



# *Our Firm* Foundation

## *The Importance of Obedience*

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 20, Number 2

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## What Kind of Witness Are We?

After having attended fifteen or more camp meetings held by ministries like Hope International, I am struck with one particular thought: Most of the attendees are interested in a deeper and closer walk with the Lord and want to develop a character that will reflect that of our Saviour's. It is extremely gratifying to witness the genuine love and camaraderie among the "brethren." I have heard several times how the meetings were a blessing not just because of the content, but also because of the fellowship.

But there is another element in most of these meetings. Some, and it is usually only a few, come looking for something to find fault with. Either the speaker was too long, too fast, too short, uses too many quotes, doesn't use enough quotes, or has some other fault. Then there are those that have a particular slant to the Scriptures and wish to promote their ideas, such as that the Godhead is not composed of three persons, the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit; that there is no Holy Spirit; that we are to observe the feast days; and so on. Then there are those who make a god of diet, dress or something else. You can almost always tell which people are in the group that are coming for the spiritual feast and who are coming to correct those that have come. You can see it in their faces. Those coming to "correct" others are almost never happy. You can pick them out of the crowd. They carry their "cloud" with them wherever they go.

Sister White addressed one who had this "cloud" that surrounded

him: "I was shown the case of Brother B, that a cloud of darkness surrounds him. The light of heaven is not in his dwelling. Although he professes to believe the truth, he does not in his daily life exemplify its sanctifying influence upon the heart. He does not naturally possess a benevolent, kind, affectionate, courteous disposition." *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 36.

It is so sad to see the cases such as are presented here. They are miserable, and want to share that with everyone else. Unfortunately, it is this type of people that Satan tries to get others to focus on, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the messages that the Lord desires to give to His people.

"Make it a business to shed rays of sunlight, but never leave a cloud." *Letters to Young Lovers*, 15.

If it were the business of these people to shed light instead of darkness, how much more could be accomplished! If there were any light in what they had to say, how much more effectively it could be communicated! The truth will always uplift, ennoble, sanctify. Those who claim such a close connection with God should manifest such traits of character that it will recommend their faith to others.

"In a special manner, those who are blessed with a connection with God, should, by close application to His sacred Word, imitate the great Pattern in doing good, thus exemplifying the life of Christ in their daily conversation, in pure and virtuous characters. By being courteous and beneficent, they adorn His doctrine and show that

the truth of heavenly origin beautifies the character and ennobles the life. Christ's followers are 'living epistles, known and read of all men.' See 2 Corinthians 3:2-3. Their daily words and noble actions recommend the truth to those who have been prejudiced against it by nominal professors, who have had a form of godliness, while their lives have testified that they know nothing of its sanctifying power." *Review and Herald*, November 28, 1878.

What is our witness to others when we come to meetings not to bless, but to correct? Yes, there are times for correction and instruction—even at meetings such as I have described—but what is our demeanor? Will people see the love, the compassion? Is there a genuine concern for souls, or just a desire to see others conform to what we believe? Ask yourself, What message am I preaching by the way I act and talk?

"In your words manifest patience and forbearance, and you may every day be preaching a sermon upon the power of truth and do effectual service to the cause of God. Let no one say that the truth you profess makes you no different from the worldling. . . . Do not give the least occasion for anyone to speak ill of your faith because you are not sanctified through the truth." *Our High Calling*, 32.



Joe Olson serves as the executive director and chairman of the board of Hope International. He also travels as an international speaker.



## Our Mission

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

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## About Hope International

Hope International is a lay ministry founded, supported, and operated by Seventh-day Adventists to assist the Seventh-day Adventist church in the proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel in every way that is consistent with the principles of God as revealed in Inspiration.

## Invitation to Writers

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Hope International does not solicit tithes; however, we are a tithe-worthy organization and accept tithes. We use the tithe only for the gospel ministry. Donations designated “Gospel Ministry” will be considered tithe.

# *The Importance of Obedience*

*Ellen G. White*

**O**bedience or disobedience decides every man's destiny. Those who obey God are counted worthy to share His throne, while those who disobey will be forever lost. But sin has weakened our powers of obedience, and in our own strength we can never obey God. Knowing this, God sent Jesus to our world to live His law. Only the mind that is trained to obedience to God can do justice to His divine claims, and God gave Christ up to humiliation and suffering, to be afflicted with all the temptations wherewith humanity is afflicted, that in His strength we might be enabled to keep His law.

It was for the recovery of man that Christ came into the world, and it is to the will of man that He appeals. The knowledge of God through Jesus Christ brings every thought into obedience to His will. The heart that was defiled by disobedience to God's requirements, and which in its fall dragged down the faculties of the whole being, is renewed by this knowledge.

## **The First Adam**

All may study with profit the experience of the first Adam in contrast with that of the second Adam. The first Adam possessed beautiful Eden, a gift from God to

the beings He had created. The sinless pair were very happy in their possession; for nothing that was needed to sustain them, or to please the senses, was withheld. Only one test was made—they were not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and death was the penalty of the transgression of this command.

But Satan came to them, and told them that if they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would immediately become as gods, knowing good and evil. God wished them to know only good. Will they listen to the strange voice, which charges God with selfishness and injustice for making such an arrangement? Will they disobey God by listening to the insinuations of the enemy, because addressed to them in flattering words? Can it be that they will do this terrible thing?

They did do it. Adam fell from his loyalty because he did not obey the "Thou shalt not" of God's Word; and by his sin the flood-gates of woe were opened upon our world. If faithful to God's requirements, he would have had perfect descendants, as pure and uncorrupted as he himself was when he came from the hand of God. As father of the human race, he could have imparted the pure higher educa-

tion, which he himself had received direct from God. But by his disobedience he spoiled God's plan for himself and for his posterity.

After Adam had sinned, the only means of salvation for the human race was for the Son of the infinite God to give His life that they might have another trial of obedience. What love the Father manifested in behalf of man, erring and disobedient though he was! He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. God was in the world, represented by Christ.

## **The Second Adam**

Christ, the second Adam, came to a world polluted and marred, to live a life of perfect obedience. The race, weakened in moral power, was unable to cope with Satan, who ruled his subjects with cruel authority. Christ came to stand on the field of battle in warfare against all the satanic forces. By representing in His life the character of God, He sought to win man back to his allegiance.

Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinful-

ness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. Clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might associate with fallen humanity, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world.

In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God. He pleased not Himself, but went about doing good. His whole history, for more than thirty years, was one of pure, disinterested benevolence. By His words, His influence, and His example, He made men feel that it was possible for them to return to their loyalty and be reinstated in God's favor. He led them to see that if they repented, if their characters were transformed after the divine similitude, they would win immortality.

Can we wonder that men were astonished at His teaching? "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Matthew 7:29. The teaching of the scribes and Pharisees was a continuous repetition of fables and childish traditions. Their opinions and ceremonies rested on ancient maxims and rabbinical sayings which were frivolous and worthless.

With what astonishment did the people listen to the words that fell from the lips of the divine Teacher! Christ did not dwell on weak, insipid sayings and theories of men. As one possessing the highest authority, He addressed His hearers, presenting before them momentous subjects; and His appeals carried conviction to their hearts. The opinion of all, expressed by many who were not able to keep silent, was, "Never man spake like this Man." John 7:46.

### **Obedience in Tithes and Offerings**

God desires that the beings made in His image shall render obedience to Him. He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9. For this He gave His only begotten Son to this world, that in His strength men might have power to obey. He has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Ephesians 1:3-4.

In order that sinners may hear the message of salvation, He calls upon those who claim to be His servants to cooperate with the heavenly intelligences in carrying forward His work. He has plainly stated the way in which the ministry of His

and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

2 Timothy 3:16-17. The teaching of this Word is exactly that needed in all circumstances in which we may be placed. It is a sufficient rule of faith and practice; for it is the voice of God speaking to the soul, giving the members of His family directions for keeping the heart with all diligence. If this Word is studied—not merely read, but studied—it furnishes us with a storehouse of knowledge which enables us to improve every God-given endow-

*In Him was no guile or sinfulness;  
He was ever pure and undefiled;  
yet He took upon Him our sinful nature.*

Word is to be sustained. Each one is to act his part. No one is excused from cheerfully doing his part to keep the treasury of God supplied with means.

These offerings are to be used in His work, drawn from the treasury as the cause demands, to extend His work in regions beyond. God waits to see if we, who have been purchased by the life of the Son of God, through whom all our temporal blessings flow, will render obedience to Him in this matter. Shall we disobey God by withholding from Him our tithes and offerings? Other souls, as precious in His sight as we are, must have the light of truth brought to them. Then shall we not follow the example of our Saviour, and work to save others?

### **Bible Study Helps Us Obey**

The Bible teaches the whole will of God concerning us. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and it teaches us our obligation to use the faculties given us. Guided by its precepts, we may render obedience to God's requirements.

All who will come to the Word of God for guidance, with humble, inquiring minds, determined to know the terms of salvation, will understand what saith the Scriptures. But those who bring to the investigation of the Word a spirit which it does not approve, will take away from the search a spirit which it has not imparted. The Lord will not speak to a mind that is unconcerned. He wastes not His instruction on one who is willingly irreverent or polluted. But the tempter educates every mind that yields itself to his suggestions, and is willing to make of none effect God's holy law.

We need to humble our hearts, and with sincerity and reverence search the Word of life; for that mind alone that is humble and

contrite can see light. The heart, the mind, the soul, must be prepared to receive light. There must be silence in the soul. The thoughts must be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. The boastful self-knowledge and self-sufficiency must stand rebuked in the presence of the Word of God.

sinner. The word will be, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." Hosea 4:17.

But the voice of entreaty is still heard. Mercy lingers; it is not yet too late for wrongs to be repented of and righted. "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root

of God to your aid, to labor for you, for the sake of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who came to our world to call sinners to repentance, let all who claim to be Christians say by precept and example to those who are out of the fold, "Come; for all things are now ready." Luke 14:17.

I would call upon all to be wide-awake. The time in which we are now living is the only probation we shall have. The perils of the last days are upon us. Ere long the opportunity to gain eternal life by obedience to God's commandments will be forever gone. If the invitations given now are refused, if we persist in disobedience, we shall have no second probation. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" — God or Mammon. Joshua 24:15. Now, while it is called "today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15), lest it be the last invitation of mercy. ❀

*Review and Herald*, December 15, 1896.



*Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God's people around the world.*

*Stirring times are before us,  
and it is fatal to be careless and indifferent.  
"Yet a little while, and he that shall come  
will come, and will not tarry."*

The Lord speaks to the heart that humbles itself before Him. At the altar of prayer, as the throne of grace is touched by faith, we receive from the hand of God that celestial torch which enlightens our darkness, and convinces us of our spiritual necessity. The Holy Spirit takes of the things of God, and reveals them to the one who is sincerely seeking for the heavenly treasure. If we yield to His guidance, He leads us into all light. As we behold the glory of Christ, we become changed into His image. We have that faith which works by love, and purifies the soul. Our hearts are renewed, and we are made willing to obey God in all things.

and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:16–17. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2.

Now is the time to receive the Word of truth and life and salvation. Now is the time for those who know the truth to say to those who are in darkness, "Come." In the place of calling the messenger

### **Probationary Time is Short**

Stirring times are before us, and it is fatal to be careless and indifferent. "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Hebrews 10:37. We cannot afford to be disobedient to God's requirements. The wrath which the impenitent are now treasuring up against that day when the judgment shall sit, and every case shall be judged and awarded according to the things written in the books of heaven, will soon break upon them. Then the voice of mercy will no longer plead in behalf of the

*Those who travel in the narrow way are talking of the joy and happiness they will have at the end of the journey. Their countenances are often sad, yet often beam with holy, sacred joy. They do not dress like the company in the broad road, or talk like them, or act like them. A Pattern has been given them. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief opened that road for them, and traveled it Himself. His followers see His footsteps and are comforted and cheered. He went through safely; so can they, if they follow His footsteps.—Messages to Young People, 126*

# Dangers of a Constitutional Convention

Ralph Moss



A religious climate is being created that could easily bring about the final scenes depicted in the prophecies of the Bible and in books such as *The Great Controversy* by Ellen G. White:

1. People everywhere are being inspired by a huge "blockbuster" movie *The Passion* to do something for Christ.

2. President Bush, has suggested a Constitutional Amendment, legislating plans to better our nation and at the same time pacify the "Religious Right" in its effort to "bring our nation back to God."

3. Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, along with many other organizations have had their fill of the glorifying of immoral acts, violence, and using God's name in vain promoted in movies and television.

It is true that to date, all amendments to the United States Constitution have been proposed by congress; but if enough constituents made up of the voters called for a Constitutional Convention

to consider amendments, ostensibly to make our government more efficient and "Christian," we would have the fulfillment of prophecy. We must remember that a Constitutional Convention need not be limited to a single subject. It could, in fact, consider any

of religious and political leaders met in September 2003 to pledge their support for a Federal Marriage Amendment to the U. S. Constitution that would bar the practice of homosexual "marriage" in the United States. At a press conference organized by the Alliance

*A Constitutional Convention . . . could, in fact, consider any number of subjects; it could even consider replacing the present U. S. Constitution with an entirely new document.*

number of subjects; it could even consider replacing the present U. S. Constitution with an entirely new document.

Let us look at one assault on marriage. The homosexuals are exalting sodomy by law. In Washington, a diverse coalition

for Marriage, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, conservative and liberal activists, both Republican and Democrat, declared their united support behind an effort to amend the Constitution to define marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

The *Washington Insider Report*,<sup>1</sup> published by the "Capitol Hill Prayer Alert Foundation" February 27, 2004 issued the following statement:

**"WHAT CAN WE EXPECT"**

"Economic, Natural Disasters Will Increase"

"A Repentant Prayer:

"Lord, as our National Sins have mounted so have the disasters upon our land. Please EXTEND YOUR MERCY! Send REVIVAL. Hasten REPENTANCE & AWAKENING in the Church.' "

which the State must guarantee.

...  
"Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy." <sup>2</sup>

**Conclusion**

In *The Great Controversy*, Sister White tells us, "It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and

*"It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced. . . ."*

In the writings of Ellen White, we read the following:

"In quick succession the judgments of God will follow one another—fire and flood and earthquake, with war and bloodshed." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 97.

This prophecy was written in 1904. Today, a hundred years later the prediction can be observed taking place. Events are seen by Evangelicals who do not have the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy.

One of the biggest themes that virtually all Christian churches can unify on is the observance of Sunday. This "Sunday Sabbath" has the backing of all of the popular "Christian" denominations. The Catholic Church, who claims to have changed the Sabbath from Saturday to the first-day Sunday, has the backing of Pope John Paul II. In 1998, he stated in his *Dies Domini*, "Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke of Sunday rest as a worker's right

that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their *restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity*." Page 590.

We can see that for this "last movement" to be created, a religious climate must be uppermost in the minds of the peoples of Earth. All the other reasons for a Constitutional Convention only lead up to the *big* reason—a universal Sunday observance, for which Satan will persuade the people it is necessary to stop God's wrath. ✠



Ralph Moss, an editor and researcher, is a retired engineer and resides in California.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> www.prayeralert.org

<sup>2</sup> Chapter IV, #66-67, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_05071998\\_dies-domini\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_05071998_dies-domini_en.html)

## Objections Overruled

Jean Handwerk

Speaking the gospel truth will anger some—  
But would you rather face their anger  
Or God's rejection of you for failing to speak it for others' salvation?

Speaking the gospel truth will cause some to speak ill of our church—  
But how many more will seek us out  
Because we do tell it?

Speaking the gospel truth may cost you many of your friends—  
But they will be replaced by others  
Whose value and goals are more aligned with yours.

Speaking the gospel truth may separate you from your family—  
But would you do them any eternal good  
By rejecting your faith in order to earn their acceptance?

Speaking the gospel truth will attract criticism and ridicule to yourself—  
But it will also attract God's grace  
And the power of the Holy Spirit.



# Let the Trumpet Give a Certain Sound, Part 1

*Ellen G. White*

**W**e are pressing on to the final conflict, and this is no time to compromise. It is no time to hide your colors. When the battle wages sore, let no one turn traitor. It is no time to lay down or conceal our weapons, and give Satan the advantage in the warfare. But unless you watch, and keep your garments unspotted from the world, you will not stand true to your Captain. It is no time for watchmen to slumber on the walls of Zion. Let them be wide-awake. Call to your fellow-watchmen, crying, "The morning cometh, and also the night." Isaiah 21:12.

It is no time now to relax our efforts, to become tame and spiritless; no time to hide our light under a bushel, to speak smooth things, to prophesy deceit. Every power is to be employed for God. You are to maintain your allegiance, bearing testimony for God and for truth. Be not turned aside by any suggestion the world can make. We cannot afford to compromise. There is a living issue before us, of vital importance to the remnant people of God, to the very close of this earth's history; for eternal interests are involved. On the very eve of the crisis, it is no time to be found with

an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God.

The original apostasy began in disbelief and denial of the truth; but if we would triumph, we must fix the eye of faith steadfastly upon Jesus, the Captain of our salvation. We are to follow the example of Christ, and in all that Jesus did on earth, He had an eye single to the glory of God. He says, "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." John 14:31. "This commandment have I received of my Father." John 10:18. In all He did He was working out the will of His Father, so that His life on earth was a manifestation of the divine perfection.

Divinity and humanity were united in Christ, that He might reveal to us God's purpose, and bring man into close communion with Himself. This union will enable us to overcome the enemy; for through faith in Christ we shall have divine power. The days will come (for the enemy is working to that end) in which the law of God will be made void. As those days approach, the loyal subjects of God must rise to the emergency, manifesting more fervent zeal, giving more positive and unflinching testimony.

## **Love One Another**

But while we are to speak as having authority, we should do nothing in a defiant spirit. If our hearts are fully surrendered to God, we shall unite meekness and love with truth and decision. We are "to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men." Titus 3:1-2.

It is time for God's people to take up the duties that lie next them, to be faithful in little things; for on the right performance of little things hang great results. Do not leave the work which needs to be done, because to your judgment it appears small and unimportant. Make up every waste place, repair the breaches as fast as they occur.

Let no difference or dissension exist among the workers. Let all go to work to help some one who needs help. There is a cause for the great weakness in our churches, and that cause is hard to remove; for it is self. Trouble does not arise because men have too much will, but because they have too much self-will. The will should be wholly sanctified to God. The professed followers of Christ need to fall on the

Rock and be broken; for in every one who enters the gates of the city of God, self must be crucified.

This fierce spirit which rises up in the hearts of some in the church when everything does not go to please them, must be subdued; for it is not the Spirit of Christ. It is fully time that we return to our first love, and be at peace among ourselves. We must make it manifest that we are not only Bible readers, but Bible believers. If we are united to Christ, we shall be united to one another.

*Watchmen on the walls of Zion are to be vigilant, and sleep not day nor night. But if they have not received the message from the lips of Christ, their trumpets will give an uncertain sound.*

Jesus says, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:34–35. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. . . . Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 15:1–6.

### **Half-Hearted Hindrances**

Our numbers are increasing, our facilities are enlarging, and all this calls for union among the

workers, for entire consecration and thorough devotion to the cause of God. There is no place in the work of God for half-hearted workers, for those who are neither cold nor hot. Jesus says, "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Revelation 3:15–17.

Among those who are half-hearted are the class who pride themselves on their great caution in receiving "new light," as they term it. But their failure to receive

the light is caused by their spiritual blindness; for they cannot discern the ways and works of God. Those who array themselves against the precious light of heaven, will accept messages that God has not sent, and will thus become dangerous to the cause of God; for they will set up false standards.

There are men in our cause who might be of great use if they would but learn of Christ, and go on from light to greater light; but because they will not, they are positive hindrances, forever questioning, wasting precious time in argument, and contributing nothing to the spiritual elevation of the church. They misdirect minds, and lead men to accept perilous suggestions. They cannot see afar off; they cannot discern the conclusion of the matter. Their moral force is squandered upon trifles; for they view an atom as a world, and a world as an atom.

Many have trusted and gloried in the wisdom of men far more

than in Christ and in the precious sanctifying truth for this time. They need the heavenly anointing, that they may comprehend what is light and truth. They thank God that they are confined to no narrow groove, but they do not see the breadth and far-reaching extent of the principles of truth, and are not enlightened by the Spirit of God as to heaven's large liberality. They admire man-made theories, and walk in the sparks of their own kindling, diverging farther and farther from the genuine principles of Christian action ordained to make men wise unto salvation. They strive to extend the gospel, but separate from it the very marrow and life. They say, "Let the light shine," but cover it so that it shall not shine in clear rays on the very subjects that they need to understand. Some exhaust the fervor of their zeal on plans that cannot be carried out without peril to the church.

At this time the church should not be diverted from the main object of vital interest, to things that will not bring health and courage, faith and power. They must see, and by their actions testify, that the gospel is aggressive.

### **Trumpet the Distinct Message**

Watchmen on the walls of Zion are to be vigilant, and sleep not day nor night. But if they have not received the message from the lips of Christ, their trumpets will give an uncertain sound. Brethren, God calls upon you, both ministers and laymen, to listen to His voice speaking to you in His Word. Let His truth be received into the heart, that you may be spiritualized by its living, sanctifying power. Then let the distinct message for this time be sent from watchman to watchman on the walls of Zion.

This is a time of general departure from truth and righteousness, a time when we must "build the old waste places," and with interested effort labor to "raise up the founda-

tions of many generations." Isaiah 58:12.

"Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." Isaiah 58:12–14. [Isaiah 51:7–16; 62:1–4 quoted.]

### The Three Angels' Messages

While you hold the banner of truth firmly proclaiming the law of God, let every soul remember that the faith of Jesus is connected with the commandments of God. The third angel is represented as flying through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. The first, second, and third angels' messages are all linked together. The evidences of the abiding, ever-living truth of these grand messages, that mean so much to us, that have awakened such intense opposition from the religious world, cannot be extinguished. Satan is constantly seeking to cast his hellish shadow about these messages, so that the remnant people of God shall not clearly discern their import, their time, and place; but they live, and are to exert their power upon our religious experience while time shall last.

The influence of these messages has been deepening and widening, setting in motion the springs of action in thousands of hearts, bringing into existence institutions of learning, publishing houses, and health institutions; all these are the instrumentalities of God to co-oper-

ate in the grand work represented by the first, second, third angels flying in the midst of heaven to warn the inhabitants of the world that Christ is coming again with power and great glory.

The prophet says, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils." Revelation 18:1–2. This is the same message that was given by the second angel. Babylon is fallen, "because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8.

What is that wine?—Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false Sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told to Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9.

When Jesus began His public ministry, He cleansed the temple from its sacrilegious profanation.

Among the last acts of His ministry was the second cleansing of the temple. So in the last work for the warning of the world, two distinct calls are made to the churches. The second angel's message is, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8. And in the loud cry of the third angel's message a voice is heard from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Revelation 18:4–5. ✠

*To be continued.*

*Review and Herald*, December 6, 1892.



*Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God's people around the world.*

*"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Isaiah 62:1–2.*

# A Natural Impossibility

## Part 2

Harvey Steck

Last month we noted that there are many affirmations that at the incarnation, Christ took upon Himself our sinful flesh. We also noted that we are cautioned that Christ had no evil propensities,<sup>1</sup> while the rest of Adam's posterity have inherited propensities to disobedience.

To some readers, these statements appear to be contradictory, but instead, like pieces of a beautiful puzzle, we will see that they fit together to develop a precious truth.

1) Christ was our example, maintaining a holy character while accepting our sinful flesh.

2) He did not inherit "propensities of disobedience," for these propensities are aspects of the *character*.

3) He has made it possible—and actually requires—that man be cleansed of his sinful propensities, while yet possessing sinful flesh.

Here are a few of the many inspired statements that confirm this position:

### Danger of Sinful Propensities

There is great danger in cherishing our evil, sinful propensities

and tendencies, for they are unacceptable to God, and they will give Satan a foothold for his temptations:

"Never should we lower the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. We need to understand that *imperfection of character is sin*." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 330. All emphasis supplied.

"It is Satan's work to dethrone God from the heart, and to mold

human nature into his own image of deformity. *He stirs up all evil propensities*, awakening unholy passions and ambitions." *Messages to Young People*, 54.

"In accepting and retaining workers who persist in retaining their imperfections of character, and do not give full proof of their ministry, the standard has been greatly lowered. . . . Although *their evil propensities* may seem to them as precious as the right hand or the right eye, they *must be separated from the worker, or he cannot be acceptable before God*." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 171–172.

### We Need Not Retain Sinful Propensities

"We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. *We need not retain one sinful propensity*. . . . [Ephesians 2:1–6 quoted.]

"As we partake of the divine nature, *hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character*, and we are made a living power for good." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 943.

"Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to *overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil*, and to impress His own character upon His church." *The Desire of Ages*, 671.

"God requires every soul to be pure and holy. *We have hereditary tendencies to wrong. This is a part of self that no one need carry about.* It is a weakness of humanity to pet selfishness, because it is a natural trait of character. But *unless all selfishness is put away, unless self is crucified, we can never be holy as God is holy.*" *The Faith I Live By*, 140.

"As it is necessary thoroughly to cultivate the soil that has once been overgrown with weeds, so it is necessary for the Christian to be diligent in exterminating the faults that *threaten his eternal ruin.* Patient, earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus, can alone *remove the evil tendencies of the natural heart.*" *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, 240.

"Those who have *hereditary tendencies to evil*, those who are putting forth thorn branches to wound all with whom they come in contact, should *see that the offending members are cut away.* Painful as this work may be of *separating the evil from our character*, it must be done." *Signs of the Times*, May 20, 1897.

"The mighty cleaver of truth has taken you out of the quarry of the world. You were rough stones with jagged edges, bruising and marring whoever you came in contact with; there is a work to be done to smooth off the rough edges. . . . *When self and carnal propensities are*

*worked away, then* the stone will assume proper proportions for the heavenly building, and then the polishing, refining, subduing, burnishing processes will begin, and you will be molded after the model of Christ's character." *The Youth's Instructor*, January 3, 1895.

### **Neglect to Overcome Yields Serious Consequences**

"The garden of the heart must be cultivated. The soil must be broken up by deep repentance for sin.

down with my Father in his throne.' Revelation 3:21. . . . *Christ died on Calvary that man might have power to overcome his natural tendencies to sin.* But one says, 'Can I not have my own way, and act myself?—No, you cannot have your way, and enter the kingdom of heaven. No 'my way' will be there." *Review and Herald*, February 23, 1892.

"To be pardoned in the way that Christ pardons, is not only to be forgiven, but to be renewed in the spirit of our mind. The Lord

*"Every provision has been made by our heavenly Father whereby you may be able to overcome every unholy tendency."*

Poisonous, Satanic plants must be uprooted. The soil once overgrown by thorns can be reclaimed only by diligent labor. So *the evil tendencies of the natural heart can be overcome only by earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus.*" *Christ's Object Lessons*, 56.

"While we yield ourselves as instruments for the Holy Spirit's working, the grace of God works in us to deny old inclinations, to overcome powerful propensities, and to form new habits." *Ibid.*, 354.

"You may feel that you cannot meet the approval of heaven. You may say, 'I was born with a natural tendency toward this evil, and I cannot overcome.' But *every provision has been made by our heavenly Father whereby you may be able to overcome every unholy tendency.* You are to overcome even as Christ overcame in your behalf. He says, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set

says, 'A new heart will I give unto thee.' (See Ezekiel 36:26.) The image of Christ is to be stamped upon the very mind, heart, and soul. The apostle says, 'But we have the mind of Christ.' 1 Corinthians 2:16. Without the transforming process which can come alone through divine power, *the original propensities to sin are left in the heart in all their strength*, to forge new chains, to impose a slavery that can never be broken by human power. But *men can never enter heaven with their old tastes, inclinations, idols, ideas, and theories.* Heaven would be no place of joy to them; for everything would be in collision with their tastes, appetites, and inclinations, and painfully opposed to their natural and cultivated traits of character." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 190–191.

"The broad road [to destruction] is wide enough for sinners to travel it with all their sinful propensities." *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 364.

## What Will Make Sin Hateful?

Knowing that we cannot safely retain any propensity to sin, what is it that will develop in us a hatred for sin?

**Seek to follow Jesus' example:** "Never before had there been a being upon the earth who *hated sin with so perfect a hatred* as did Christ. He had seen its deceiving, infatuating power upon the holy angels, and all His powers were enlisted against it." *Selected Messages*, book 1, 254.

"When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience.

of all things than to depart from the least of God's commandments." *Our High Calling*, 94.

"When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have *no relish for sin*; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but *we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God.*" *Selected Messages*, book 1, 360.

**Love and live the truth:** "Let the truth be loved and brought into the life, as well as advocated, and that man or woman will hate sin and will be a living representative of Jesus Christ to the world." *Selected Messages*, book 2, 377.

seen that He had no propensities to sin. And we have seen that we are to follow His example. I don't know what your besetting sin has been in your life, but you do. Have you come to hate it with a perfect hatred?

Perhaps the devil has comforted you with the thought, "I really love \_\_\_\_\_, but as long as I don't do it (or at least if I confess right away after I do it), I can still go to heaven." If you feel at ease with these kinds of thoughts, *wake up!* Come to Jesus, and ask Him to help you to cooperate with Him as He works to change your attitude toward that sin. Ask Him to help you to hate it with a perfect hatred—to hate that sin to the point that you would rather *die* than commit it again.

"Let *this mind* be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." *Philippians* 2:5-8. ✠

*Concluded.*

*"Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us."*

Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, *sin will become hateful to us.*" *The Desire of Ages*, 668. See also *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 294.

**We must seek an experience of true conversion:** "The converted soul has a hatred of sin; he does not indulge in self-complacency, self-love, self-sufficiency, nor pass on day after day, claiming to be a Christian, and yet bringing dishonor upon Christ by misrepresenting Him in character." *Review and Herald*, September 17, 1895.

**Contemplate the suffering that has resulted from sin:** "We have the example of Adam and Eve before us, and the result of their transgression should lead every soul of us to avoid sin, to *abhor sin as the hateful thing it is*, and to feel, in view of the sufferings which sin is sure to inflict, that it is better to suffer loss

**Claim Christ's promise to put enmity between us and the serpent:** "In the statement, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed' (Genesis 3:15), God pledged Himself to introduce into the hearts of human beings a new principle—a *hatred of sin*, of deception, of pretense, of everything that bears the marks of Satan's guile." *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, 6.

"Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts." *Steps to Christ*, 26.

## The Mind of Christ

Friends, we have seen that Jesus had a perfect hatred of sin. We have



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Note:

<sup>1</sup> "PROPENSION/PROPENSITY, n.: 1. Bent of mind, natural or acquired; inclination; in a moral sense; disposition to any thing good or evil, particularly to evil; as a propensity to sin; the corrupt propensity of the will. 2. Natural tendency; as the propension of bodies to a particular place. [In a moral sense, propensity is now chiefly used.]" —Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary.



# Lessons From the Titanic

## Part 2

*A n o n y m o u s*

In part 1 of this article, the author noted Ellen White's vision of an iceberg and the lesson it contains for the Seventh-day Adventist movement. He also began to enumerate some of the lessons we can learn from the history of the Titanic. We resume the article as the author is discussing the impact that the fuel needs of the "monster ship" Titanic had upon other ships.—Editors.

Now with the other ships short of fuel, it can only be that the personnel of these other ships would also come aboard and unite so that they may all go in the direction they were scheduled to go—New York City. Amazingly, we now discover that this decision, made in order to solve the problem of a lack of fuel, actually caused some other difficulties.

"Problems also arose among the Titanic's crew. The *Olympic* had been laid up for repairs following a minor collision in the channel with a cruiser, the *H.M.S. Hawke*. . . . The chief

officer of the *Olympic*, H. T. Wilde, was transferred to the *Titanic*, causing a reshuffle in the higherarchy of the other officers as well as in their respected duties. Crewmen had also come from the *Olympic*, as well as from the cancelled *Oceanic*, a vessel considerably smaller than the new White Star giants. The *Oceanic's* crew couldn't get over the vastness of the *Titanic*. For Second Officer Lightoller, an expert seamen of considerable experience, took two weeks before he could confidently find his way from one part of the ship to another by the shortest route. More men came from the canceled *New York*—even smaller than the *Oceanic*, whose coal was now in the *Titanic's* stokeholds. Many of the *New York* crewmen had joined the *Titanic* as late as the morning of sailing day and, although their impressions are unrecorded, they must have been befuddled.

"In short, the men were a diverse group—what one dissatisfied passenger would later call 'a scratch crew'—unfamiliar with the ship,

their duties, and with each other." *The Titanic*, 22.<sup>1</sup>

We are constantly hearing about the concept of diversity. All of our periodicals confirm that we have just what the *Titanic* possessed—a diverse group of people. And yet, our narrative tells us that this diversity caused major problems aboard the *Titanic*. For one thing, there were passengers and crew there who should not have been there. And we will see that this problem prevailed throughout the very adventure and cost many lives when the *Titanic* foundered. Is there a parallel? Is there something to learn from this?

### **Danger From the North**

The *Titanic* began her journey, arriving very quickly in an area which had many icebergs. These icebergs had come from a very notable direction.

"It had been an odd season for ice in the North Atlantic; the fact was well known. A relatively warm winter had caused a great num-

ber of bergs to break off from the Greenland coast. Drifting northward, these had eventually hit the Labrador current and shifted in a southerly direction. Eventually they had littered the steamship lanes off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland." *Ibid.*, 28.

Do I read something in the book of Daniel, chapter 11, about a certain king of the North, which we understand to refer to the papacy?

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of wom-

## No Need for Lifeboats

Now the author of *The Titanic: End of the Dream* takes up the subject of lifeboat drills:

"There had been just one drill, when the ship was docked in Southampton, and only two boats had been lowered. There had been another drill scheduled on the very day of the collision, but it had never taken place. The boatlists had been put up, but the drill was never called—no one knew why." *The Titanic*, 205.

"Furthermore, there had been proportionately few seamen among the *Titanic's* enormous crew. It had been inconceivable that on the 'practically unsinkable' ship the need would ever arise for evacuating all the passengers at sea." *Ibid.*, 207.

Once again, because they

found out too late where their trust should have been.

## Many Warnings

A major part of the story about the *Titanic* is that she was given abundant **WARNING** of the dangers that were around her when she was in that dangerous part of the ocean. "Admiral F.E. Chadwick sent a letter in time for the late edition of the *New York Evening Post*. 'The *Titanic*,' claimed Chadwick, 'was lost by unwise navigation, by running at full speed, though so amply forewarned, into the dangerous situation, which might easily have been avoided. This is the fundamental sad, and one important fact. It accounts for everything.' It was a terse summing up of the information known so far. Bad navigation accounted for the disaster." *Ibid.*, 37.

During hearings in New York investigating this disaster after it occurred, these words were collected during an interview Senator Alden Smith had with Harold Bride (the only surviving *Titanic* wireless radio operator):

"There was a message delivered to the Captain in the afternoon, sir, late in the afternoon—"

"Of Sunday?" Smith interposed.

"Yes, sir, regarding the ice field."

"From whom?"

"From the *Californian*, sir," Bride replied.

"The crowd gasped. This was at least the third ice warning known to have been sent to the *Titanic*. Over the next month, the subcommittee would collect more ice warnings that had been sent to the liner, and even then the list would be incomplete." *Ibid.*, 139–140.

One key passenger who was interviewed as to his thoughts surrounding the cause of the disaster stated, "I say it was carelessness, gross carelessness. Why, the captain knew we were going into an ice field, and why should he remain dining in the saloon when such danger was about?"

*The people aboard the Titanic trusted to the size and strength of the ship and to the wisdom of those who were managing it, and they found out too late where their trust should have been.*

en, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. . . .

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over." Daniel 11: 36–37, 40. See also Jeremiah 1:13–16; 25:9; Ezekiel 26:7.

I think that is an interesting little parallel—just a small one.

So, in our day, brothers and sisters, God's people are warning all of Christianity that modern Babylon is coming for them from the north, in Bible terms, bringing destruction such as not been seen since people have been upon this earth. Perhaps that is just an interesting coincidence.

thought the ship was unsinkable, they did not even bother with the necessary safety procedures. "Why waste our time with that?"

So it is that the church that we love falls headlong into a crisis, the likes of which was never seen in the history of this earth. And she was warned over and over again of the great trial ahead; yet, the closer and closer we come to the great and final crisis, the less and less her media talks about what is coming upon the church, the less and less she seems to train to get ready to meet it.

Are we as overconfident as was the crew of the *Titanic*? Remember, the people aboard the *Titanic* trusted to the size and strength of the ship and to the wisdom of those who were managing it, and they



The same person related to another reporter. "Mr. Ismay was dining with Captain Smith—both of them in evening clothes—in a lower saloon when the captain, at least, should have been at his post of duty on the bridge. . . . In my opinion, as a man used to discipline and responsibility, Captain Smith should have been on the bridge, knowing, as everyone aboard the *Titanic* knew, that there were icebergs en route. I suppose, however, that he was invited to this dinner by the general manager of the line and that he had to go." *Ibid.*, 55–56.

The idea that any person, any group, or any institution has God's unconditional blessing—that they are blessed regardless of what they do, regardless of their complete disregard of warning as sent in the written Word—is completely contrary to the Bible, and therefore, contrary even to Protestant principles. Many of our conservative leaders hold fast to the ideas that the denominational organization will always be protected by the Lord, no matter what she does, no matter what warnings are given.

### Downplaying the Danger

"The Senator reviewed the ice warnings sent to the *Titanic* by the *Baltic*, *Amerika*, and *Californian*, and documented a fact the surviving senior officers of the *Titanic* had adroitly downplayed—that ice is a well-known hazard to navigation. He then moved toward the culpability of the *Titanic*'s late commander. The 'heroism' of Captain E.J. had been praised from nearly every American and British pulpit, and introducing the inescapable fact of the captain's negligence was going to be a matter of the utmost delicacy." *Ibid.*, 285–286.

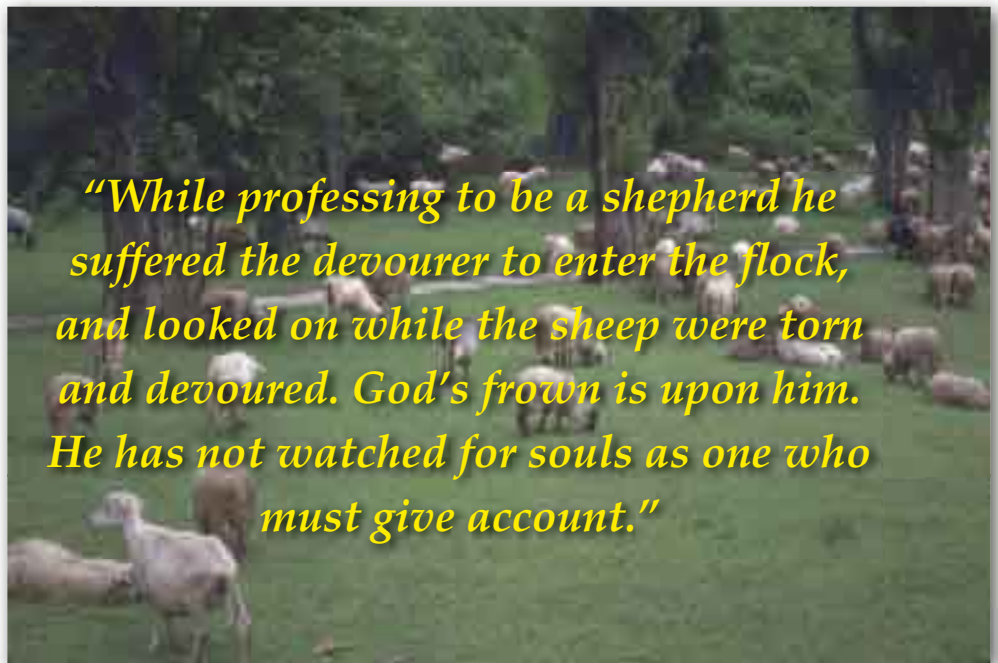
But you know we hear today, "Yes, there are bad things happening within our church—this remnant church of prophecy. Prophecy says all this will happen. Just keep your eyes on the Lord. Let Him take care of the problems. Don't worry, God will

guide this ship safely into port. Don't be concerned, just let it all happen."

"Captain Smith knew the sea, and his clear eye and steady hand had often guided his ship through dangerous paths. For forty years storms sought in vain to vex him or menace his craft. . . . Each new advancing type of ship built by his company was handed over to him as a reward for faithful services and as an evidence of confidence in his skill. Strong of limb, intent of

"A fearful responsibility is resting upon Brother G. While professing to be a shepherd he suffered the devourer to enter the flock, and looked on while the sheep were torn and devoured. God's frown is upon him. He has not watched for souls as one who must give account."

Did you know, after the collision had occurred, "hundreds [of steerage passengers] were in a circle with a preacher in the middle, praying, crying, asking God and Mary



purpose, pure in character, dauntless as a sailor should be, he walked the deck of this majestic structure as master of her keel.

"Titanic though she was, his *indifference to danger* was one of the *direct and contributing causes* of this unnecessary tragedy—while his own willingness to die was the expiating evidence of his fitness to live. Those of us who knew him well, not in anger but in sorrow, file one specific charge against him: *overconfidence* and neglect to heed the oft-repeated warnings of his friends." *Ibid.*, 286. All emphasis in original.

You see, it is not bad character, it is not evil men; it is good men who become overconfident, self-satisfied. Ellen White wrote it this way in *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 232:

to help them. They lay there still crying till the water was over their heads. They just prayed and yelled, never lifting a hand to help themselves. They had lost their own will power and expected God to do all the work for them." *Ibid.*, 276. Does that have a parallel on those who kind of say, "What can I do? We're helpless, we can do nothing."

The least that can be done is to warn and make sure that no one will go into danger unprepared, unwarned. Then there must be protest, enlightenment, and rebuke.

*To be concluded.*

Note:

<sup>1</sup> Wade, Wyn Craig, *The Titanic: End of a Dream*, Rawson, Wade Publishers, Inc., New York, 1979.

# The Motivating Factor, Part 2



*Randy Floyd*

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:9–10.

Calvary—that’s where the love of God for man was manifested. That’s what we and the world must behold. Paul said that he was determined not to know anything but Christ and Him crucified. See 1 Corinthians 2:2. Why is this? Because Christ and Him crucified is the theme of the entire gospel. It is the gospel. But the gospel is more than just a story, more than just facts that must be mentally accepted as true.

The gospel is *power*: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Romans 1:16. Power to do what? Power to change a

person from the inside out; to turn a sinner into a saint. How? By Christ making His home in your heart, when the love of Christ as revealed at Calvary is perceived, believed and received into the soul. This is the only power that can banish sin and selfishness from the hearts of men and women.

Why is the Bible constantly telling us to “behold,” “look,” “consider” etc.? See John 1:29; 1 John 3:1; Hebrews 12:1–3. Because it is by beholding Christ and Him crucified that we are changed! See 2 Corinthians 3:18. Sister White told us that it would do us well to spend a thoughtful hour each day contemplating the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes. See *The Desire of Ages*, 83. I don’t know how many of us actually do this, and I often fail to do it myself. But when I make the time to do it, what a marvelous change is wrought in my heart and mind!

I would like us to take a look at Calvary just now. We’re going to look at it for what it really is. Let’s get a look at Calvary that is broader, longer, deeper, and higher than any Hollywood film can portray.

What we need to realize and let sink into our heads, is that Christ suffered the second death on that cross. He didn’t just suffer the first death, but the second. The first death is the *result* of sin in this world, but the second is the *penalty* for sin. Jesus paid the full penalty for the sins of every one ever born. What is the second death? It is the wrath of God meted out for sin (John 3:36); it is the destruction of both body and soul (Matthew 10:28); it is to be cast out of God’s presence (Matthew 7:23; 25:41).

It is hard to imagine what it would be like for just one person to die under the full guilt and weight

of his own sins, but Christ suffered under the full weight and guilt of the sin of us all. See Isaiah 53:6. Can we possibly imagine the burden of soul, not to mention the body, that rested upon our dear Savior? I would venture to say not.

He began to suffer under the weight of our sins in the garden of Gethsemane (see Matthew 26:37–38; Luke 22:44–45; Isaiah 53:12). The word Gethsemane actually means, “olive-press.” I have seen an example of how the olive press operates. Baskets of olives are piled one upon the other. Then a stone of great weight is placed atop them. The weight of the stone continues to press upon the olives until all the oil is squeezed out of them and nothing remains but empty husks. That’s what happened to Jesus, friends. It wasn’t the instrument of the cross that killed Him—it was the weight of the sin of the world.

When we behold Christ upon Calvary’s cross and we contemplate the great love manifested there, how can we not be broken? To realize that He paid a price far higher than any will ever have to pay! He died the second death of millions, not just one!

### **Our Brother Forever**

Another amazing thing to realize is that in clothing His divinity with humanity for the purpose of death, He partook of our humanity forever!

Ellen White wrote, “In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. . . . In Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. . . . To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human

family, forever to retain His human nature.” *The Desire of Ages*, 25.

Knowledge of such condescension breaks the hardened heart, and leads us to the only true motivation in the service of God—pure agapé love, love that is selfless. There is no hint of self in such love. If we serve Him from any motive that stinks of self, we shall surely fail; but “love never fails.” See 1 Corinthians 13:8.

### **Perception Problems**

Even among Adventists, we have some perception problems as well. Not only a perception problem about what really happened about Calvary, but about some other things that can prevent us from experiencing full liberty from sin.

*There is no hint of self in such love. If we serve Him from any motive that stinks of self, we shall surely fail; but “love never fails.”*

Take sin for instance. What is sin? Surely we know the answer, “sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4. But it’s more than just the violation of a law. Many see the Ten Commandments as a list of rules, an external code. But the law is much more than this. It is a transcript of God’s character.

God is holy, just, and good. The law is holy, just, and good (see Romans 7:12; Psalm 19:7–9). The law reveals the heart and mind of God. When we sin, we do more than break a rule, we break the very heart of God!

The Bible is clear that when we knowingly commit sin, we crucify Christ afresh and put Him to open shame. See Hebrews 6:4–6, 10:26–29. In the light of Calvary, sin should be unthinkable. We should

rather die than sin when we realize the truth of it. A perfect love for our Savior will result in a perfect hatred for that which caused Him such anguish—sin. If our motivation is love for Jesus, we will choose that love over the sin; but if our motivations are selfish, we will choose ourselves over Him.

God wants to make the law an inward principle. We are no longer to look at the law as an external code recorded on stone, but an inward principle written upon our hearts (see 2 Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:10; Deuteronomy 6:6; Psalm 119:11). This was the Pharisees’ problem (Matthew 23:25–28). They were trying to do the job on their own from the outside in.

If the law is a transcript of God’s

character, if Christ is the image of God, and if Christ is to be formed in us, then God’s character, embodied in His law, is to become our character. Thus, as the Bible says, “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:10. When I was having so much trouble fulfilling the righteous requirements of the law, it was because my chief motivation wasn’t love. Only through the motivation of love can one keep the law through Christ in his or her heart.

### **What Makes Heaven Heavenly?**

Another perception problem is our perception of Heaven. We know it is an awesome place. And it seems we all want to be there; but do we really? I ask that question because what makes heaven heav-

enly is Christ. The kingdom of God is so wonderful because Christ is there—not because of all the great things there are to do. It's not just the absence of things like death and sorrow and sickness, but the presence of Him Who is love.

We may think we want to go to heaven, but how we live *here* shows whether or not heaven would be heavenly for us. Jesus said, "the kingdom of God is *within* you." Luke 17:21. (All emphasis supplied.) This is the whole point of the gospel of Christianity, it is "Christ *in you*, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:27. See also Galatians 2:20, 4:19.

Christ's kingdom is here and now—in your heart—if you'll let it be. In order for us to have Christ as our King in Heaven, we need to allow Him to be King of our hearts here. Otherwise, Heaven would not be a good place for you to be. You would not be happy there. If Heaven is Heaven because of the presence of Christ, then it is most certain that many would not choose Heaven, for Christ was present here for thirty three and a half years, and we crucified Him.

The whole point of this is that love must be *the* motivating factor in our Christian walk. This is the governing principle of Heaven, and it must govern us now.

The Bible tells us to examine ourselves (1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5). If there were no threat of Hell nor promise of Heaven; if the only reward for serving Christ were to have His principle of agapé love in my heart, would I still serve Him? I asked myself that question some time ago, and I still ask myself that question on occasion. When I'm feeling that the answer might be No, I behold Christ and Him crucified, and I am changed. ✨

*Randy Floyd writes from California.*

## *Broken Ears*

What child is this, this precious gift  
That lies before me now,  
With perfect smile and glowing eyes  
That seem to wonder how

How do I grow to be like you,  
And teach the world to smile?  
How do I hold the things you hold,  
And walk the weary miles?

And will I learn to talk like you  
And hear the things you hear?  
And will my life bring happiness  
To everyone who's near?

I'm trying hard to listen to  
The words your lips are forming,  
But sound seems to escape me now  
Your voice I'm not ignoring.

Oh little one with broken ears  
How fortunate you are  
To see the things that you can see  
And be the child you are.

For God knows best the way He's blessed  
And what you are to be;  
And often things that we will miss  
Are things that you will see.

For we so often seem to think  
We know the things we need  
And miss the very smile of God  
That He would have us see.

So fret not that you cannot hear;  
In time His voice you'll know.  
And all the gifts God wants to give  
On you He will bestow.

Lee Forbes,  
May 2002



# Waiting the Fourth Watch

Virgil Robinson

The next time James and Ellen met was at the home of Stockbridge Howland, in Topsham, Maine. Howland was a staunch Adventist. So bravely did he defend his home as a citadel of truth that in later years James White referred to it as “Fort Howland.”<sup>1</sup>

At the time James and Ellen were there, Howland’s daughter, Frances, was very sick with rheumatic fever. The family physician came regularly, doing what he could to relieve her pain. One morning, as Frances lay in one of the upstairs bedrooms, a large group downstairs was praying for her. After the prayers one of the brethren cried out, “Is there a sister here who has the faith to go and take her by the hand, and bid her arise in the name of the Lord?”

Before he had finished speaking a Sister Curtis was on her way up the stairs. In the name of the Lord she bade the sick girl, “Arise, and be made whole.” Life-giving power flowed through the girl’s frame. She arose, dressed, and joined the family downstairs.

At the worship hour the next morning, as James was reading a portion of the fifth chapter of James, the doctor came into the house and went upstairs to visit his patient, only to find her gone. Alarmed, he hurriedly descended the stairs and stepped into the kitchen, where the family was sitting around the table. Seeing Frances sitting with them, he exclaimed in astonishment: “So Frances is better!”

“Yes, the Lord has healed her,” was the reply.

James White continued reading from the Bible: “Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him.” Verse 14. A puzzled look came over the doctor’s face as he left without saying another word.<sup>2</sup>

### Meeting Coordinator

Feeling that God had called her to bear her testimony to the Advent people in New Hampshire, Ellen prepared to go. Three or four others accompanied her, one of whom was James. Ellen found him an efficient help in arranging her

meetings. She appreciated it when he sometimes spoke to the people.

The weeks passed, with James and Ellen going from company to company, encouraging the weak, rebuking fanatics, and assuring believers that God had not forgotten them. Traveling together in this ministry, the two discovered in time that they shared many beliefs and ideals. Time and time again Ellen found in James a strong protector; he, in turn, became more and more convinced that her visions were of God, and that a supernatural power worked through her.

When word came that fanaticism was flourishing in Paris, Maine, they went there. While in Paris they stayed with a family named Stowell, who observed the seventh-day Sabbath. . . .

### The Fourth Watch

At this time Ellen did not expect ever to marry. Adventists felt that the coming of the Lord was so near that it would be better not to enter into this relationship. James

White and a number of others, on the basis of the “fourth watch,” believed that the Lord’s coming would be delayed for just one year and looked for the Advent in the autumn of 1845. (See Matthew 14:25.)

On September 20, 1845, he wrote to Brother Jacobs: “Do we know what watch the Lord is coming? Certainly. Three have passed, and there is but four. All who see this light will receive a certainty that before the 10th day of the 7th

would be necessary for him to leave her free to travel with someone else. He was an ordained minister, and she was a worker for God. Both must guard their reputations.

Ellen was dismayed. She had come to lean so heavily upon him that the thought of permanent separation was painful, and the idea of someone else traveling with her was no less disturbing to him. After allowing the implications of his announcement to sink in, he pointed out that there was another

*With others James had maintained that because Christ would soon come, Adventists should not marry. In fact, he had written a letter to a couple planning to get married, accusing them of denying their faith by so doing.*

month, 1845, our King will come, and we will watch, and like Noah, know the day. . . . Awake! Awake! Awake! ye heralds of the Jubilee, and tell the scattered flock, ‘The morning cometh.’ Isaiah 21:12.”<sup>3</sup>

But Ellen Harmon, who was at this time visiting friends in Massachusetts, wrote that she had been shown in vision this date would pass and Christ would not come as they expected.<sup>4</sup>

### Ugly Rumors

James and Ellen took up their travels again during the winter of 1845 and were always accompanied by a chaperone. Their messages continued to comfort the people of God.

Soon, perhaps inevitably, the old ugly rumors began spreading again. We are not told in just what manner they came to the attention of James White, but he was told the situation was becoming serious. He talked to Ellen, pointing out that something had come up, and it

solution to the problem. They could get married. He was willing if she was.

“Ellen,” he said, “let’s accept the situation. You need me, and I need you. What about it?”

“We must do nothing rash, James,” she replied. “We must beware of injuring our testimony or making any move that could prevent our doing acceptable work for God. We must do God’s will. Let’s pray about it.”

They agreed to spend much time in prayer over the matter. When they met again, they decided that they should marry.<sup>5</sup>

This was not an easy decision to make. With others James had maintained that because Christ would soon come, Adventists should not marry. In fact, he had written a letter to a couple planning to get married, accusing them of denying their faith by so doing. Now he was planning for his own marriage.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, there were some who were dismayed.

### Wedding Day

As soon as James returned to Portland he published the banns<sup>7</sup> for their forthcoming marriage. Had the Harmons still been members of the Methodist Church, James and Ellen would probably have had a church wedding. But the Adventists in Portland had no church of their own. So on Monday, August 30, 1846, James White and Ellen Harmon were married by Charles Harding, a justice of the peace for the city of Portland.

There was no honeymoon. A century ago people who earned their bread by the toil of their hands seldom had time or money for such enjoyable, but not always essential, pleasures. Certainly, the newlyweds could not afford one, for they did not have much of this world’s goods. Whatever James had earned he had donated to the Advent cause or spent traveling from place to place. How did James and Ellen feel about each other?

Wrote James White in later years, “She has been my crown of rejoicing.”<sup>8</sup>

Ellen declared long after, “Although he is dead, I feel that he is the best man that ever trod shoe leather.”<sup>9</sup> ❧

*This article was reprinted from Virgil Robinson, James White, 36–39. The author was the great-grandson of James and Ellen White on his mother’s side and the great-grandson of William Farnsworth (one of the first Seventh-day Adventists) on his father’s side.*

#### Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> James White, “The Cause,” *Review and Herald*, October 27, 1863.
- <sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, Pacific Press Pub. Assn., Mountain View, Calif., 1915, 74–75.
- <sup>3</sup> James White letter to Brother Jacobs, September 20, 1845.
- <sup>4</sup> James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, 22.
- <sup>5</sup> *By Saddle and Sleigh*, 128; also Document File 733 C.
- <sup>6</sup> James White letter to Brother Jacobs, published in *Day Star*, October 11, 1845.
- <sup>7</sup> A public notice of a proposed marriage so that any person knowing of impediments to the marriage might make them known.
- <sup>8</sup> *Life Sketches* (1888), 125.
- <sup>9</sup> Document File, 733 C. Interview.



## The Alpha and the Omega of Deadly Error, Part 4

### Meeting the Omega

A Review of Significant Warnings  
and Special Instruction From the Spirit of Prophecy

*F. M. Wilcox*

“**W**oe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD! Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words. . . . Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.” Isaiah 31:1–3.

That we face a serious problem in the educational situation, every one who has given serious thought to the question readily admits.

We live in a world that for the most part has forgotten God, in a world indeed that has not only forgotten Him, but is engaged in an active warfare against Him. Teachings which not only subvert the gospel and the truths of divine revelation, but even deny the very existence of God, are being taught openly. And the very center of much of this teaching is found in some of the great institutions of the land which are supposed to educate men and women for a higher civilization, for better citizenship in this world, and for a preparation for the world to come. Some of the great universities, and also some of the church seminaries whose special purpose is to prepare men for holy orders, are the leaders in this propaganda.

And the sad reflection in it all, as relates to our work, is found in the fact that at the present time we have had enrolled this summer in these higher institutions of learning more than two hundred teachers from our own schools, besides many other Seventh-day Adventist boys and girls who are seeking postgraduate work and of whom we are not informed. It is safe to say that a large percentage of these have gone into these worldly schools contrary to definite counsel. If the teaching to be found in many of these schools shall do for Seventh-day Adventists who attend them what it has done for thousands of the communicants of other churches, we face the greatest crisis of all our history. . . .

## The Omega of Error

We [have already] considered,<sup>1</sup> to some extent, the pernicious doctrines and theories which are taught in worldly schools. We reviewed some of the significant warnings which the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy sounded against the entrance of these delusive doctrines into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We were warned against the “doctrine of devils,” that an effort would be made to undermine the very foundation of this movement, and to supplant with a system of intellectual philosophy

be repeated, and that the church of God would be called upon to face another crisis. We quote this warning:

“I am instructed to speak plainly. ‘Meet it,’ is the word spoken to me. ‘Meet it firmly, and without delay.’ But it is not to be met by our taking our working forces from the field to investigate doctrines and points of difference. We have no such investigation to make. In the book ‘Living Temple’ there is presented the alpha of deadly heresies. The omega will follow, and will be received by those who are not willing to heed the

ror against which we were warned twenty-five years ago involved the principles of pantheism, naturalism, and evolution. It was a teaching which destroyed faith in the inspiration of the divine Word, in Christ the Saviour from sin, in the efficacy of the atonement, making man his own savior, and exalting an intellectual philosophy to the supplanting of a living, transforming Christian faith in the miracle-working power of divine grace. And this is the very teaching, only in aggravated degree, emanating from the great universities today. This teaching well answers to the omega against which we were warned. It may, of course, assume other forms in the future and come to us from other sources. But we need to recognize it in its present form and heed the warning we have received against its reception. Will we do it?

As watchmen on the walls of Zion we need to be constantly on our guard, praying for spiritual discernment and heavenly vision, that we may recognize the efforts of the enemy in whatever form those efforts may be put forth or by whomsoever they may be made.

We may be assured of this, that the omega of error, whenever it comes, will present many plausible reasons as to why it should be accepted. On the subtle plea of broad-mindedness, liberality, competent and efficient leadership, and conformity to the advanced thought of a new age, it will demand recognition. And from the standpoint of worldly policy and expediency it will have much to commend it for acceptance; but the evil fruit of its seductive power will be just as baneful. The omega will not come from professed enemies of our work, but rather from professed friends, even from Seventh-day Adventists who are still enrolled as members of the church, but who have lost out of their hearts the spirit of this message. Of this danger we are warned:

*We may be assured of this, that the omega of error, whenever it comes, will present many plausible reasons as to why it should be accepted.*

the fundamental principles of truth, for which we have stood through the years. This system of intellectual philosophy would discredit the past leadings of God in this movement, and would seek such changes and transformations as would bring this work into harmony with the so-called advanced thought of the present day. And we were warned that this was the alpha of error that was seeking admission into the church.

When this warning was given, twenty-five years ago, the danger was recognized, and earnest steps were taken to avert the threatened catastrophe. God blessed the effort. But this was not to be the end of the satanic campaign to corrupt the truth of the gospel as held by this denomination. We were definitely warned that the wicked philosophy which was met twenty-five years ago was the alpha of error, but that the omega of error would be developed later, that the erroneous teaching of the past would again

warning God has given.

“Our physicians, upon whom important responsibilities rest, should have clear spiritual discernment. They are to stand constantly on guard. Dangers that we do not now discern will soon break upon us, and I greatly desire that they shall not be deceived. I have an intense longing to see them standing free in the Lord. I pray that they may have courage to stand firm for the truth as it is in Jesus, holding fast the beginning of their confidence unto the end.” *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, 50.

The book ———— “contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while; and I trembled for our people.” *Ibid.*, 53.

### A Warning to Be Heeded

We do not know in what varied forms and phases the omega of error will manifest itself in the future, but this warning needs to be burned into our very souls. The alpha of er-



# Historical Footnotes

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” —E. G. White, *Life Sketches*, 196. Many today have neglected to study the history and people that made up the early days of the Advent movement. To help encourage interest in Adventist history, we have put together questions about people and events of our past. Our goal is to spark faith, and *further study* into “the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”

“Those who seek the education that the world esteems so highly are gradually led farther and farther from the principles of truth, until they become educated worldlings. At what a price have they gained their education! They have parted with the Holy Spirit of God. They have chosen to accept what the world calls knowledge in the place of the truths which God has committed to men through his ministers and apostles and prophets.

“And there are some who, having secured this worldly education, think that they can introduce it into our schools. There is constant danger that those who labor in our schools and sanitariums will entertain the idea that they must get in line with the world, study the things the world studies, and become familiar with the things the world becomes familiar with.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 15–16.

We need indeed to be on our guard, maintaining our simplicity of faith and Christian experience, and holding fast to the fundamentals of truth and doctrine which have brought us into existence as a denomination. The principles which made us Seventh-day Adventists, if cherished, will keep us Seventh-day Adventists. ❀

*To be continued.*

Source: “Why Our Educational Symposium? The Alpha and the Omega of Deadly Error: A Review of Significant Warnings and Special Instruction from the Spirit of Prophecy, in Two Parts—Part 2,” *Review and Herald*, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., October 23, 1930, 3–8.



Francis McLellan Wilcox served the Seventh-day Adventist church as author, minister, and administrator and was the editor of the *Review and Herald* from 1911 to 1944.

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> See parts 1–3 of this series, published in *Our Firm Foundation*, November 2004–January 2005.

- Who invented and patented a desk that was used by students in North American schools for many decades?
  - Uriah Smith
  - J. H. Kellogg
  - J. N. Andrews
  - J. N. Loughborough
- When was the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists formed?
  - 1844
  - 1863
  - 1888
  - 1899
- What was the name of the first poem in the *Review*?
  - “He Is Coming”
  - “Why Does Our Lord Tarry?”
  - “The Sabbath”
  - “The Redeemed”
- What was the first book printed especially for colporteurs to sell to the public?
  - Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*
  - The Great Controversy*
  - Bible Stories*
  - Bible Readings for the Home Circle*
- In 1890, Ellen White said that there were two books that should be “circulated more widely than any others.” *The Great Controversy* was one, what was the other?
  - Life Sketches*
  - The Desire of Ages*
  - Bible Readings for the Home Circle*
  - Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*
- When was Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska established?
  - 1880
  - 1885
  - 1890
  - 1900
- Battle Creek College was renamed when it moved from Battle Creek to Berrien Springs, Michigan. What was the new name?
  - Emmanuel Missionary College
  - Andrews University
  - Emmanuel College
  - Bell College
- Two ministers, Waggoner and Jones brought the “righteous by faith” message to the 1888 General Conference session in Minneapolis, Minnesota. What happened to both of them?
  - They died shortly thereafter
  - They left the faith
  - They were sent as missionaries to Australia
  - They became General Conference presidents
- In what year did James White die?
  - 1872
  - 1881
  - 1890
  - 1905
- In 1887, a very influential Adventist minister left the faith and subsequently wrote a book entitled *Seventh-day Adventism Renounced*. Who was he?
  - J. H. Kellogg
  - Otis McKinley
  - R. F. Cottrell
  - D. M. Canright

Answers: 1.a; 2.b; 3.c; 4.a; 5.d; 6.c; 7.a; 8.b; 9.b; 10.d.  
For specific references to any answer, please contact Hope International.



The above NASA satellite photos were taken of the town of Lhoknga, on the west coast of Sumatra near the capital of Aceh, Banda Aceh, [which] was completely destroyed by the tsunami, with the exception of the mosque (white circular feature) in the city's center." [http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/NewImages/images.php3?img\\_id=16777](http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Newsroom/NewImages/images.php3?img_id=16777).

## God, Why Did You Do This to Us?

**News Item:** "THE sea and wreckage of coastal towns all around the Indian Ocean yielded up tens of thousands of bodies today, pushing the toll from Sunday's tsunami past 59,000.

"The apocalyptic destruction caused by the wave dwarfed the efforts of governments and relief agencies as they turned from rescuing survivors to trying to care for millions of homeless, increasingly threatened by disease amid the rotting corpses.

" 'Why did you do this to us, God?' wailed an old woman in a devastated fishing village in southern India's Tamil Nadu state. 'What did we do to upset you? This is worse than death.' " [News.com.au](http://news.com.au), December 29, 2004.

**End-time Perspective:** As the angels allow the winds loose a little more, we will see more and more disasters come upon this world. The "wail" from the old woman will be repeated over and over until the people demand answers. And answers will be given—it is those "Saturday Sabbath keepers!" "God is angry because they are desecrating His holy day, Sunday!"

"In churches and in large gatherings in the open air, ministers will urge upon the people the necessity of keeping the first day of the week. There are calamities on sea and land: and these calamities will increase, one disaster following close upon another; and the little band of conscientious Sabbath-keepers will be pointed out as the ones who are bringing the wrath of God upon the world by their disregard of Sunday." *Review and Herald*, March 18, 1884.

God, in His mercy, is not only trying to reach the lost by these calamities, He is trying to wake us up that we might be prepared to meet what is soon to come!



Photo: Photodisc

## Praying for Divine guidance

**News Item:** "He [President Bush] seems to have relied more on divine guidance than the considered opinions of his top advisors. Bush told [*Washington Post* reporter Bob] Woodward that as he approached the final decision to go to war, 'I was praying for strength to do the Lord's will. . . . I'm surely not going to justify war based on God, understand that. Nevertheless, in my case I pray that I be as good a messenger of His will as possible.' "

Evan Thomas, " 'I Haven't Suffered Doubt,' " *Newsweek*, April 26, 2004, 23.

**End-time Perspective:** This can be a good thing, or a really, really bad thing, depending on whether or not one is truly being led by the Lord. "Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war." Proverbs 20:18.



Photo: Photodisc

## LDS and DNA

**News Item:** "A new book casts doubt on the plausibility of a basic Book of Mormon claim, and it is polarizing members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"In *Losing a Lost Tribe: Native Americans, DNA, and the Mormon Church* (Signature Books), research scientist Simon G. Southerton of Canberra, Australia, notes that none of the nearly 7,500 DNA-tested Native Americans shows any link to ancient Israel. More than 99 percent show an Asian heritage. The Book of Mormon, however, says that Israelites emigrated to the Americas 2,600 years ago, with the now-extinct Lamanites and Nephites becoming the ancestors of American Indians." John W. Kennedy, "LDS and DNA," *Christianity Today*, October, 2004, 20.

**End-time Perspective:** "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. "The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God. . . . Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence

of God's remnant people in the true testimony. He will bring in spurious visions, to mislead and mingle the false with the true, and so disgust people that they will regard everything that bears the name of visions, as a species of fanaticism; but honest souls, by contrasting false and true, will be enabled to distinguish between them." *The Faith I Live By*, 296.



Photo: Photodisc

### Illegal Imprisonment?

**News Item:** "Philadelphia police on October 10 arrested 11 Christians, charging them with felonies, including criminal conspiracy, rioting, and 'ethnic intimidation,' a 'hate crime' under city law. Michael Marcavage and his group were preaching the gospel during 'Outfest,' a homosexual event, when a gay group confronted them, blocking their path. Police arrived and ordered the Christians to leave, but Mr. Marcavage refused, saying his group had a right to remain on public property." "The Buzz," *World*, October 30, 2004, 11.

**End-time Perspective:** "Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him

that there was no judgment." Isaiah 59:14–15.

"He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD." Proverbs 17:15.

It appears that the laws are now being made, or at least interpreted by some to be made, that justify the wicked and condemn the righteous! Woe unto this nation! "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good." 2 Timothy 3:1–3. We are indeed living in perilous times, especially for those who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

### Paraphrase of the New Testament

**News Item:** "My advice is for everyone to have a regular partner. . . . If you know you have strong needs, get yourself a partner. Better than being frustrated!" 1 Corinthians 7:9, according to *Good as New*, a new "women, gay, and sinner-friendly" paraphrase of the New Testament. It excludes 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation but adds the Gospel of Thomas." Quoted from *Los Angeles Times* in "Quotation Marks," *Christianity Today*, October, 2004, 21.

**End-time Perspective:** "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book

of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Revelation 22:18–19.



Photo: Photodisc

### The "Left Behind" Series

**News Item:** " 'Death is too good for you. You are sentenced to eternity in the lake of fire.' 'Oh, God, no!' — In *Glorious Appearing*<sup>1</sup>, Jesus condemns a follower of the Antichrist." David Gates, "The Pop Prophets," *Newsweek*, May 24, 2004, 46.

**End-time Perspective:** "To those who feel free to read story magazines and novels I would say: You are sowing seed the harvest of which you will not care to garner. From such reading there is no spiritual strength to be gained. Rather it destroys love for the pure truth of the Word. Through the agency of novels and story magazines, Satan is working to fill with unreal and trivial thoughts, minds that should be diligently studying the Word of God." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 120–121.

Not only does Satan work to fill minds with "unreal and trivial thoughts," but flat-out lies! The way this is presented, Jesus appears angry and wants the person to suffer. Nothing could be further from the truth. Jesus hates sin, not sinners. We are much better off with the Word of God, just as it reads.

*Contributor: Joe Olson*

Note:

<sup>1</sup> Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, *Glorious Appearing: The End of Days*, Left Behind vol. 12, Tyndale House Publishers, 2004.

**Correction:** In my article published in November 2004, I stated that the United States federal government required the payment of M.L. Andreasen's pension. I have since been advised that the government took notice of another case, not Andreasen's. I regret this error. — Ralph Larson.

# Selected Publications

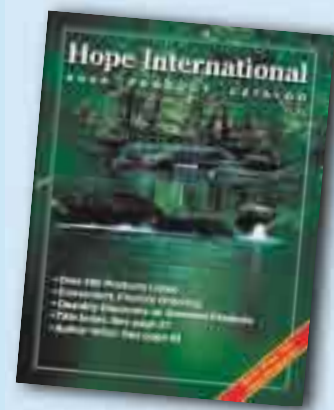
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This book contains many messages of instruction, sympathy, reproof, and encouragement from the pen of Ellen G. White, addressed directly to young people.

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Better Living Publications, Paperback, 224 pages, 1990, Regular price: \$3.50

**BEWE-MHBL \$1.09**

Remnant, Paperback, 295 pages, 1995, Regular price: \$9.95

**BEWE-MHRP \$7.49**

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Compiled from the Spirit of Prophecy, *Pathways to Health and Happiness* helps you understand and apply the principles of health reform in everyday life. An invaluable resource and guide to better health!

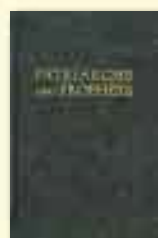
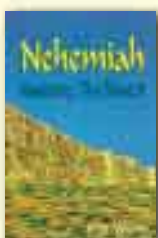
Paperback, Regular price: \$5.50

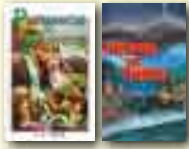
**BEWE-PTHH \$4.49**

#### *Patriarchs and Prophets*

Why would a God of love allow sin and suffering? This important question and many others are answered in this remarkable book, which sheds light on the Biblical history of this world, from Creation to the time of King David.

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**BEWE-PKIN** \$11.75

Remnant, Paperback, 441 pages, 1993, Regular price: \$11.95

**BEWE-PKRP** \$8.99

Harvestime, Paperback, 550 pages, 2000

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Book 2, Hardcover, 465 pages, 1986, Regular price: \$12.99

**BEWE-SMV2** \$11.49

Book 3, Hardcover, 488 pages, 1986, Regular price: \$12.99

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This book combines the complete book *Steps to Christ* with 60 pages from *Great Controversy*, and over 200 Bible promises for day-to-day living.

Paperback, 241 pages, 1988, Regular price: \$2.95

**BEWE-SIST** \$0.99

**Simple Diet—A Spectacular Plan, A**

Find out what God's ideal is concerning your diet, and reap the physical, mental, and spiritual benefits that He has in store for you! Compiled by Glenn D. Toppenberg, MD.

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**BEWE-SDSP** \$4.99

**Sketches From the Life of Paul**

A predecessor to *Acts of the Apostles*, this historical narrative traces down in a clear and connected manner the ministry of Paul to the early Christian church. Highlights many lessons for the church of today.

Hardback, 334 pages, 1974

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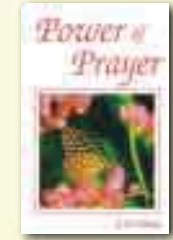
**BEWE-SPL3** \$85.49

**Spiritual Gifts, vol. 1 & 2**

Two of the earliest books written by Ellen G. White, Volume 1 is "The Great Controversy between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels," published in 1858. Book two is "My Christian Experience, Views and Labors in connection with the rise and progress of the third angel's message," published in 1860.

Hardcover, 525 pages, 1858 & 1860

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### *Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3 & 4*

Two small works in one binding, including Sister White's first detailed history of mankind from creation to the days of Solomon, an extended article regarding the 1863 health reform vision, and "Testimonies for the Church," numbers one to ten.

Hardcover, 620 pages, 1864

**BEWE-SG34** **\$10.50**



### *Steps to Christ*

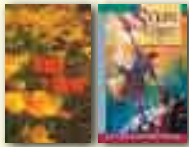
One of the great spiritual classics of all time, this book is a meaningful guide to Christian living.

Hardcover, 126 pages, Regular price: \$8.99

**BEWE-STCH** **\$8.00**

Paperback, 121 pages, 2000

**BEWE-SCHT** **\$0.30**



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Hardcover, 448 pages, 2002, Regular price: \$14.99

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### *Temperance*

Temperance was a favorite theme of Ellen G. White, both in her writings and in her public speaking. The selections appearing in this book have been drawn from the whole range of her

writing on the topic, including sources long out of print.

Hardcover, 292 pages, 1949

**BEWE-TEMP** **\$10.50**

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Vital spiritual comments and counsel for all members God's remnant church.

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Hardcover, 172 pages, Regular price: \$8.99

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Paperback, 152 pages, 1956, Regular price: \$6.99

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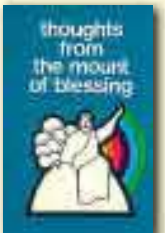


### *To Be a True Young Lady*

This compilation is specifically focused on how to develop a beautiful personality in a young woman, which will truly beautify the external person as well. It is God's greatest desire for us to carry this out to its fullest extent, so we can become what He intended us to be.

Paperback, 181 pages, 1986, Regular price: \$9.95

**BEWE-TBTY** **\$6.96**



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## Letters to the Editor



I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the magazines you published are so touching. My prayer is that the Lord will bless your efforts. It will be a wonderful day when we meet Jesus face to face!

NM

I just want to let you know how much I appreciate your work. I ask that you will pray for me and my family.

VR, Newfoundland, Canada

Thank you for *Our Firm Foundation*, and for all the good work you are doing to spread the gospel all over the world. God bless you and keep you in doing this.

Please pray for me so my faith will not fail, no matter what, and I will be ready when Jesus comes for the second time.

TS, Idaho

Thank you for *Our Firm Foundation* and all the rest of the books; they are a blessing to me because I do not get to go to church on account of my health. I stay with my daughter. I am 91 years old, but God is still blessing me.

IM, Texas

I wanted to write a few lines to thank you for the newsletters that you send to me. I also want to tell you how much I enjoy the magazine, *Our Firm Foundation*.

It has helped me so much in the way I should be living my life in order to be ready to meet Jesus when He comes to take us to heaven.

In the newsletter you asked for names of friends and relatives, so I am sending some names. Please pray for my children and me. My prayer is for God to continue to bless each one of you at Hope.

TS, Alabama

A friend has given me copies of your materials for years—*wonderful, great* materials and great tapes! When finished, I post them all to Ghana, Kenya, Zambia, and other countries in Africa, where many souls are being won to Jesus. Then the copies go out to colporteurs and hungry souls.

I love all the materials you print, as they *always* have Spirit of Prophecy aplenty and the King James Bible as well.

My prayers include you. Please include my daughter—a former pastor's wife—who is not walking with Jesus anymore.

C, Arizona

I am truly grateful for your gospel ministry and your faithfulness to true Bible doctrine. I have especially appreciated Elder Ralph Larson's articles about *Questions on Doctrine*—the book and its errors. Thank God for watchmen on the walls of Zion.

BT, California

I was misled by a group of Adventist believers who keep themselves apart from the church and teach others to separate from the church in order to be saved. It took me a whole summer to see more clearly what I should do. I have been praying constantly and studied to learn my duty for myself the best I could. Now, I have made the step, to become a Seventh-day Adventist, even though I am aware of all the dangers of apostasy, and so on, in this church.

A brother shared with me your magazine last summer, and I found in it something so precious—a healthy, balanced faith, warning us and giving direction concerning our walk with God. I would like to receive it every month. The issue I have is from a time when you were at Eatonville, so I am not sure about the price. Could you please send me your magazines for a whole year? I will surely pay.

US, British Columbia, Canada

Please pray for —, as he is receiving *Our Firm Foundation*, and he is Sabbath School superintendent and the head of Personal Ministries.

Please send me the book by Ron Spear, *The Final Generation and the Fourth Angel*. I am sending payment for it.

AD, Michigan



Spiral Bound, 226 pages, 2004

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## *Authority in God's Church*

by Vernon Sparks

“Vernon Sparks, in his book, *Authority in God's Church*, has done a much-needed piece of research on the subject of authority. The present apostasy has resulted in the usurping of God's authority by men in high places.

“Let us not forget that when leaders, pastors, or laymen do not follow God's orders explicitly, clearly given by God's greatest gift to His remnant church—the Spirit of Prophecy—they have no authority. All misuse of authority begins with selfishness, which is the root of all sin. God speaks to us in the *Review and Herald*, April 12, 1898: ‘No selfishness can enter God's work. The most splendid service, if it originates with self, is useless.’

“The counsel contained in this book will help us to understand true loyalty to God and the need for obedience to His inspired Testimonies for His beloved church.” — Elder Ron Spear

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**Are you a church leader—either in your local church or in higher levels of church administration?** If so, here is how you can help bring our Advent movement back to the historic beliefs and standards given us by the God of heaven.

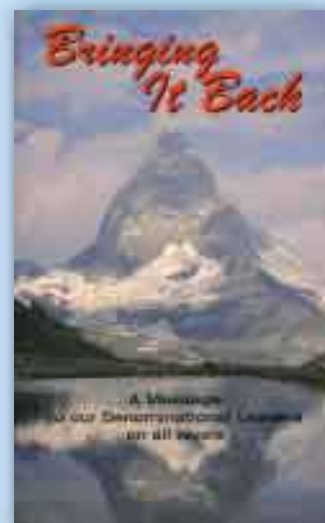
This book contains messages of hope which explain what each person can do to strengthen and help our Seventh-day Adventist Church and its members help reduce losses of funds and members.

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This little book is a friend which explains the simple steps needed to strengthen our denomination so it can more fully do the work God intended for us to do in these final hours of earth's history.

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