christ, God will send lightnings from Heaven in His wrath, which will unite with fire in the earth. The mountains will burn like a furnace, and will pour forth terrible streams of lava, destroying gardens and fields, villages and cities; and as they pour their melted ore, rocks and heated mud into the rivers, will cause them to boil like a pot, and send forth massive rocks and scatter their broken fragments upon the land with indescribable violence. Whole rivers will be dried up. The earth will be convulsed, and there will be dreadful eruptions and earthquakes everywhere. God will plague the wicked inhabitants of the earth until they are destroyed from off it.

“The saints are preserved in the earth in the midst of these dreadful commotions, as Noah was preserved in the ark at the time of the flood. Christ appears in His glory, and calls forth the righteous dead. The living saints are changed, and, with the resurrected dead, are borne away from the earth by angels to meet their Lord in the air. The earth is left like a desolate wilderness.” *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, 82-83.

September 11, 2001, was a wake-up call to the world and to all Seventh-day Adventist leaders, pastors, and laity. There will soon be revealed in the time of trouble the wrath of God. The sinful days of Noah are here again. Sin is reaching a climax. God will be forced to take the reigns into His own hands. See *Testimonies to Ministers*, 300. May God now help each seeker, each obedient child of God, to make the character preparation that He requires. ❀



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

—Editors

Executive Editor: Ron Spear  
 Administrative Editor: Bill Humeniuk  
 Managing Editor: Harvey Steck  
 Layout & Design: Kevin H. Patterson

*Our Firm Foundation* is a monthly publication of:



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

**Phone:** (360) 832-6602  
 Mon–Thurs: 8:30am–5:30pm  
 Fri: 8:30am–12:30pm Pacific Time

**Fax:** (360) 832-3720  
**Email:** [office@hopeint.org](mailto:office@hopeint.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.hopeint.org>

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# The Purification of God's Church

Harvey Steck

What about Seventh-day Adventists? What about that body of believers that claims to be the remnant church: Is it pure of all sin and hypocrisy today? If not, can we look forward to a day when Christ will purify His church—when there will be only genuine members—wheat—in His church? If so, what means will God use to purify the church? In this article we will conclude our study of the Inspired counsel on this subject.

## Our Duty to Guard the Church's Purity

In Matthew, chapter 13, Christ has warned us that in His last-day church an enemy—Satan—would sow tares in His church. In the same chapter He tells us that the gospel net will gather in both good fish and bad. Does that mean we should be complacent about open sin? How important is the purity of the church? Do we have a duty to work for its purity?

“Renewed, purified, sanctified, the church must be, else the wrath

of God will fall upon them with much greater power than upon those who have never professed to be saints.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, 263.

“One fanatic, with his strong spirit and radical ideas, who will oppress the conscience of those who want to be right, will do great harm. The church needs to be purified from all such influences.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 319.

No doubt many church difficulties would be prevented if we were faithful to the following counsel:

“Only when the church is composed of pure, unselfish members, can it fulfill God's purpose. Too much hasty work is done in adding names to the church roll. Serious defects are seen in the characters of some who join the church. Those who admit them say, We will first get them into the church, and then reform them. But this is a mistake. The very first work to be done is the work of reform. Pray with them, talk with them, but do not allow them to unite with God's people in church

relationship until they give decided evidence that the Spirit of God is working on their hearts.” *Review and Herald*, May 21, 1901.

And our responsibility does not end after people are baptized.

“What the church needs is to be cleansed of those who defile it. The spirit of reformation must be kindled among us, and this class must be converted or be separated from the church. We entreat those who have a connection with God to pray earnestly and in faith, and not to stop here, but to work as well as pray, for the purification of the church.” *Ibid.*, June 3, 1880; see also *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 117–118; *ibid.*, vol. 3, 265–269; *ibid.*, vol. 4, 516; *ibid.*, vol. 5, 186; *Testimonies to Ministers*, 450.

## Misdirected Zeal

While some neglect their duty to deal with open sin, others exercise a zeal not according to knowledge in their efforts to purify the church. They would remove those whom they suspect to be unconverted members before they follow Christ's instruction in Matthew 18. We have clear warnings that we are not to go about uprooting the tares, lest we root out also the wheat:

“It should be the earnest desire of every heart to keep the church pure, and individually we are to keep our hearts in the love of God, and practice the truth daily, that this may be accomplished. . . . We are not required to criticise, to condemn, or root out all that we suppose to be tares, lest we root out also the wheat. The church will not be free from those whose influence is out of harmony with that which should characterize the servants of Christ. The children of God will be stirred in spirit by the doings of these unworthy members, and they will desire to do something to cleanse the church, that its members may be a light to shine in the world; but even under these circumstances, let them be careful to heed the words of the great Teacher: ‘Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also

the wheat with them.' Matthew 13:29. . . . In many cases it is evident that those who are most zealous to see the church without blemish, have serious defects of character which they do not discern. Because of their own mistakes and failings, unconsciously to themselves, they may be doing greater harm than the one they judge unworthy to remain in fellowship with the church." *Review and Herald*, January 10, 1893; see also *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 262; *Testimonies to Ministers*, 46-47; *The Great Controversy*, 43.

### God Will Purge His Floor

John the Baptist foresaw a time when God would purge His floor. He spoke of Christ, "whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." Luke 3:17.

Now, notice what we are told about Christ's cleansing of the earthly temple:

"God's love for His church is infinite. His care over His heritage is unceasing. He suffers no affliction to come upon the church but such as is essential for her purification, her present and eternal good. *He will purify His church even as He purified the temple at the beginning and close of His ministry on earth.*" *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 228. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

After the proclamation of the first angel's message and the Great Disappointment that followed, only a handful of faithful believers remained. God tested the hearts of those who professed to be looking for the advent of Christ, and all but approximately 50 were purged out of His church by the experience:

"God accomplished His own beneficent purpose in permitting the warning of the judgment to be given just as it was. The great day was at hand, and in His providence the people were brought to the test of a definite time, in order to reveal to them what was in their hearts. The message was designed for the

testing and purification of the church." *The Great Controversy*, 353; see also *ibid.*, 380.

Just as Christ cleansed the earthly temple twice, He has also cleansed the Advent movement once at the beginning, and He will do it again at the end. Once again, God will test His professed people—those who claim to "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. When God purges His floor—when His people face a life-or-death decision whether to obey God's

*When God purges His floor—when His people face a life-or-death decision whether to obey God's Word or to follow their human impulses—then the genuine wheat will be made plain for all to see.*

Word or to follow their human impulses—then the genuine wheat will be made plain for all to see:

"The days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor. . . .

"The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view. There are precious ones now hidden who have not bowed the knee to Baal. They have not had the light which has been shining in a concentrated blaze upon you. But it may be under a rough and uninviting exterior the pure brightness of a genuine Christian character will be revealed." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 80-81.

"God's people must not only know His will, but they must practice it. Many will be purged out from the numbers of those who know the truth, because they are not sanctified by it." *Review and Herald*, May 24, 1887; see also *The Great Controversy*, 625.

Friends, are *you* being sanctified by the truth? Will you be gathered with the wheat, or burned with the chaff?

### How God Purifies His Church

This purification, so necessary for the church's final victory, is also referred to as "the shaking":

"The shaking must soon take place to purify the church." *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, 284.

All will be tested by the shaking to see whether their experience is genuine:

"We are living in a time when life is most precious and most interesting. The end of all things is at hand. Startling developments will be continually unfolding before us; for unseen agencies are at work, manifesting intense activity. . . . Nothing short of real, genuine faith will survive the strain that will come upon every soul of man in these last days to test and try him. God must be our refuge; we cannot trust in form, profession, ceremony, or position, or think that because we have a name to live, we shall be able to stand in the day of trial. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken, and those things that cannot be shaken by the deceptions and delusions of these last days, will remain." *The Youth's Instructor*, August 3, 1893; see also Hebrews 12:26-27; *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 355.

God will use a variety of means to shake and purify His church. Here are some of them:

**Pointed Messages of Truth—**The shaking is not a pleasant experience. Most of us recoil at the thought of presenting a pointed message that might cause division in the church. However, notice that we must do this work that God's

church may be brought into favor with Him:

“The ministers preach smooth things to suit carnal professors. They dare not preach Jesus and the cutting truths of the Bible; for if they should, these carnal professors would not remain in the church. . . . Pleasing fables were taught and readily received, and hypocrites and open sinners united with the church. If the truth had been preached in its purity, it would soon have shut out this class. . . . God had a message for the church that was sacred and important. If received, it would make a thorough reformation in the church, revive the living testimony that would purge out hypocrites and sinners, and bring the church again into favor with God.” *Early Writings*, 228.

straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God’s people.” *Early Writings*, 270.

**Shaken by False Teachers and Heresies**—“God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 707.

“When the shaking comes, by the introduction of false theories, these surface readers, anchored nowhere, are like shifting sand. They slide into any position to suit

able, but who, if persecution should arise, would go out from us. In the crisis, they would see force in specious reasoning that has had an influence on their minds. Satan has prepared various snares to meet varied minds. When the law of God is made void the church will be sifted by fiery trials, and a larger proportion than we now anticipate, will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 368.

### Who Will Be Shaken Out?

Inspiration tells us clearly who will be shaken out of the church:

“The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while *the sinners in Zion will be sifted out*—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. *None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true*, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.” *Ibid.*, 380.

The church that remains will not look at all like what we see today. The severe persecution at this time will not allow for God’s faithful people to openly operate conference offices or to direct the work from any central location. Faithful ministers, gospel workers, and medical missionaries will not be able to rely upon a paycheck; they will be living and working in faith that God will direct and sustain them. Some are teaching that God’s faithful people will “come out” of an apostate church once again, as has happened in former times. However, we are told that at this time God will work in a manner out of the ordinary:

“The Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. . . . God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will

*“The ministers preach smooth things to suit carnal professors. They dare not preach Jesus and the cutting truths of the Bible; for if they should, these carnal professors would not remain in the church.”*

“God is sifting His people. He will have a clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But the Lord has provided means to keep the church pure. A corrupt people has arisen who could not live with the people of God. They despised reproof, and would not be corrected. They had an opportunity to know that theirs was an unrighteous warfare. They had time to repent of their wrongs; but self was too dear to die. They nourished it, and it grew strong, and they separated from the trusting people of God, whom He is purifying unto Himself. We all have reason to thank God that a way has been opened to save the church; for the wrath of God must have come upon us if these corrupt pretenders had remained with us.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 99.

“I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the

the tenor of their feelings of bitterness.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 112.

Notice how God can use both truth and error for His purposes. While truth reveals the sin in our hearts and will bring some to repentance, error leads others to go deeper into apostasy, and reveal the corruption that was already cherished in their hearts.

**Persecution and Fiery Trials**—Regarding the early church, we are told: “As long as persecution continued, the church remained comparatively pure. But as it ceased, converts were added who were less sincere and devoted, and the way was open for Satan to obtain a foothold.” *The Great Controversy*, 44; see also *Early Writings*, 222.

Once again, regarding the end of time, we read: “In the absence of persecution, there have drifted into our ranks some who appear sound, and their Christianity unquestion-

be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 300.

The "sinners in Zion" who will be shaken out are described in a number of other ways:

- Those "who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause" *Early Writings*, 50.

- "Every selfish, covetous person" *Ibid.*, 269.

- "The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for it" *Ibid.*, 271.

- "All who wish to draw off from the body; "The jealous and the faultfinding" *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 251.

- "Men leaving the faith; "Souls leave the truth" *Review and Herald*, April 9, 1889.

On the Day of Atonement of the type, those of Israel who had not afflicted their souls were to be cut off from the congregation. Likewise, today, we are to afflict and purify our souls; we are to know by experience what it means to sigh and cry, to cry aloud and spare not. See Ezekiel 9:4; Isaiah 58:1. If this is not our experience, we will be cut off from God's remnant church, for He will have a purified church, and only those who receive His seal will be a part of it:

"In the time when His wrath shall go forth in judgments, these humble, devoted followers of Christ will be distinguished from the rest of the world by their soul anguish, which is expressed in lamentation and weeping, reproofs and warnings. . . . They are powerless to stop the rushing torrent of iniquity, and hence they are filled with grief and alarm. They mourn before God to see religion despised in the very homes of those who have had great light. They lament and afflict their souls because pride, avarice, selfishness, and deception of almost every kind are in the church. The Spirit of God, which prompts to reproof, is

trampled underfoot, while the servants of Satan triumph. God is dishonored, the truth made of none effect.

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 210-211.

### Multitudes Lost

Tragically, we are warned that multitudes will be shaken out during this terrible ordeal:

"Much so-called Christianity passes for genuine, faithful soundness, but it is because those who profess it have no persecution to endure for the truth's sake. When

*"The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church."*

the day comes when the law of God is made void, and the church is sifted by the fiery trials that are to try all that live upon the earth, a great proportion of those who are supposed to be genuine will give heed to seducing spirits, and will turn traitors and betray sacred trusts. They will prove our very worst persecutors." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1065.

"I was pointed to the providence of God among His people and was shown that every trial made by the refining, purifying process upon professed Christians proves some to be dross. The fine gold does not always appear. In every religious crisis some fall under temptation. The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church. As a class, their spirits are not steadfast with God. They go out from us because they are not of us; for

when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, many are offended." *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 89.

### How to Be Secure

In closing, we must remember that there is no need of discouragement. If we will choose the straight and narrow path of repentance and consecration, we will be secure in the terrible shaking to come.

**Know God's Word and Obey It**—"We are living in perilous times, and as we draw near the close of earth's history, there will be no safety for those who do not become familiar with the Word of God. I would warn the disciples of Christ of the impending days of

peril, and beseech you to prepare for the time of test and trial; for everything that can be shaken, will be shaken. Do we now obey the Word of God, and live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God? Are we established and settled in the present truth? There is need of closely examining yourselves whether you are in the love of God; for except Christ be in you, you are reprobates. Self-deception is dangerous, and no one of us can afford to go on in delusion." *The Youth's Instructor*, May 18, 1893.

"They that will be doers of the Word are building securely, and the tempest and storm of persecution will not shake their foundation, because their souls are rooted to the eternal Rock." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 17, 82.

Let us examine our own hearts, faithfully obey every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, and work and pray for the purity of God's church. ✠

# How Soon Shall We Enter?

*Ron Spear*

**F**or 430 years, Abraham's seed—his children—multiplied in the land of Goshen. The Pharaohs forgot Joseph, the miracles of God in preserving Egypt, the seven years of plenty, and the seven years of famine. All Israel were now slaves of their masters, the Egyptians. God chose Moses to be His prophet and Israel's deliverer—to bring them to Canaan, their Promised Land.

Let us look carefully at the spiritual problems of His chosen people of that day. Their history is carefully recorded in the book of Psalms.

"Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron; because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High: therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses." Psalm 107:10-13.

They provoked the Lord at Kadesh. Because of their rebellion, they spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness of Zin. "The hand of

the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed." Deuteronomy 2:15.

"For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward." Jeremiah 7:22-24.

At the threshold of the Promised Land, they rebelled against Moses—God's prophet. They appointed a captain to lead their return to Egypt and slavery.

## **Hearts Still in Egypt**

God's people did not sever all connections with the things of Egypt. As the result of their lust and rebellion, they were not ready for Canaan. They must suffer the penalty for their rebellion.

"But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness." Numbers 14:32-33; see also Psalm 107:40.

During their 40 years in the wilderness, Israel continued to multiply in membership. They seemed to have material prosperity, but it did not lead to the Promised Land. Increased numbers and organizational efficiency, which I am sure took place during this time, was not a preparation for Canaan. Spiritual progress alone would bring the people to an understanding of God's requirements.

Israel had all the evidence of God's love and protection in providing for all their needs. In the pillar of fire by night and in the cloud by day, God was there, even in their rebellion.

Some have estimated that it would have taken 20 tank cars of water every day to provide for their bathing, and drinking water for themselves and their herds. Remember now, there were about



2 million souls in the camp. God brought a river of water out of the ground for their needs, and manna—angel’s food—onto the ground six days of every week for their nutrition. God also provided food for their herds. What great miracles God provided for His church in the wilderness!

### Advent Parallels

As we study and research the great gift of the *Testimonies for the Church*, we note again and again the parallels of the Seventh-day Adventist movement with the church in Egypt and in the wilderness. In *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 217, we find God’s prophet repeatedly reminding us of these similarities:

“I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.

“The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus.”

“I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leavening the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God’s peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord’s displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a

more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe.

“I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies has been steadily increasing as the people backslide from God. It is all through our ranks, all over the field.” *Ibid.*, 75–76.

“The same disobedience and failure which were seen in the Jewish church have characterized in a greater degree the people who have had this great light from heaven in the last messages of warning. Shall we, like them, squander our opportunities and

with voice and pen the few who, following in the providence of God, received the Sabbath reform and began to proclaim the third angel’s message. Many who should have devoted their time and talents to the one purpose of sounding warning to the world, were absorbed in opposing the Sabbath truth, and in turn, the labor of its advocates was necessarily spent in answering these opponents and defending the truth. Thus the work was hindered, and the world was left in darkness. Had the whole Adventist body united upon the commandments of God and the

*“For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan.”*

privileges until God shall permit oppression and persecution to come upon us? Will the work which might be performed in peace and comparative prosperity be left undone until it must be performed in days of darkness, under the pressure of trial and persecution?” *Ibid.*, 456–457; see also *ibid.*, 72–77, 94, 99, 160, 226, 297, 535, 601.

### Our Kadesh-Barnea

“Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith, and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward.

“But in the period of doubt and uncertainty that followed the disappointment, many of the Advent believers yielded their faith. Dissensions and divisions came in. The majority opposed

faith of Jesus, how widely different would have been our history!

“It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in ‘because of unbelief.’ Hebrews 3:19. Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them.

“For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 68–69.

“While the heaven-sent message that began at the Minneapolis

conference in 1888 led the Advent movement out of the wilderness of sin to the very borders of the heavenly Canaan, the rejection of that message resulted in a retreat back into the wilderness again. The movement itself has not gone all the way back to Egypt or the world, but like Israel of old has only retreated 'toward Egypt.' It is true, however, that many thousands of individual members have completed the journey all the way back to the world." Taylor Bunch, *The Exodus and Advent Movements in Type and Antitype*, 113.

"An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to

has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of everyone to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him." *Ibid.*, 363.

ened with the glory of the Lord." *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 401.

"God will soon do great things for us, if we lie humble and believing at His feet. . . . More than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications." *Evangelism*, 693.

Like Israel in their wilderness wanderings, we have increased in our membership, organization and material wealth, but we have miserably failed to complete the great commission of the three angels' messages to warn the world of the coming of our Redeemer and the soon destruction of the world by fire. As the children of Israel failed to enter into the Promised Land at Kadesh-Barnea, we have also failed. As the Israelites failed, because their hearts were still in Egypt, we have failed because our hearts are still in this world. We have lost our vision of heaven, and a finished work.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John 2:15-17.

### Like Will Attract Like

What if the church pursues the same course as that of Israel?

"Our compassionate Redeemer, foreseeing the perils that would surround His followers at this time, has given them special warning: 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of

*As the Israelites failed, because their hearts were still in Egypt, we have failed because our hearts are still in this world. We have lost our vision of heaven, and a finished work.*

accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E. J.] Waggoner and [A. T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 234-235.

### The Proof of Our Rebellion

The fourth angel of Revelation, chapter 18, came down to join the third angel's movement and swell it to a loud cry. Listen to God speak through His prophet:

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel

This inspired statement was written in 1892, four years after the Minneapolis conference. For more than 100 years the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been in the wilderness like Israel, our counterpart. We are spiritual Israel, and we are still here because we have defied God's orders and plans for His remnant church. We have responded in rebellion, insubordination, and apostasy. The proof of our rebellion is seen in the fact that we are still awaiting the mighty outpouring of the latter rain.

"When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together, and present to the enemy a united front. . . . The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be light-

man.' Luke 21:34. If the church pursues a course similar to that of the world, they will share the same fate. Nay, rather, as they have received greater light, their punishment will be greater than that of the impenitent.

"We as a people profess to have truth in advance of every other people upon the earth. Then our life and character should be in harmony with such a faith. . . .

"Like will attract like. Those who are drinking from the same fountain of blessing will draw nearer together. Truth dwelling in the hearts of believers will lead to blessed and happy assimilation. Thus will be answered the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one even as He is one with the Father. For this oneness every truly converted heart will be striving." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 100–101.

Jesus said, "For many are called, but few are chosen." Matthew 22:14.

Only a few in 1888 accepted the great message and experienced the righteousness of Christ by faith. This is the reason for the long delay. See *ibid.*, vol. 2, 194.

### Wake Up!

God is calling to spiritual Israel to wake up! Will our people now hear His call and respond?

"Many have for years made no advancement in knowledge and true holiness. They are spiritual

dwarfs. Instead of going forward to perfection, they are going back to the darkness and bondage of Egypt. Their minds are not exercised unto godliness and true holiness.

The end of all things is at hand! Let ministers, leaders, and laity awake to the *great crisis* that is coming upon the unprepared as an overwhelming surprise. See *ibid.*, vol. 8, 28.

*The end of all things is at hand! Let ministers, leaders, and laity awake to the great crisis that is coming upon the unprepared as an overwhelming surprise.*

"Will the Israel of God awake? Will all who profess godliness seek to put away every wrong, to confess to God every secret sin, and afflict the soul before Him? Will they, with great humility, investigate the motives of every action, and know that the eye of God reads all, searches out every hidden thing? Let the work be thorough, the consecration to God entire. He calls for a full surrender of all that we have and are. Ministers and people need a new conversion, a transformation of the mind, without which we are not saviors of life unto life, but of death unto death. Great privileges belong to the people of God. Great light has been given them, that they may attain to their high calling in Christ Jesus; yet they are not what God would have them to be and what He designs they shall be." *Ibid.*, 124.

"My heart is filled with anguish when I think of the tame messages borne by some of our ministers, when they have a message of life and death to bear. The ministers are asleep; the lay members are asleep; and a world is perishing in sin. May God help His people to arouse and walk and work as men and women on the borders of the eternal world. Soon an awful surprise is coming upon the inhabitants of the world. Suddenly, with power and great glory, Christ will come. Then there will be no time to prepare to meet Him. Now is the time for us to give the warning message." *Ibid.*, 37.

Truly, we are responsible for the delay of Christ's return, and it is up to us to decide how soon we shall enter the Promised Land.

May God help His beloved church in this great crisis is my prayer. ✨



### Back To Our Future H. A. St. John

We live in a time in history when revisionists mold the truths of the past into almost unrecognizable shapes.

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Volume 17, Number 8

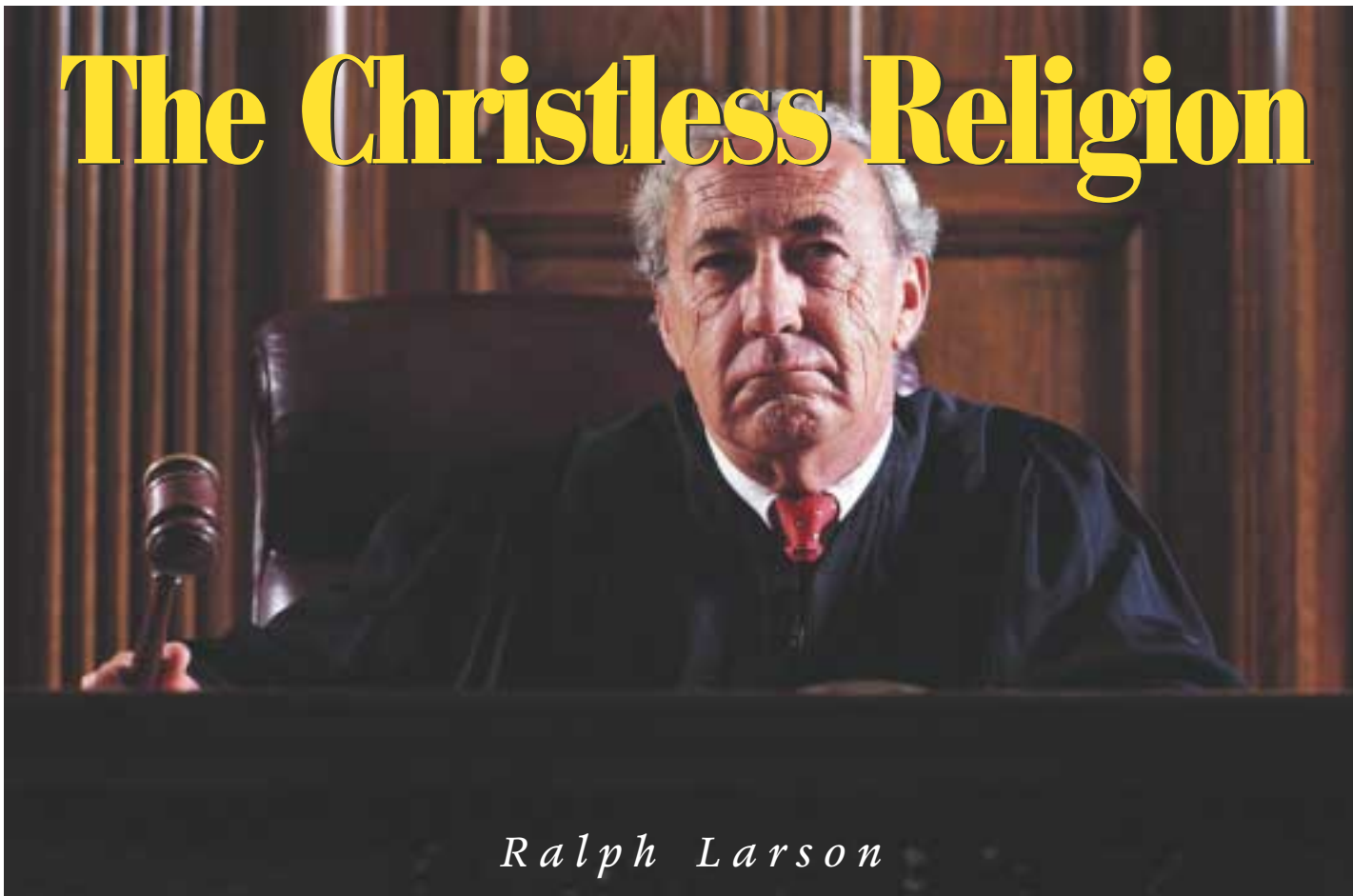
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# The Christless Religion



Ralph Larson

I wish you could have seen it. The way those heads swiveled around toward me, and the way the wide-open eyes stared at me, was a moment worth remembering! It happened in a classroom at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. After twenty years in the ministry, I had returned to work toward my doctoral degree. Thus, I was that much older than most of my classmates, who had just finished college.

As I went from class to class, I was first astonished and then displeased by the frequency with which I heard these young, inexperienced ministerial students make uncomplimentary references to “those old Adventist legalists out there in the churches.” There came a day when I had had enough. I raised my hand, and when the professor recognized me I said,

“I would just like to say that I have been ministering to the Seventh-day Adventist people for twenty years, and I have never yet met a legalist among them.”

That is what caused the startled reaction described above. The professor made a brief comment about the definition of terms, and went on with his lecture. One of the students talked to me afterward, and left me with the strong impression that there was indeed a need for a definition of terms. *What, really, is a legalist?* I felt that some of my young classmates did not have a clue.

I was, of course, familiar with the term *legalist*. I had seen and heard it, countless times, hurled at our people by the enemies of our faith. Their reasoning was as simple as it was senseless. *Anyone who observed the seventh-day Sabbath was a legalist.* Never mind that Jesus was a Sabbathkeeper, as were the apostles and the New Testament Christians. Never mind that the Old Testament prophets and all of God’s sincere people of that time were Sabbathkeepers. They said things were somehow different now. In our time, one could, and should, faithfully observe all of the Ten Commandments—except the Sabbath commandment. To observe

the fourth commandment was to be a cursed legalist, an offense to God. I had seen much of this strange reasoning, and wondered if some of my classmates had been deceived by it.

I gradually learned that theirs was a greater problem. They were taking a dim view of obedience to any and all of the Ten Commandments. They were uncomfortable with the very word *obedience*, or with any preaching about God’s law. “*Just love the Lord and let it all hang out.*” That was their credo. To exalt God’s Ten Commandments, or any other of His requirements, was *legalism*. We must face the fact that this attitude is widespread in the church today. The scornful, disparaging term *legalist* is being thrown around by people, and even ministers, who, I am convinced, have no idea what it means.

## Inspired Definitions

So, let us go to the inspired writings for some definitions—beginning with *The Desire of Ages*, 280: “A **legal religion** can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a

loveless, **Christless religion.**" (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

Do not pass by this definition too quickly. What does it really mean? Just what part does Christ play in the experience of a true Christian?

The true Christian looks to Christ for strength and power to do His will, and for grace and forgiveness for his shortcomings and mistakes. His is by no means a Christless religion. Christ is the center of his being. He can say with the Apostle Paul: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

The opposite of this experience would be the Christless religion—that of a person who looks at God's law and decides that it is all that he needs. He thinks that he can readily keep the law in his own strength. He may even think that he has always kept the law, like the rich young ruler who said to Christ, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." Matthew 19:20. Such a person feels no need of Christ for either strength or forgiveness. Such a person is hopelessly out of touch with reality. He fails to recognize the enormous difference between God's righteousness and the righteousness of any human being, even the most saintly. He needs to give heed to some more inspired definitions:

"Priests and rulers . . . were satisfied with a **legal religion.** . . . They thought their own righteousness all-sufficient." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 15.

"They entertain ideas that *men may be saved by their own merit.* A false religion has come in among us, a **legal religion.**" *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 230.

"He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a **legal religion**, a form of godliness." *The Desire of Ages*, 172.

"Repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. *Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God;* and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion." *Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889.

"The Lord is not pleased to have man trusting in *his own ability or good deeds* or in a **legal religion**, but in God, the living God." *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 375.

*A legalist . . . fails to recognize that his performance would have to be absolutely flawless from birth to death in order to have any weight in the scales of heaven.*

"Our own works can never purchase salvation." *The Desire of Ages*, 280.

More could be added, but surely this is enough to establish the basic facts: A *legal religion* is a religion in which there is no Christ. A *legalist* is a person who practices this Christless religion, thinking that he needs neither forgiveness from Christ nor the enabling power of Christ. He fails to recognize that his performance would have to be absolutely flawless from birth to death in order to have any weight in the scales of heaven. The utter impossibility of this has been plainly pointed out by God's messenger.

And I would say again, as I said to the class at the Theological Seminary, I have never met a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who could be so described. Not one of my Adventist acquaintances would claim to hold any concept at all of going to the kingdom of God on his own—with no help from Jesus Christ.

### **"As Filthy Rags"**

The Bible, of course, provides many examples of persons who were in this tragic condition, trying

to work their way to heaven by their own righteousness. Isaiah testified of them in his day: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Isaiah 64:6.

The Jewish leaders of Christ's day had this legal, Christless religion, trying to earn their way to heaven by their works. They were fully confident that they could do it. They felt no need of either Christ or His righteousness. The apostle Paul was much like them until he

was confronted by Christ on the road to Damascus. Their "righteousnesses" were indeed like filthy rags, as Isaiah had said.

Some people find this a little hard to take. They accept the fact that their *sins* are as filthy rags, but surely not their *righteousnesses*. What about their kindness to their neighbors, their sincere and fervent prayers, their selfless devotion to service to God? Are these all filthy rags?

Yes, *by comparison.*

By comparison with what? Let God's messenger answer: "They had been trusting in their own righteousness. Now they saw it as filthy rags, *in comparison with the righteousness of Christ*, which is alone acceptable to God." *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 268.

Stop and think for a moment. Are we ready to say that our experience or performance, on any point, is equal to that of Christ? Consider, for example, our spirit of forgiveness. How would it compare with that of Christ, who actually prayed for the Father to forgive those who were nailing Him to His cross? We have to recognize that this is so far above and beyond anything we, of

ourselves, can do that there is really no comparison. Yet, we must have this spirit of forgiveness in order to qualify for a place in the kingdom of God. The same would apply to any other aspect of our Christian experience. *Our righteousness must be equal to the righteousness of Christ. That is the only righteousness that God will accept.* How can we ever hope to have such righteousness?

in which he argues that *Christians sin because God wants them to sin.* According to him, God is too wise to let Christians have complete victory over sin. He and his followers would, of course, denounce any effort to be victorious over sin as *legalism.*

We cannot deny that the strange reasoning of these sin-loving “Christians” is creeping into our church. That is why some members

the birth of Isaac?—Of course not. His action was identical in both cases. Why, then, was one legalism and the other faith?—Because of the different attitudes in Abraham’s heart. In the case of Hagar, Abraham was relying on his own ability. There was no faith needed or exercised. In the case of Sarah, he was relying on the promise of God, knowing full well that what he was attempting was impossible in human ability. Thus, Paul makes it clear that legalism is not an action; it is an attitude of the heart.

This leads to a very important question: *What human being is able to read the attitudes of the heart?*—Obviously none. Only God can read the heart. So, who is qualified to judge legalism?—Obviously, only God.

Let us not overlook, however, an aspect of legalism that is even more deceptive than the self-sufficient attitude of the Pharisee. Consider the person who openly acknowledges his need of Christ’s righteousness, yet he is drawn away by the temptations and pressures of this world. He does not make it his first priority to obtain and maintain a living connection with Christ, and thus, he fails to truly live by faith. We are clearly warned of this attitude of *neglect:*

“The spirit of bondage is engendered by seeking to live in accordance with **legal religion**, through striving to fulfill the claims of the law *in our own strength.* There is hope for us only as we come under the Abrahamic covenant, which is the covenant of grace by faith in Christ Jesus.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1077.

“Those who have not a daily experience in the things of God will not move wisely. They may have a **legal religion**, a form of godliness, there may be an appearance of light in the church; all the machinery—much of it human invention—may appear to be working well, and yet the church may be as *destitute of the grace of God* as were the hills of

*The same identical action can be either legalistic or an act of true faith and obedience, depending on the attitude of the heart.*

### The Way of Obedience

Do not despair. There is a way, but *only one way.* We can receive it as a free gift from Jesus Christ when we accept Him and obey Him. Put these two scriptures together:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Acts 16:31.

“He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” Hebrews 5:9.

The word “obey” as in the above scripture is an offense to many of the Christians of our time. They bristle and cry, “Legalism” at any mention of the principle of obedience, or of the law of God. To such persons even our efforts to strengthen our faith are considered to be an element of legalism. Consider these words by theologian Neal Punt in his book, *Unconditional Good News*, 137: “As paradoxical as it may seem, imperfect faith is evidence of our union with Jesus Christ.”

Imperfect faith goes with imperfect conduct. This is very close to saying that some sin in our lives is evidence of our union with Christ. There can be great confusion on this point. I have in my possession a paper written by a Seventh-day Adventist theologian

and even some ministers do not hesitate to hurl the epithet “legalist” at those of us who still believe in the principle of obedience as expressed by Jesus in the words, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15), and echoed by the apostle John: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

### An Attitude Problem

Those ministers and church members who are so quick to hurl the epithet “legalist” at those of us who still believe in the principle of obedience are making clear their ignorance of an important truth, that *legalism is not an action; it is an attitude.* The same identical action can be either legalistic or an act of true faith and obedience, depending on the attitude of the heart. Paul makes this clear in what he calls “an allegory” of Hagar and Sarah in the fourth chapter of Galatians. He refers to the birth of Ishmael to Hagar, and of Isaac to Sarah, and describes the first experience (of Hagar) as legalism and the second (of Sarah) as faith.

But we must delicately and chastely ask, Was the action of Abraham that resulted in the birth of Ishmael any different than the action of Abraham that resulted in

Gilboa of dew and rain." *Review and Herald*, January 31, 1893; see also *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 417–418.

"Ministers preaching present truth will *assent* to the necessity of the influence of the Spirit of God in the conviction of sin and the conversion of souls, and this influence must attend the preaching of the Word, but *they do not feel its importance sufficiently to have a deep and practical knowledge of the same*. The scantiness of the grace and power of the divine influence of the truth upon their own hearts prevents them from discerning spiritual things and from presenting its positive necessity upon the church. So they go crippling along, dwarfed in religious growth, because they have in their ministry a **legal religion**. *The power of the grace of God is not felt to be a living, effectual necessity, an abiding principle.*" *Selected Messages*, book 3, 189.

What is God looking for?

"God has given us the rule of conduct which every one of His servants must follow. It is obedience to His law, not merely a **legal obedience**, but *an obedience which enters into the life, and is exemplified in the character.*" *The Desire of Ages*, 523.

"There is no safety for any soul who has merely a **legal religion**, a form of godliness, a round of ceremonial exactions. To attend services on the Sabbath, to pray occasionally or regularly, makes no one a Christian. *The important thing is to become united to Christ, to believe in Christ as a personal Saviour, to live by faith in the Son of God.*" *Signs of the Times*, September 26, 1892.

### "Thy Law Is Within My Heart"

Therefore, let us give heed to the counsel of God's messenger: "Both Old and New Testament Scriptures teach *the principle of obedience* to the commandments of God as the terms of securing that life which measures with the life of God; *for it is through obedience that we become partakers of the divine nature*, and learn to escape the corruptions that are in the world

through lust. Therefore its maxims are to be studied, its commands obeyed, its principles, which are more precious than gold, brought

drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. So in every soul wherein Christ—the hope of glory—dwells, His words are re-

*It was not necessary to explain to an unfallen angel that if you loved your neighbor you would not steal from him, or lie to him, or covet his goods, and so on. Unfallen beings needed no such instruction.*

into the daily life." *Loma Linda Messages*, 257.

Some will ask, "Why do Christians need law? Why isn't it good enough to just love the Lord and let it all hang out?"

The answer is simple and clear. *It is because of our fallen human nature*. It was not always so. Before sin entered the picture, and the Fall of man occurred, such details of law as we have in the Ten Commandments were not needed. It was not necessary to explain to an unfallen angel that if you loved your neighbor you would not steal from him, or lie to him, or covet his goods, and so on. Unfallen beings needed no such instruction. The principle of love was enough for them. Ellen White writes:

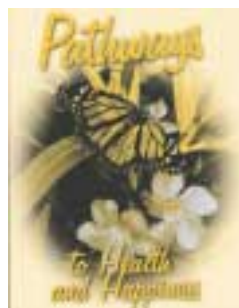
"But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as *an awakening to something unthought of*. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. . . . Obedience is to them no

echoed, 'I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.' Psalm 40:8." *Maranatha*, 79.

A final comment on the great confusion that fills the minds of the modern "Christians" who define obedience to God's law as "legalism," and the misguided Seventh-day Adventists who are following them: *They are grossly contradicting and violating what their own churches profess*.

Francis D. Nichol, in his well-known book *Reasons For Our Faith*, has a chapter entitled "The Law of God in Church Creeds." Here he presents portions of seventeen major church creeds, all of which strongly affirm the principle of obedience to God's law as the duty of faith for all Christians. Six of them contain a clear declaration that this principle is not contrary to the grace of the gospel but complies with that grace.

So, let us not be disturbed by those who recklessly throw around the word "legalist," and let us take our stand with Jesus who said: "Thy law is within my heart." ✨



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Throughout this earth's history, God has entrusted to His people the task of bearing witness to all the sad, lonely, angry, sick, hurting people of this world. What are God's methods for this endeavor, and how can we better fulfill the mission we have been given? Let us strive to live for Him and to share His goodness with everyone we see each day.

## Bible Marking

"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:

**Children of Promise,**

**CPI:** Deuteronomy 7:6-8.

- Turn to the first verse and write the comment (if you wish to use the comments), and the next reference in the margin near 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 reach the end. Beside the last text, write "**End CP.**"

- Go through the study to check for broken links.

- Share the study with others!

## Children of Promise

### Code: CP

**CPI: Deuteronomy 7:6-8.**

In choosing Israel, "the fewest" people, God had a plan.

**CP2: Isaiah 43:9-10.**

He intended that His people would be a light to the rest of the world.

**CP3: Exodus 19:4-6.**

By following God's directions, Israel was to become a wonderful witness of His power and His grace.

**CP4: Nehemiah 1:8-9.**

When the Israelites strayed into disobedience, God gave them a choice, to either return to Him or be scattered among the heathen.

**CP5: Daniel 9:5-6, 10-12.**

After long patience—eagerly awaiting the repentance of His people that He might gather them back to Himself—God finally allowed them to be taken into Babylonian captivity.

**CP6: 2 Chronicles 6:37-39.**

When Israel repented—confessing and turning from their sins—God permitted them to return to their own land.

**CP7: Daniel 9:24.**

God gave Israel 490 years to demonstrate their change of heart and willingness to obey Him.

**CP8: Daniel 9:26-27; see also Matthew 23:36-24:2.**

Because they returned to their former ways, God told them that Jerusalem and their temple would be left desolate.

**CP9: Matthew 21:43.**

Jesus sadly told the wayward people of God that the kingdom would be taken away from them and given to others who would bear His "fruits."

**CPI0: 1 Peter 2:7-10.**

Peter tells us to whom the kingdom has now been given.

**CPI1: Romans 9:8.**

Paul clearly defines who are now the "children of the promise."

**CPI2: Galatians 3:28-29.**

What a privilege and opportunity we have been given!

**CPI3: 1 John 5:3-4.**

If we love God, we will, by faith, overcome in every area of our lives, and then our witness of God's power and His grace will be more effective. ✠





# It Is High Time to Awake!

Bill Humeniuk

“Knowing the time, that *now* it is *high time* to awake out of sleep: for *now* is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” Romans 13:11. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

God, in His mercy, is sending *wake up* calls to His people. Yes, we see some movement here and there, but it appears as if life continues on as usual. Nonetheless, “God calls for a spiritual *revival* and a spiritual *reformation*.” *Review and Herald*, February 25, 1902.

Satan always presents the counterfeit when he sees that the genuine is about to occur. Is it possible that a genuine revival is about to occur, since we see a false revival being stirred not only in Babylon but also in the Seventh-day Adventist Church? It seems that people are being told that all they have to do is to become justified and love others—that sanctification is not a condition of salvation. The celebration movement, with its uncouth music, is spreading rapidly. Every wind of doctrine is blowing, and worldliness is creeping within our beloved church. All this is false revival, and oh, how Satan is pleased!

But, “before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a *revival* of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times.” *The Great Controversy*, 464. Yes, a revival will occur just before probation closes and the seven last plagues are poured out.

Let us explore, through the Spirit of Prophecy, approximately when this revival is supposed to begin. “When we as a people *understand* what this book [Revelation] means to us, there will be seen *among us* a *great revival*.” *Testimonies to Ministers*, 113.

“When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better *understood*, believers will have an entirely different religious experience.” *Ibid.*, 114.

“The truths of this book [Revelation] are addressed to those living in these *last days*. . . . We are *nearing the time* when the prophecies of the book of Revelation are to be fulfilled.” *Ibid.*, 113.

“As we near the close of this world’s history, the prophecies relating to the *last days* especially *demand* our study. The last book of

the New Testament Scriptures is full of truth that we *need to understand*.” *Ibid.*, 116.

Notice the word “demand.” The Holy Spirit is gently demanding us to study last-day prophecies— for our good!

God, through His servant, has revealed something to us in the preceding quotes about the book of Revelation. We must seriously begin studying that book so that we may *understand* the truths revealed therein, which will begin a revival and develop a different religious experience among God’s people by reflecting the character of Jesus Christ, so Jesus can come. See *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 69.

My dear people, what are we waiting for? How many of us still sit down, with the TV and the computer turned off, and begin *searching* into what God requires of us for preparation in this crisis hour?

“Though no man knoweth the day nor the hour of His coming, we are instructed and required to *know* when it is *near*. We are further taught that to disregard His warning, and refuse or neglect to know when His advent is near, will

be as fatal for us as it was for those who lived in the days of Noah.” *The Great Controversy*, 371. Then the servant of the Lord said, “show the people where we are in prophetic history.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 716.

Do you understand the significance of these statements, that we are *instructed and required to know*? God, in His gracious, loving, and merciful way has pulled out all the

fall on your knees and plead with God, then understanding and preparation will be revealed. God is anxious to give eyesalve to His people (see Revelation 3:18) that we may understand and behold Jesus, for the very first verse of the Apocalypse indicates that it is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ” to the last generation, for the last crisis, in these last days.

of harlots, the mystery of Babylon. Read also 2 Thessalonians 2:2-9 and see who this mysterious woman is—“that Wicked,” “mystery of iniquity.” Revelation 17:7 talks about “the mystery of the woman” and “the beast that carrieth her.” But verses 8-11 begin to identify that mystery.

Notice, as God reveals to us, step-by-step, the chain of events that leads to the coming of Jesus Christ. The woman (Babylon, the false church) is riding the beast with seven heads, which are seven mountains and seven kings. Verse 18 reveals to us that this woman (a spiritual power) is controlling the heads (political powers), revealing how worldly governments have always been dominated by the false worship of gods, images, and the heavenly bodies—especially in Babylon and now papal Rome.

Verse 8 has perplexed many Bible students by stating, “The beast that thou sawest *was*, and *is not*; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit. . . . behold the beast that *was*, and *is not*, and *yet is*.” It mentions the world wondering at such changes occurring in this beast.

Since verses 9 and 10 identify the seven heads as seven mountains and seven kings, we now have something to work with. Since Revelation reveals to this last generation what has already transpired, what is occurring, and what is about to occur, we need to march through history and identify the five fallen kings, the one that is, and the other that “is not yet come, but when he cometh, he must continue a short space.” The prophetic chart on page 20 will assist us in following these seven kings, including the five fallen ones.

### **The Five Fallen Kings/Beasts**

How can we know who the first five kings are? Turn to Daniel 2:36-41. Here Daniel sees an image, which represents four kingdoms. Then, in chapter 7, verses 2-8, Daniel refers to four beasts, which verse 17 clarifies to be four kings.

*I believe that God is calling our attention to where we are in time, and that it is time for us to pay attention, wake up, and prepare for a revival and reformation.*

stops in warning His people, then, through the servant of the Lord, He is begging us, “Listen to Me, you are required to know when My coming is near if you desire salvation.” Do you really desire salvation? Are you hungering and thirsting for eternity? If so, you are *required to know* when His coming is near—and oh, what a revival and reformation will follow! Then we will be truly “looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God”! 2 Peter 3:12.

Prophecy, as revealed by Jesus, shows us the past, present, and future. As we study—earnestly and prayerfully—we will *understand* where we are in prophetic history.

“If you lose confidence in the *Testimonies* you will drift away from Bible truth.” *Ibid.*, 674. Oh, may we, in this crisis hour, cling to the Bible and the *Testimonies*, for they will strengthen us in faith and purpose for the final conflict, the loud cry, the close of probation, the time of trouble, the coming of the Lord, and finally, translation!

### **We Need Divine Wisdom**

Revelation 17:9 says, “Here is the mind which hath wisdom.” We desperately need wisdom. Daniel 12:10 also states, “The wise shall understand.” If you would truly seek understanding and wisdom regarding Revelation and Daniel,

Before we continue on, please pray in a special way for “the wisdom that is *from above* [which] is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” James 3:17. Please read also verses 13-16 for a deeper understanding of verse 17.

I believe that God is calling our attention to where we are in time, and that *it is time* for us to pay attention, wake up, and prepare for a revival and reformation.

As you read this article, please use your Bible. This article is not designed for a casual reader; it is designed to awaken God’s people to prepare *now* for the end-time crises and for translation, to show where we are in time, and then for you to study it for yourself in greater detail.

### **Revelation 17**

Now, let us begin our study on one part of the book of Revelation—chapter 17—which distinctly reveals to us how close we are to the end. This chapter depicts a worldwide religious/political union, and in particular the woman (false church) sitting on a scarlet beast, decked out with the world, full of filthiness and abominations of erroneous doctrines, the mother

Daniel 8:3–8, 20–21 identify the ram to be Media and Persia [Medo-Persia], and the goat to be Grecia [Greece]. By this time, Babylon is fallen and gone.

Now, going back to the chart, who is the first king? Daniel 2:37 states that God identifies Babylon as the first king, which rose to power in 605 B.C. Then we see Medo-Persia rise to power in 538 B.C., and Greece in 331 B.C. These are clearly identified in Daniel, chapters 2, 7, and 8. We quickly see three kings (and kingdoms) that came and went.

The fourth beast, pagan Rome – a beast as strong as iron (see Daniel 2:40), and dreadful, with great iron teeth, (see Daniel 7:7) – rises to power in 168 B.C. We do not have space here to discuss the little horn power of chapters 7 and 8; however, we see it rise to power. Daniel 7:24 identifies horns as kings, political powers; but it says this little horn will be *diverse* from the others. Why? – Verse 25 says he will speak against “the most High,” and “think to change times and laws,” identifying this little horn as a political/religious power – papal Rome.

In A.D. 538, the Heruli, Vandals, and Ostrogoths were all subdued and uprooted, leaving the Papacy in total control and unopposed by any political or religious power for 1260 years (the Dark Ages) until A.D. 1798, when the time of the end began.

### The Sixth King/Beast

In 1798, General Berthier of France took the pope captive, where he died, thus receiving the “deadly wound” of Revelation 13:3. This action of France also fulfilled Daniel 11:40, as atheism (the king of the south) overran papal Rome (the king of the north) and briefly rose to power. Atheism is also the beast that “shall ascend from the bottomless pit” in Revelation 17:8. The servant of the Lord confirms this in *The Great Controversy*, 268–269:

“The period when the two witnesses [of Revelation 11:3] were

to prophesy clothed in sackcloth, ended in 1798. As they were approaching the termination of their work in obscurity, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as ‘the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.’ Revelation 11:7. In many of the nations of Europe the powers that ruled in church and state had for

worship; now divine honors were paid to the vilest objects. The work which the Papacy had begun, *atheism* completed. The one withheld from the people the truths of the Bible; the other taught them to reject both the Bible and its Author. The seed sown by priests and prelates was yielding its evil fruit.” *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 192.

*In 1798, we have the fall of Rome—the fifth beast, “the beast that was” (Revelation 17:8), and atheism, under France, rising to power, making it the sixth beast or king.*

centuries been controlled by Satan through the medium of the Papacy. But here is brought to *view a new manifestation of satanic power. . . .*

“Another power – the *beast from the bottomless pit* – was to arise to make open, avowed war upon the Word of God. . . .

“*This is atheism*, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance. . . .

“A little before the year 1798 some *power of satanic origin* and character would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God’s two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh and the licentiousness of Sodom.

“This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfillment in the *history of France*.”

Notice that the Holy Spirit revealed a Satanic power rising around 1798. Atheism, under France, was that power. For much more detail, please read the chapter entitled “The Bible and the French Revolution” in *The Great Controversy*, 265–288.

“The same master spirit that urged on the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, led also in the scenes of the French Revolution. . . . Romanism had enjoined image

There you have it with no speculation or surmising. In 1798, we have the fall of Rome – the fifth beast, “the beast that was” (Revelation 17:8), and atheism, under France, rising to power, making it the sixth beast or king.

### The Seventh King/Beast

Also, remember, another nation was in its infancy in 1776. The United States was beginning to rise in power. This nation is described more fully in Revelation 13, which we will not dwell upon in this study.

Though France waned in power, atheism continued to live. Communism rose to great power around the world, especially in the former U.S.S.R., suppressing the Bible and the existence of religion as a whole by severe persecution. In this way atheism – the sixth beast – was still a contending power.

### The Rise of the Eighth Beast

Behind the scenes was the Papacy – the beast that “was” (because of the deadly wound it received in 1798), and “is not” (because it was weakened politically and religiously). This beast was recovering slowly. A new pope was elected and continued to progress. In 1929, Mussolini restored the property that had been taken away from the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican City was

	Babylon	Medo-Persia	Greece	Pagan Rome	Papal Rome	Atheism France, USSR	USA	Papal Rome
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Cooperation Rev. 13	
	605 BC	538 BC	331 BC	168 BC	538 AD	1798 AD	1991 AD	
vs. 8	Was (Past)					Is Not (Present)		Yet Is (Future)
vs. 10	Five Are Fallen (Past)					One Is (Present)	Other Is Not Yet Come --- Continues A Short Space	
vs. 11	Was (Past)					Is Not (Present)		The Eighth is of The Seven

given political sovereignty, and the healing process of the Papacy's deadly wound began to accelerate. As the Papacy was gaining power politically and religiously, it was fulfilling the "yet is" of Revelation 17:8. Today, the Papacy continues to rise to much greater heights.

On June 7, 1982, President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II combined forces to bring the downfall of communism (atheism). This cooperative effort was called the "Holy Alliance" by *Time* magazine, February 24, 1992. In 1989, the Berlin Wall collapsed and in 1991, the Communist headquarters in Moscow was abolished.

America now stands as the only superpower—the *seventh beast* that is to continue for only a short time. See Revelation 17:10. And, according to Revelation, chapter 13, the seventh beast (the United States) will restore complete power to the eighth beast (the papal power), which is of the seven (having the characteristics of the seven previous kingdoms or powers).

"The Scriptures teach that popery is to regain its lost supremacy." *Maranatha*, 194.

"The tyranny of Rome will be exercised, but Christ is our refuge." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 206.

"Her former persecutions will be repeated." *The Great Controversy*, 581.

"That gigantic system of false religion [the Papacy] is a masterpiece of Satan's power." *Ibid.*, 50.

Do you see all this happening right before your eyes? Revelation 17:12 is being fulfilled *right before our eyes*; even now the United Nations—enabled by the military power of the United States—is working to unite all nations under one world order. Revelation 17:13 states, "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." See also *Selected Messages*, book 3, 392–393. Yes, the eighth beast is reviving rapidly, and the whole prophecy will soon be fulfilled. The United States of America, which has been a lamb for two centuries, is now beginning to sound like a dragon, and will soon enforce the decrees of the Papacy.

"God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that *His people may be prepared.*" *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 452.

I believe we shall soon see events occurring. Yea, they have begun with September 11, 2001—when we were attacked by terrorists—and with the more recent developments in Israel and Palestine. These events could quickly be

followed by a financial collapse or crisis (*Ibid.*, vol. 9, 13); national disasters (*The Great Controversy*, 590; *Maranatha*, 176, 216); and/or moral corruption (*The Great Controversy*, 587).

Oh, how we as a people should study the books of Daniel and Revelation. Then we would hasten a revival and reformation that would bring upon us an entirely different religious experience, and prepare us for the final days and the coming of our Lord. What do you say?

Because the events are upon us, let us arise and support the gospel work. Money will soon depreciate (see *Evangelism*, 63), and hoarded wealth will be worthless (see *Review and Herald*, March 21, 1878). Lay your property on the altar (see *Early Writings*, 57); loose every encumbrance (see *ibid.*, 50, 57).

It is time! Let us *awake*, and *arise* to *action*! Revelation, chapter 17, is literally being fulfilled before our eyes, which means that if we as a people will better understand Revelation, there will be a great revival. God's true, remnant people are studying Daniel and Revelation, and a revival and reformation is soon to follow. Join me in this study, and may God stir your hearts in this final movement. ✨



# Consecration and Diligence in Christian Workers

*Ellen G. White*

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” Psalm 51:10-13.

This is one of the most earnest and contrite prayers on record, and the Lord’s response is, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.” Ezekiel 36:26.

“Create in me a clean heart.” This is beginning right, at the very foundation of Christian character; for out of the heart are the issues of life. If all, ministers and people, would see to it that their hearts are right with God, we should see much larger results from the labor put forth. The more important and responsible your work, the greater the necessity that you have clean hearts. The needed grace is provided, and the power of the Holy Spirit will work with every effort you make in this direction. If every child of God would seek Him

earnestly and perseveringly, there would be a greater growth in grace. Dissensions would cease; believers would be of one heart and one mind; and purity and love would prevail in the church. By beholding we become changed. The more you contemplate the character of Christ, the more you will become conformed to His image. Come to Jesus just as you are, and He will receive you, and put a new song in your mouth, even praise to God.

“Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.” Repentance as well

as forgiveness is the gift of God through Christ. It is through the influence of the Holy Spirit that we are convinced of sin, and feel our need of pardon. None but the contrite are forgiven; but it is the grace of the Lord that makes the heart penitent. He is acquainted with all our weaknesses and infirmities, and He will help us. He will hear the prayer of faith; but the sincerity of prayer can be proved

you associate with the young, and yet have so little desire for their salvation? Let them see that you care for their souls. As far as possible break down every barrier that keeps them from Christ. Labor for them in the desk, and at their homes. Pray with and for them. Point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and urge them to come and be healed.

to truth, from the path of transgression to obedience to God's law. The mighty power of grace worked with them, and success attended their efforts. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Corinthians 1:27-29.

*Their usefulness does not depend so much on wealth or learning or power as on a willing mind, their consecration to Christ and His cause.*

only by our efforts to bring ourselves into harmony with the great moral standard which will test every man's character. We need to open our hearts to the influence of the Spirit, and to experience His transforming power. The reason that you do not receive more of the saving help of God is because the channel of communication between Heaven and your own souls is clogged by worldliness, love of display, and desire for supremacy. While some are conforming more and more to the world's customs and maxims, we should be molding our lives after the divine Model. And our covenant-keeping God will restore unto us the joys of His salvation, and uphold us by His free Spirit.

"Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." The nearer we live to God, the more we shall be able to accomplish for our fellow men; for the Lord will work with our efforts. Your hearts are too cold and unimpressible; they should be all aglow with the love of Jesus. While hungering and thirsting for salvation yourselves, you will have a longing desire to aid in saving precious souls; and your humble, pathetic appeals to those out of Christ will move hearts. How can

### **The Secret of Usefulness**

Let labor for souls become a part of your life. Go to the homes of those even who manifest no interest. While mercy's sweet voice invites the sinner, work with every energy of heart and brain, as did Paul, who "ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Acts 20:31. In the day of God, how many will confront us, and say, "I am lost! I am lost! And you never warned me; you never entreated me to come to Jesus. Had I believed as you did, I would have followed every judgment-bound soul within my reach with prayers and tears and warnings."

Ministers, teach the people how to work. Tell them that their usefulness does not depend so much on wealth or learning or power as on a willing mind, their consecration to Christ and His cause. In times past God has used humble men, and because of their faith and devotion they have often accomplished more than many more pretentious laborers. They realized their weakness and dependence upon God; and by letters, by tracts, by personal efforts in appeals and warnings, by a well-ordered life and godly conversation, they turned many from error

Two men start out to labor in the cause of God. One has had every advantage of education. His mind is cultivated; his powers are developed, and he is prepared to become an efficient worker. But we look in vain to see the good results of all the advantages he has enjoyed. Instead of increasing his usefulness, his education fosters a feeling of power and self-importance; he esteems himself above his less fortunate brethren. He does not continue to store his mind with useful knowledge, to fit himself for greater responsibilities. While he boasts of learning, he does not labor to the utmost of his ability, with an eye single to the glory of God. The other has good natural abilities, but a limited education. He is a constant learner in the school of Christ. The love of Jesus is in his heart, and he walks humbly with God. He is unselfish in thought and purpose, and tries to do all the good he can. As he uses the ability he has, his mind expands. Said the psalmist, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm 119:130.

The educated man may exalt himself over his unlearned brother; but he is like the man in the parable, who hid his talent in the earth. He has shunned the trouble and exertion necessary to trade with his intrusted talent, that he may be able to return it with increase; and he will be condemned as a slothful servant, and dismissed from the presence of his Lord. But the one who is faithful in the

improvement of his talents will return both principal and interest, and will hear the "well done, good and faithful servant." Matthew 25:23. The man who blesses society and makes a success of life, is the one – whether educated or uneducated – who uses all his powers in the service of God and his fellow men.

In all our churches there are persons who might be educated to become workers for Christ. But there are few who will venture to go out and labor unselfishly, trusting all to Jesus. They must have wages; and even then, if something offers [presents itself] that promises greater financial success, many youth will choose the worldly employment. They do not love Christ, and are not willing to make sacrifices for His sake.

### **Need for Self-sacrificing Personal Labor**

There is a great work to be done to warn the world. Let us do what we can ourselves, and encourage others to labor. There is certainly a fault among us, or there would be more talent developed to unite us in our efforts for souls. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Matthew 9:38. Have special meetings for the education of workers. Souls for whom Christ died are perishing all around us, and what excuse can we give that they have never been warned?

If you would preach fewer sermons, and do more personal labor in visiting and praying with individuals, your ministry would be more like that of Jesus. We must have a knowledge of the truth, that we may be able to meet its wily opponents; but we have certainly made a mistake in supposing that so much depends on long, argumentative discourses. If one part of your work must be limited, let it be the discourses; for unless your sermons are followed by personal effort, Satan will often catch away

the seed of truth sown in the heart, and the good effect will be lost.

I charge you, Do not do half-hearted work. Some of you who in the beginning of your ministry were earnest and persevering have grown weary of protracted effort and ceaseless turmoil, and you sigh for repose, and dream of leisure and fireside comfort. Some are greatly overworked, and are suffering in consequence; and others, by doing their work negligently, have brought double burdens upon these unselfish, thorough, God-fearing workers.

perseveringly, that God may work in us and by us. In these days of multiplied popular fables, there is no way to reach the people only as God works through our efforts. Angels are commissioned to be our helpers. They are passing between earth and heaven, bearing upward the record of the doings of all the children of men.

We can never be saved in inactivity. The life of Jesus rebukes every idler. In His strength we may do much greater and more perfect work. The promises of God are rich, and full, and free, and we may

*Do mighty strokes for God. There are no compromises to be made with sin, nor any with timidity and cowardice.*

Some are not willing to bear reproach for Christ's sake. Think what mighty truths God has entrusted to our keeping, and let earnest work follow your thoughts. Do mighty strokes for God. There are no compromises to be made with sin, nor any with timidity and cowardice. The Christian worker knows no weariness; there is no drudgery in his Heaven-appointed work. He enters into the joy of his Lord in seeing souls emancipated from the slavery of sin; and this joy more than repays him for every self-denial.

Our faith is weak, our sense of God's requirements feeble. We must awake to duty. We must be endued with power from on high; we must have a baptism of the Holy Spirit before we leave this place. Instead of resting satisfied with our present attainments, let us cherish a longing desire that our unclean lips may be purified, and touched with a live coal from off the altar. The words of God to us must come to the people, not in a hesitating, doubting manner, but with earnestness and power. We must pray more fervently, more

have the power of His salvation with us. Then, why do we not believe Him and work for Him? It is because threads of unbelief are woven into all the woof [crosswise threads] of life; but shall we not now commence to weave in the precious golden threads of faith? Remember, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. If clouds hide the sun from sight, we do not mourn as though it would never appear again. God's dear face of brightness is not always seen; but we are not to despond. It is our duty to trust Him in the darkness, knowing that His love is changeless. Then, let us put all our powers into our work; let us devote our voice and pen to the service of God, not laboring in our own strength or to please ourselves; and we shall see sinners converted, and God will give us a rich reward. ✨

*Review and Herald, June 24, 1884.*  
(Remarks addressed to the ministers assembled in General Conference session at Battle Creek, Michigan, in their morning meeting held November 18, 1883.)



# Unity

*William Covert*

Jesus prayed that His disciples might be one, even as He and the Father are one. When this prayer is fulfilled, the gospel cause will speedily triumph.

That which, more than anything else, now stands in the way of this is selfishness—a desire for preference and first place, or advantage in things.

Such a spirit manifested by a person who calls himself a brother does more to retard the work of truth than does the opposition of an avowed enemy.

Christ's prayer for believers is that they may be one in Him—that the world may believe. Today, the world's people fail to believe in Christ because those who profess to be His followers fail to reveal Him. Many non-professors are looking to see a manifestation of Christ in the lives of those who claim to follow Him; but too often they hear and see that which they know to be unkind and even bitter—and therefore turn away discouraged.

In one of his many entreaties for unity, Paul said: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Corinthians 1:10. The Corinthian church was divided into factions with reference to the ministry, giving preference to different men according to the estimation that carnal minds placed upon them. This condition of things greatly hindered the church in its work, besides saddening the hearts of those ministers who were striving to save sinners, rather than build up themselves.

As the apostle proceeded with his epistle, he showed that men, as to power and success, are nothing, but that the Lord is everything, even being all in all. No increase can result from any man's labor only as God gives it; and no laborer can accomplish anything except as he becomes an instrument in the Lord's hands.

All are to let the mind of Christ dwell and work in them, and so be perfectly joined together in one mind and one judgment. Instead of an unpleasant, critical spirit, they are to be so filled with the heavenly spirit and power that nothing can resist their work and influence for the right.

Christ gave the following promises to those who will labor in the right spirit: "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." Luke 21:15. In the case of Stephen, it was said: "And they [the adversaries] were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Acts 6:10. If men today will be emptied of self, and filled with the Spirit, as Stephen was, they will be moved by the same power that was manifested through him.

The same ability will also be shown in their teaching of Christ, or in defending the truth. Also their wisdom in the cause will be as marked, and their success as great, as that of this earnest martyr.

But this unity can never exist until the mind of Christ only, moves and dwells in the hearts of all believers. The Lord can be known only through one mind, and His will can be wrought only by one power.

Unity will prevail when the love that moved Jesus to leave heaven,

and impelled Him in His mission of salvation, dwells in all hearts. The unity that shall leaven all things is that which dwelt in the Infinite Bosom, and called into being the universe. The eye that can behold this unity has that singleness of vision which fills the whole body with light. The tongue that can tell it [this unity] is one touched with the living coal from off heaven's flaming altar. The faith that believes it [this unity] is the faith that abides in the mind of Christ our Saviour, and passes into action through the faculties of His children. The joy that responds to this theme of glory is that which emanates from the throne where righteousness reigns supreme, and judgment and justice preside together.

Unity is not manufactured by efforts, nor produced from resolutions, but is a child born from above, whose kindred inhabit heaven. Its goings forth have been of old, and its continuation will be to everlasting. Those who shall live eternally must come into this unity. Division must cease. Strife must end with all who will be ready for translation; for translated ones are going to a place where there are no divided minds.

Is it not high time for God's people to gather together? The great day of the Lord is fast approaching, and it behooves everyone to seek the Lord that he may be hid in the time of the coming storm.

Of course, there can be no compromises made with error; but everyone can well afford to surrender his selfishness and bickering, get rid of his folly, and become one with the Lord and His people. ✠

*Review and Herald, August 14, 1900.*





# The Need of a Spiritual Awakening

*Ellen G. White*

**T**he words of the apostle Paul to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:16), may be addressed to every member of the church of God. We are not half awake. The enemy is watching for an opportunity to take God's standard from the hands of His people, and place there his own standard; but they discern it not. The call comes, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God." Jonah 1:6. It is high time for us to awake out of sleep, to cast off the armor of Satan, and call upon Him who never slumbers nor sleeps. The Lord desires men and women to break their connection with the enemy, and link up with Christ. The mistakes of the past have been enough. Through them minds have been confused, precious opportunities have been neglected, and time, which is of more value than gold, has been wasted. We need now strong evidence that the Lord is

with us of a truth. We need to consecrate ourselves and all we have to the service of God.

In every church there is need of a spiritual awakening; for many who profess to be Christ's servants are obeying the dictates of a natural heart. They do not the works of God. They have not a saving faith in Him whom the Father hath sent. Oh, if they could only understand that by their waywardness, their inconsistency, their half-hearted service, they are denying their Redeemer and putting Him to open shame!

There are many who do not possess that faith in Christ which would constitute them lights in the world. They are satisfied to stand on a low level. To them the Saviour says, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes

with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:18-20.

Important events are about to take place. While the world is asking in scorn, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:4), the signs are rapidly fulfilling. While men are crying, "Peace and safety," sudden destruction is coming. See 1 Thessalonians 5:3. The Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the earth, and calamity is following calamity by land and by sea. Tempests and earthquakes, fires and floods, are heard of on every hand. Only in God can security be found.

Those whom God has made the depositaries of sacred truth are to stand in a pure atmosphere. Few of

those who profess to be the people of God are wearing Christ's yoke and lifting His burdens. Few are regarded by the heavenly intelligences as laborers together with God. Many who claim to be Christians have very shadowy ideas of what the name "Christian" comprehends.

The kingdom of Christ will come; but who are laboring to that end? If those who know the Lord's prayer would try to take in its meaning and realize its depth and breadth, the church would be what God desires it to be—the light of the world. Men would have less

would lead to entire dependence on Him and perfect cooperation with Him.

Christ is followed by the earnest, the true, the faithful, the meek, and the pure, while angels clothed with the panoply of heaven stand by to guard and enlighten them, for they are heaven-bound. But there are those who are often heard talking doubt and unbelief, and dwelling upon the terrible struggles they have had with infidel feelings. They talk of the discouraging features of their experience. This affects their faith and courage. At times they seem to

Such persons do not possess a religion that is pure and undefiled. Their religion is a religion of circumstances, a religion which the refining fires will wholly consume. If those around them are strong in faith and courage, if no influence is brought to bear against them, they are, to all appearance, strong in the faith. But let adversity come upon the cause, let the work drag heavily, and these souls lose faith, and hinder instead of helping. When apostasy and rebellion come, their voices are not raised in encouragement, saying, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Timothy 2:19.

This class should cultivate love for God and for secret prayer. The promise is sure, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 7:17. It will not be received with doubt and hesitancy. The heart will be filled with an assurance that will put to flight all doubt and questioning.

The light that is shining upon us with ever-increasing brightness keeps us under obligation to use every power in God's service. We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, seeking to find out how we can best glorify God in the use of our endowments.

It is the duty of every Christian to vindicate the honor of God by winning souls to Christ. But where are the missionaries to answer the calls that come from all parts of the world? Only those who place themselves in Christ's school, only those who are willing to lift His cross, can be successful missionaries. Men who can be depended on in the church, who understand its wants, who strive to keep its members true to God; men who pray and keep themselves pure from the defilement of sin, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh; men who do not leave God out of their reckoning—these are the men whom God can use. ✨

*Review and Herald*, May 21, 1901.

*Serious defects are seen in the characters of some who join the church. Those who admit them say, We will first get them into the church, and then reform them.*

desire for form and ceremony; for they would seek to plant in the heart those principles that sanctify the character.

Only when the church is composed of pure, unselfish members, can it fulfill God's purpose. Too much hasty work is done in adding names to the church roll. Serious defects are seen in the characters of some who join the church. Those who admit them say, We will first get them into the church, and then reform them. But this is a mistake. The very first work to be done is the work of reform. Pray with them, talk with them, but do not allow them to unite with God's people in church relationship until they give decided evidence that the Spirit of God is working on their hearts.

Many of those whose names are registered on the church books are not Christians. They have not a genuine experience. If they were copying their Pattern, they would pray more and quarrel less. They would strive to be laborers together with God. Their sincere faith in Christ

enjoy talking over the arguments of the infidel, thus strengthening their unbelief.

What is the reason of this darkness, this doubt and unbelief?—These men are not right with God, and they are not dealing honestly and truly with their own souls. They have neglected to cultivate personal piety. They have not separated themselves from selfishness and sin. They have failed to study Christ's life of self-denial and self-sacrifice. They have failed to imitate His purity and devotion. The sin which so easily besets them has been strengthened by cultivation. By their own negligence they have separated themselves from the company of the divine Leader, and He is a day's journey in advance of them. For their associates they have chosen the indolent, the backsliding, the unbelieving, the unthankful, the unholy; and evil angels are their attendants. What wonder is it that such are in darkness? What wonder is it that they are filled with doubt?



**Another Opinion on the Current Condition of Christian Churches**

**News Item:** “True Christians, says radio evangelist Harold Camping, should not go to church. They should drop their church memberships, leave their congregations, and just listen to the radio.

“And many of his listeners are doing what he says. At a conference of some 100 Reformed pastors, each one reported losing members because of Mr. Camping’s teachings.

“Mr. Camping, who operates the Family Radio network, bases his teaching on his idiosyncratic end-times theology. Despite his earlier mistakes—he once proclaimed that the world would end in 1994—he is undaunted in his millennialist certainty. According to his allegorical interpretation of Revelation, *he maintains that Satan has now set up his throne in the church. This is reflected in the apostasy of churches, bringing judgment even against faithful congregations.* (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

“Does Mr. Camping have a point? *Apostasy does rage* in many churches. Mainline Protestant denominations have long ago *rejected the authority of Scripture* and have made doctrines such as the *deity of Christ and His resurrection optional*, at best. Even many evangelical and conservative churches are *adjusting their teachings and their practices to fit the dominant culture, downplaying doctrine, softening the Bible’s moral demands*, and teaching that the gospel is not necessary to salvation.

“At the same time, the moral failures of so-called Christian leaders have become a world-wide scandal. Some Catholic priests are being exposed as homosexual abusers of young teenagers—with the church hierarchy covering up and enabling their crimes.” Gene Edward Veith, *World*, April 20, 2002.

**End-Time Perspective:** Even among the false prophets of the churches of Babylon some recognize the fallen condition of these churches and are not afraid to call sin by its right name. Yet, many leaders and laity in the Adventist church are desperately trying to change our message emphasis to make ourselves acceptable to the evangelical world. We are actually going to them, asking them to teach us how to worship God more fully, and asking them to advise us how and what to teach our young people. Is that amazing? We were called to warn the people and call them out of Babylon, but now we are thinking that they are not all that bad, and even wanting to learn things from them. The excuse so often given is that “they’re living up to all the light they have.” Brothers and sisters, let us remember that it is our duty to give them more light!

**Lamb-like Beast Asserts Its Authority Leading Up to Fulfilling Its End-Time Role**

**News Item:** “Washington, May 4 — The Bush administration has decided to renounce formally any involvement in a treaty setting up an international criminal court and is expected to declare that the signing of the document by the Clinton administration is no longer valid, government officials said today.

“The ‘unsigned’ of the treaty, which is expected to be announced on Monday, will be a decisive

rejection by the Bush White House of the concept of a permanent tribunal designed to prosecute individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity and other war crimes.

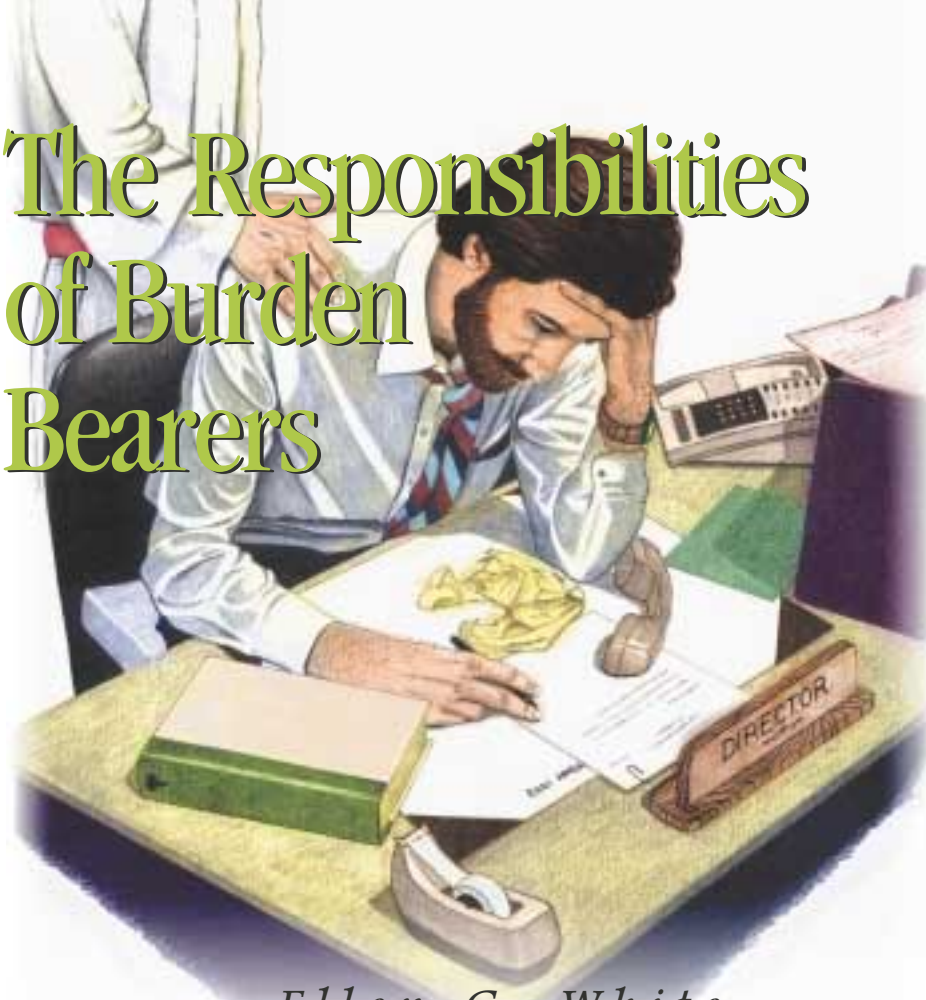
“‘We think it was a mistake to have signed it,’ an administration official said. ‘We have said we will not submit it to the Senate for ratification.’ The renunciation, officials said, also means the United States will not *recognize the court’s jurisdiction* and will *not submit* to any of its orders.

“In addition, other officials said, the United States will simultaneously assert that it will not be bound by the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a 1969 pact that outlines the obligations of nations to obey other international treaties.” Neal A. Lewis, *The New York Times On The Web*, May 5, 2002.

**End-Time Perspective:** According to Revelation, chapter 13, there are only two powers, not three, who have worldwide influence and are exercising authority over all the earth. Through the U.N., countries are trying to bring everyone under their collective authority. But Scripture points to only two powers, both deriving their sovereignty and authority from one source, the dragon. Without making a value judgment as to the political correctness of this action by the Bush administration, we see the U.S. resisting any encroachment on its sovereignty and its prerogative to exercise authority as it sees fit on the earth. When we see things like this transpiring, it should strengthen our faith in God’s Word and His messengers. Jesus said, “And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.” John 14:29.

Let us look up, for our salvation is drawing very near! Maranatha. ✠

# The Responsibilities of Burden Bearers



Ellen G. White

After King David, in the presence of the men in positions of responsibility in his kingdom, had outlined his plans regarding the building of the temple, he appealed to them to cooperate with Solomon in carrying forward this work. "Who," he asked of the assembled multitude, "is willing to consecrate his *service* this day unto the LORD?" 1 Chronicles 29:5.

## Willing Service

The response came not only in liberal offerings of treasures to meet the expense of the building, but also in willing *service* in the various lines of God's work. Hearts were filled with a desire to return to the Lord His own, by consecrating to His service all the energies of mind and body. Those upon whom had been placed burdens of state, determined to labor heartily and unselfishly, using for God the skill and ability He had given them.

David's exhortation to Solomon, and his appeal to the burden bearers of the nation, should be

kept in mind by those who are in positions of trust in the Lord's cause today. In this our day God's people will prosper only so long as they keep His precepts; and those who bear responsibilities are called upon to *consecrate their service* to the Lord. Conference officers, church officers, managers and heads of departments in our institutions, laborers in the field at home and abroad — all are to render faithful service by using their talents wholly for God. The Lord is not pleased with halfhearted service. To Him we owe all that we have and are.

## Implicit Obedience

To all engaged in His service, the Lord gives wisdom. The tabernacle to be borne from place to place in the wilderness, and the temple at Jerusalem, were built in accordance with special directions from God. Throughout the ages, God has been particular as to the design and the accomplishment of His work. In this age, He has given His people much light and instruc-

tion in regard to how His work is to be carried forward — in an elevated, refined, conscientious manner; and He is pleased with those who in their service carry out His design. Only those who, feeling their own inefficiency, obey implicitly the Lord's commands, can be retained in His service.

Uzzah meddled with the ark, notwithstanding the plain command of the Lord to regard it with fear and trembling, and to keep it sacred. He had to be removed from the Lord's work. God changes not. Today, He is just as desirous as in the days of Uzzah that men shall know His ways, and that they shall reverence the methods He has outlined for their guidance. They are to carry out the plans He has devised. When men feel that it is unimportant to obey a "Thus saith the Lord" in carrying forward His work, but that their own plans should be followed, they thereby evidence unfitness for any position of trust in His cause. In every effort to advance the interests of His work, we must lose sight of self, and keep in view God's glory.

Satan's propositions appear to present great advantages, but they end in ruin. Over and over again men have found out by experience the result of choosing to follow the plans of men rather than the plans that God has made for us. Will not others gain wisdom from their experience? Let us be afraid of any plans that are not heaven-born.

Often the professed followers of Christ are found with hearts hardened and eyes blinded, because they do not obey the truth. Selfish motives and purposes take possession of the mind. In their self-confidence they suppose that their way is the way of wisdom. They are not particular to follow exactly the path that God has marked out. They declare that circumstances alter cases, and when Satan tempts them to follow worldly principles, they yield, and making crooked paths for their feet, they lead others astray. The

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# Working With the Lord

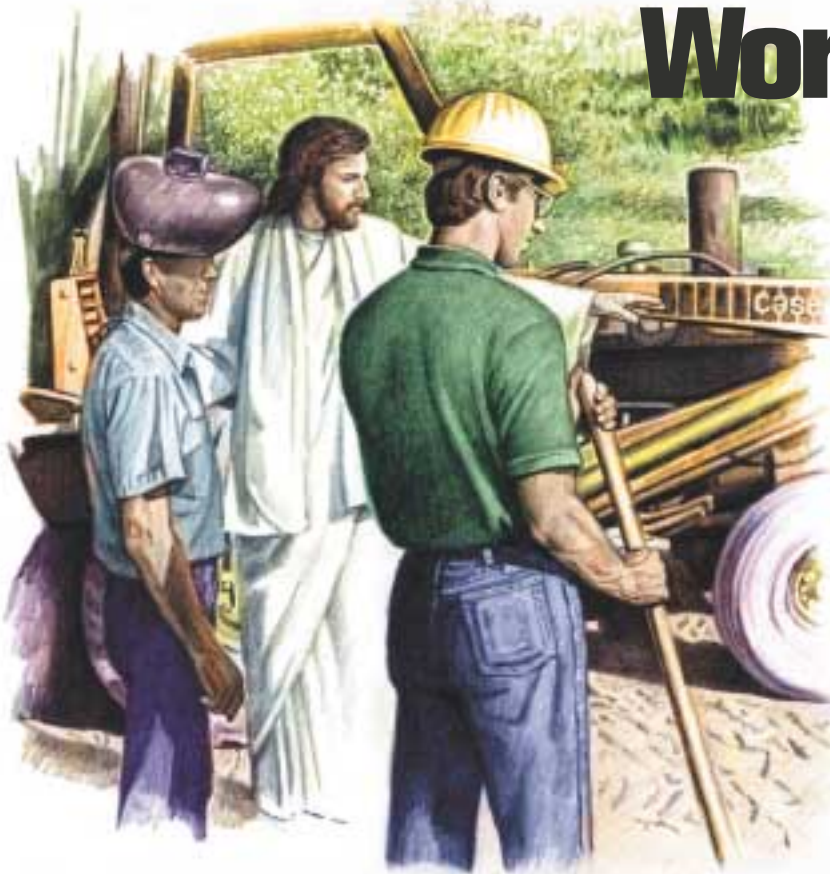
*A n o n y m o u s*

that I wanted a closer walk with Him, that I wanted to walk with Him like Enoch did to get rid of that emptiness, He let me know what was interfering with that wish.

Fervently, almost feverishly walking *for* Him, I was neglecting to walk *with* Him. From project to appointment to meeting to project, most of my day was filled with what was, and still is, meaningful service for humankind. However, I was doing it *by myself*. Not necessarily exalting myself, though I still fight that egotistical battle sometimes, I even exalted the Lord—but only when I remembered to think about Him.

I was working *for* the Lord, not *with* Him. Being so focused on serving the Lord, I forgot to ask Him to be with me as I labored in His vineyards. How could I expect to have a closer walk with Him when my days were so tightly scheduled that it usually took working on at least two worthy projects at a time just to get them all done? I raced on ahead of the Lord, not looking back to see where He was until the end of the day, and once again, He would be out of my sight. It was not that He would not walk with me. It was that I was too busy to wait for Him, so I went ahead on my own. So, when the Lord says, “Away from me. I never knew you,” it will be because I never took the time to get acquainted with Him.

Working at my intense pace—in my way, not in His way—I was too busy, too super-organized, to ask for His advice, His blessing, or His presence. I left Him behind in my rush to save the world’s lost for His



**F**or some time I had prayed for a burden for souls, and the Lord heard and answered. That precious burden motivated me in several ways, which, thankfully, left little time for self-indulgence.

I distributed thousands of dollars of free literature per year from my own budget; held Bible studies in my home for non-Adventists I had met on the job; wrote articles for denominational magazines and secular newspapers; taught vegetarian cooking classes; held different church offices; taught Sabbath School; was on the rotating schedule for hospitality dinners at church; organized literature distribution and seminar advertising for the church; contributed to many ministries; lectured on health, temperance, and current threats to spirituality; sent books to prison inmates or strangers whom the Lord impressed upon me; maintained regular supportive contact with souls wavering in their commitment to Christ; attended camp meetings, health-training seminars, church leadership conferences and committee

meetings; hosted whole groups in my home—and more. All these things were potentially saving someone from eternal destruction, I reasoned. All these things might add some souls to the Lord’s kingdom for His joy, so I put all my energies into these activities.

All this, and today I realized that I am a lost soul. Me, the Lord’s laborer for the harvest, *lost!*

Heaven’s gates will be justifiably closed in my face. Jesus will reject me when He comes for His own. I will say, “Look at all I have done for You. Look how hard I have labored to save the lost. I did it for Your joy—and their salvation. I exalted You, not me!” And He will say, “Away from Me. I never knew you.” See Matthew 7:23. I am one of those unrighteous ones we all read about in the Bible!

And He will be correct, of course.

You see, He answered another prayer of mine, too. I had been feeling an emptiness inside. I needed a heart full of Christ, but mine was still full of self. I was still sinning. Often I did not feel a connection to Him—a closeness—like I used to. So, when I told Him

kingdom—as if I could actually do that. Therefore, He will leave me behind when He takes His faithful to heaven—*unless I change*.

Right now, I do not know what worthy projects or responsibilities to give up since all of them are important, lest souls die out of His grace and mercy. Caring passionately, planting thousands of seeds, and working to save others, I could not see that I also needed saving, that I did not have a relationship with Him any more than they did. It was not that I was trying to earn salvation with works. That idea rarely even entered my thoughts. Yet, neither was Jesus in my thoughts very often!

From now on, I want to walk with the Lord. May it be said of me as it was written of Enoch: “She walked with God.” See Genesis 5:24. So simple, so wonderful. “She walked with God.”

So, I hereby resolve, with the Lord’s grace and strength, to walk with Him each day, each moment. I resolve to talk to Him as we walk along and to listen when He talks, to ask His blessing on everything I do, His guidance on every project I undertake, and for Him to tell me what He would have me to do next. I will ask Him to help me through difficulties, and also share my joys with Him. When resting, I

will rest with Him; when working, I will work with Him; when studying, I will learn from Him. He will walk with me, and I with Him. I will partake of salvation’s joyous assurance now, until the Lord returns to take me back to His home with Him, along with the others who have learned to walk with Him.

Praise to our Lord for leading us in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. “All we like sheep have gone astray” (Isaiah 53:6), and the Shepherd’s crook gently pulls us back. Praise to our Lord, *I am no longer lost!* Amen and amen. ✨

### continued from page 28...

inexperienced follow where they go, supposing that the judgment of Christians so experienced must be wise.

Those in positions of responsibility who follow their own way are held responsible for the mistakes of those who are led astray by their example. “Shall I not judge for these things?” God asks.

To have the approval of men does not win God’s approval. Those who would be acknowledged by God in the day of judgment, must here listen to His counsels and be governed by His will. Only thus can they receive the rich blessings that will fit them to receive His commendation. They must hold fast to the truth until the end, refusing to be drawn from their allegiance by any ambitious projects.

in whom they can repose the utmost confidence.

In the sixteenth chapter of First Corinthians we read: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” Verse 13. Those who are elevated to official positions in the Lord’s work are ever to guard against incurring the guilt of rash speech, of unfaithfulness, of betrayal of sacred trusts. And only so long as they discharge aright their responsibilities, are they to be retained in office.

Those who bear responsibilities must be wide-awake. It is not the man who drifts with circumstances, and who in an emergency indorses questionable moves, who wins the respect of his fellow men and the approval of Heaven. It is the man who, like a rock meeting the tide, stands firm against evil who commands respect. In a crisis, when many are not fully decided as to the right course, the one who moves steadfastly in the path that God has marked out, with unshaken determination carrying out God’s plans, is the one who wins confidence as a man fit to command. Those who occupy positions of responsibility should know what saith the Lord, and they should then stand unflinchingly for the right, stemming the tide of evil. ✨

*Review and Herald*, September 14, 1905.

*Those who occupy positions of responsibility should know what saith the Lord, and they should then stand unflinchingly for the right, stemming the tide of evil.*

There are those who think that they can improve upon the plan that the Lord has given; that they can mark out for themselves a course better than the course He has marked out for them. Such ones, choosing the things that be of men, harden their hearts against God’s leading, and follow their own way. Unless they repent, the time will come when they will look upon the utter failure of their lifework. Man’s wisdom, exercised without Christ’s guidance, is a dangerous element.

Any recognition or exaltation gained apart from God is worthless; for it is not honored in heaven.

### Stemming the Tide of Evil

We have not realized fully the importance of studying the counsel given by the Lord, through David, to Solomon, regarding those who are unworthy of confidence. Those who prove untrue are to be dealt with in accordance with the wisdom that God will impart. Never are God’s servants to look upon disaffection, scheming, and deception as virtues; those in responsibility are to manifest their decided disapproval of all unfaithfulness in business and spiritual matters. And they are to choose as counselors in every line of work, only those men



Enclosed is our personal check to help cover the cost of the many people who request from you books or magazines, but they don't have the money to pay for them.

You have a very good ministry and help to reach the hearts of many with God's Word.

PD, Michigan

I want to thank you for publishing such good articles to help prepare us for Jesus' return.

The articles this year have been so helpful to me. The article by E. White in the February issue, "Hold Fast and Repent" is so good! I'm going to run it off and put it on our church bulletin board with extra copies for people who want them. It is so necessary for this time we are living in. God is calling people to wake up before it's too late!

Thank you also for the two articles in the March issue: "The Proper Use and Influence of Words" and "Holy Conversation—Or Jesting and Joking?" These two articles have really convicted me. To see all these quotations from the Bible and E. White in one article and also the encouraging words of the two authors (Jorgensen and Humeniuk) have really helped me to see my need of change in this area of my life. It is a habit with me. I will really need God's help to overcome my bad choice of words.

Thank you so much for the thought and research that goes into your articles, but most of all, for letting the Holy Spirit lead you in the articles you publish.

Ron Spear's editorials are also very good.

JC, Indiana

I am a county jail prisoner, over two years for a burglary charge, how-

ever, by divine Providence, this period of time has been a total blessing, as I have come to read and understand our Bible. More specifically that the Father God, through His powerful Spirit teaches those whose hearts and spirits are broken and contrite with repentance at sin committed against Him!

Your book *Final Conflict Between Truth and Error* by Ellen G. White has left me speechless, blessed and increased in faith at the clarity, knowledge and insight she's been blessed to skillfully articulate.

The book was not mine and regretfully had to be returned to its owner. My prayerful request is for, if possible, this letter to be placed before the proper person beseeching with all my heart of a complimentary copy.

CD, Illinois

## From Overseas

I received the five issues of the January 2002 of *Our Firm Foundation*. What else can I say but a million thanks for the magazines. I will surely share them with others. Yet, I will have to copy about 20 more of this as this is just too important an issue not to share with others.

I hope and pray that God will bless you more as you continue to provide more timely articles in our endtimes will be always my prayer.

JB, Philippines

I'm grateful for your kindly reply to my first letter. God bless you for sending the interesting tracts and booklets.

I am a college student and haven't money to buy a Bible. Therefore, if you are able, please send me the Holy Bible, and also, if possible, *Last Day Events* and *Counsels on Diet and Foods*.

TT, Ethiopia

I am very glad to say thanks for your packet which has arrived here safely composed of a book of 32 lessons.

The *National Sunday Law* book is a very exceptional book. I have

learned that what belongs to civil government is different from what belongs to God. This is to say that the first four commandments belong to God. This is very new to me that Romans 13:1-9 is a commentary of Matthew 22:17-21. It is an exciting book.

Also, I am very much blessed by your study guide lessons. I have known the true baptism, true Sabbath and other topics. Also my wife and a friend have been helped by your material.

I have a friend who has a very beautiful book, *Desire of Ages*. I have seen it to be a very useful book. Therefore, please, if it will be possible, send me one for Bible study. I will appreciate it very much.

PK, Kenya

I am a Seventh-day Adventist leader of youth in my region. We have a lack of gospel literature, especially books and Bibles. We are away from the cities and our area is too remote.

May the Lord bless you in your daily walk of life.

AT, Zimbabwe

I am a student at — SDA school and I wish to apply for some of your literature and books. I have read some that I borrowed from my friend. I have seen that they are of importance to me, as well as my friends.

I also have some friends who are unbelievers. I do not want these friends to perish. So please, kindly send me some of the books to distribute to these friends for them to read.

EO, Ghana

I would like to thank you so much for the Spirit of Prophecy books you sent me. These books are really inspired, and I am grateful; I believe God has answered my prayers to have such prophetic books. If you could, please send me *Our Firm Foundation* magazines.

SM, Zambia



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# The Law of God

We are excited about our new brochure on "The Law of God." This tract presents the Ten Commandments as found in Exodus 20:2-17 in comparison with the Ten Commandments as changed by man. The simple gospel is also presented to the readers, and they are encouraged to submit their request for a free copy of *Final Conflict Between Truth and Error*, a free Bible course, and/or a free *Panorama of Prophecy* CD.

There are two ways you can distribute this brochure:

1) You can sponsor a bulk mailing to *every home* in a given postal route or ZIP code area, which is an excellent tool to uplift the Law of God—perhaps even more effective than the newspaper ads. The cost to send this colorful tract out, including postage, will be about **20¢ each**.

2) You may give out the brochures individually. Try sending them with your bill payments, giving them out at flea markets and fairs, or visiting your neighbors door-to-door. Order some today!



- 1-49 brochures: **20¢ each**
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