

Our Firm Foundation

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The Seventh-day Sabbath

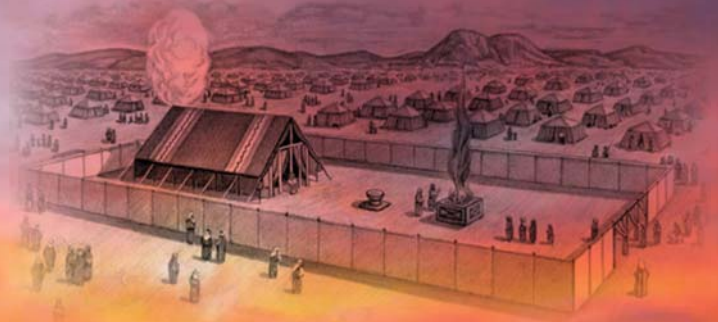
Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary



Why the Sanctuary?



Editorial

It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy." ST, Feb. 19, 1894.

Today, across the broad spectrum of all religious and civil authorities, we are witnessing the extended hand of fellowship to the man of sin. Even back in November 2004, the Associated Press revealed this:

"The nation's Roman Catholic bishops voted Wednesday to join a new alliance that would be the broadest Christian group ever formed in the United States, linking American evangelicals and Catholics in an ecumenical organization for the first time. The alliance, called Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A., is set to kick off next year. It would include mainline Protestants, Orthodox Christians, and black and other minority churches.

"With about 67 million U.S. members, the Catholic Church would be the largest denomination. 'It's not to create some kind of megabody or megachurch,' said Bishop Stephen Blaire, chairman of the ecumenical committee for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. 'It is a forum for participation so that we can pray together, grow in our understanding together and witness together our faith.' The vote came as the bishops worked to wrap up business at their fall meeting, which ends Thursday.

"It is considered a biblical imperative for Christians to find ways to build unity among their differ-

ent denominations. Pope John Paul II has made such efforts a priority of his pontificate. Blaire, of Stockton, California, called Wednesday's vote 'important and historic. . . ."

Again, the news carried this caption and article in April 2005: **"Bush to cultivate relationship with pope.** George W. Bush's brother says the U.S. president recognizes the importance of a moral voice in world affairs and plans to develop a close relationship with Pope Benedict XVI. Florida governor Jeb Bush praised the newly elected pope as he arrived in Rome for this weekend's inauguration mass. He says the new pope has the same qualities as his predecessor John Paul II, who'd led what he said was a spectacular papacy. President Bush met John Paul II three times and attended his funeral on April the 8th, praising the late leader of the world's 1.1 billion Catholics. . . . Jeb Bush says the meetings were more than just symbolism. He says they reflected the importance the president granted to the Holy See and his recognition of the importance of a moral voice in world affairs."

With prophetic markers such as these, "the work of the people of God is to prepare for the events of the future, which will soon come upon them with blinding force." Letter 26, 1903.

I find it most interesting that when the crisis hits as described by inspiration, one of the first things that God's people will be called upon to proclaim in America and then to the world is the second angel's message. Few have realized that the perfect fulfillment of Revelation 14:8 will be the matter of religious liberty. This we will share and document in forth-

coming "Theological Waymarks" articles. This work will be seen to be absolutely vital to the receiving of His spirit to proclaim the third and fourth angels' messages.

"This Bible text will be quoted to us, 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. . . . The powers that be are ordained of God.'" RH, January 1, 1889.

That Bible text is found in Romans 13:1. An understanding of this chapter will prove to be essential to God's people in order that they will be able to stand the first wave of attack. We will be called upon to illustrate from the Bible the line that heaven has given to the state, to which it can go and no further, and also the line which He has given to the church, to which she may extend herself and beyond which she may not go.

This very issue was the separating link that first divided all the churches and their members in Nazi Germany. Hitler permitted those churches who submitted to his totalitarian government beyond its God-given rights to keep their churches. Except for damage incurred during heavy Allied bombing near the end of the war, they were for the most part left untouched for cooperating and renouncing their faith. The cost? Consciences seared with a hot iron. The minority (Jehovah's Witnesses and Reformed Seventh-day Adventists) that would not violate their consciences found themselves in the concentration camps.

Is it any wonder inspiration has said, "Get ready, get ready, get ready"? EW 66.

Due to recent changes, we are pleased to announce that *Theological Waymarks* will now be in every issue of *Our Firm Foundation* magazine. ✱



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 God's 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

We are accepting article-length manuscripts (1850 to 2250 words) for possible publication in *Our Firm Foundation*. We prefer that submissions be submitted in Word (.doc) as a computer file or on letter size paper neatly typed. Include a digital picture and a short bio. Please address all correspondence to Editors, *Our Firm Foundation*, PO Box 220, Knoxville, IL 61448, or by email to editorial@hopeint.org.

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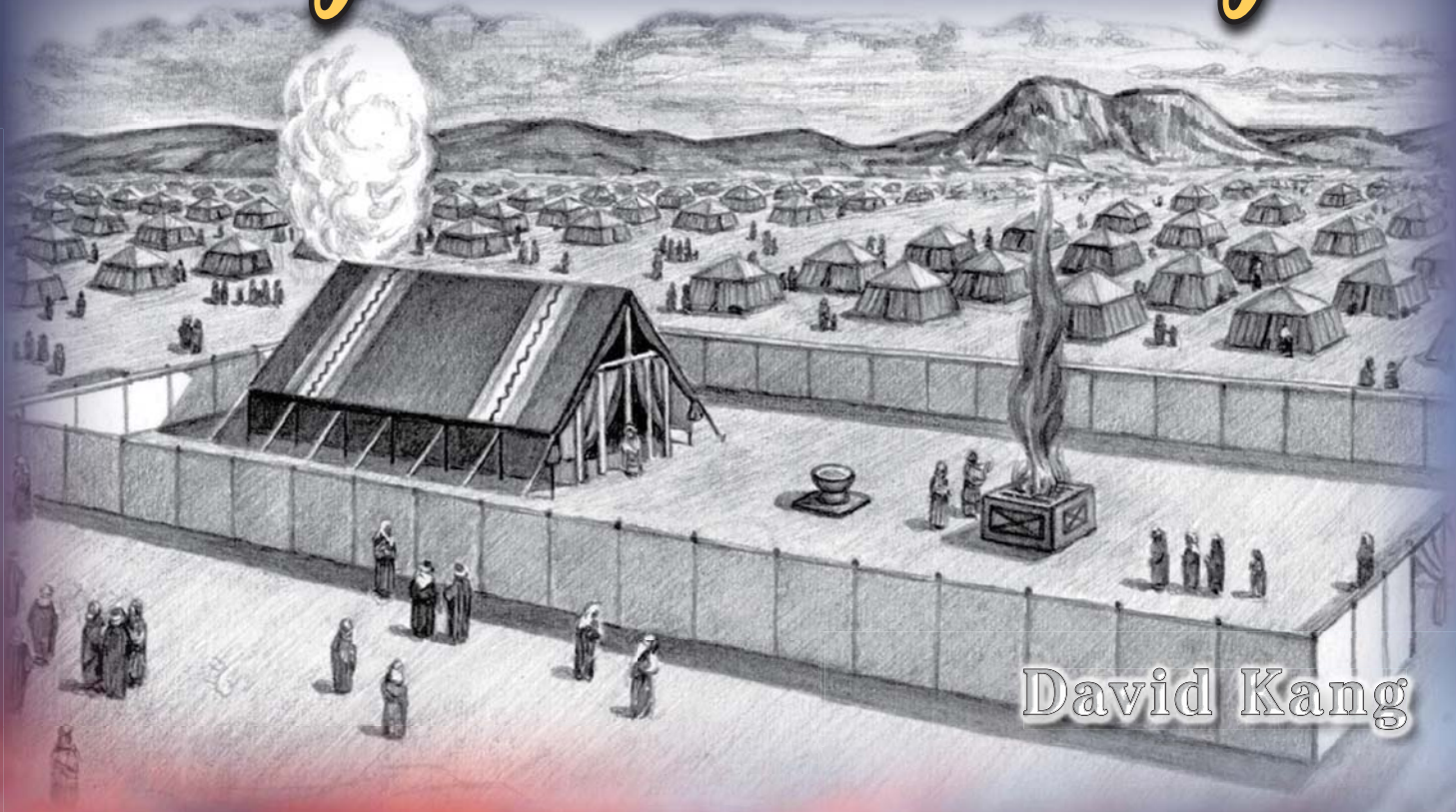
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Why the Sanctuary?



David Kang

The Sanctuary answers Satan's charges and our need to understand God's plan of redemption.

Why did God ask Moses to make the sanctuary in the wilderness? Was it because the Israelites needed something to do in the wilderness to alleviate boredom? Of course not. Then what was the reason? It was because God needed a living illustration to show and explain how God saves men. That's why He said, "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8.

From what do we need to be saved? We need to be saved from sin, which the Bible defines as lawlessness and unrighteousness. "For sin is the transgression of the law"

(1 John 3:4); "all unrighteousness is sin." 1 John 5:17.

We are born with sinful natures and sinful propensities; "... all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. We fell from that which is an image of God; sin has caused us to stop being righteous and to become selfish. Our problem is that we are not able to become righteous again on our own.

The glory of God is the character of God. The way He is. God is righteous, and, in fact, He is the only one who is truly righteous. "Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and 'God is love.'

1 John 4:16. It is conformity to the law of God, for 'all Thy commandments are righteousness' (Psalms 119:172), and 'love is the fulfilling of the law' (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God." *Mount of Blessings*, 18.

The Moral Image of God

Therefore, when we say that we have lost the image of God, it actually means that we have lost the character of the love of God, which is righteousness. And the problem is that we cannot buy it back in our own power, and no one

can be justified by the works of the law. Yet without the righteousness of God which is the love itself, no one can keep the law perfectly. And in a sense, except for humans in this fallen world, everything and everybody in the kingdom of God is righteous, including all the angels and stars and things in the universe, for they all are obeying the law of God as they are supposed to. The righteousness of God is the only qualification to live forever. So, to helpless humanity God gave the sanctuary to show how He is going to make them righteous again.

The lower order of created things is made to abide in the law of God, but the intelligent beings are designed to choose to obey Him. Angels and men are to give obedience to the law of God out of love, for they have the ability to think and choose freely. They were created in the image of God, which is love, and that love alone is their righteousness. Tragically, we humans lost it by sin and rebellion.

The Law Reveals Unlikeness

God gave us the law to point out and show us that we are not righteous. Only those who are righteous in heart can keep the law. In other words, only the keeping of the law of God in our own hearts constitutes righteousness. Therefore, the law of God is the measure or standard for the heart's condition; it's not righteousness itself. We cannot become righteous by the keeping of the law, but rather the righteous person will keep the law of God because he is righteous inside. In other words, that's what he wants and wills to do. He loves God and His creatures because he has the heavenly love inside. The Bible says, "And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us." Deuteronomy 6:25.

When God gave the Israelites His law at Mount Sinai, they said that they would keep it. But they were

so afraid, they went backwards and wanted to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord, for they did not have the righteousness of God in them. Rather, it was Moses who loved to come closer to God, to be in His presence, for he had righteousness in his heart.

Sanctuary Solution

Israel could not keep the law of God because they were unrighteous, so the Lord gave them a

law must appear, and that is Jesus Christ our Lord. But how does He make us righteous? He cannot lie or cheat in front of the whole universe for "that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26.

An Unforgettable Answer to Satan's Charge

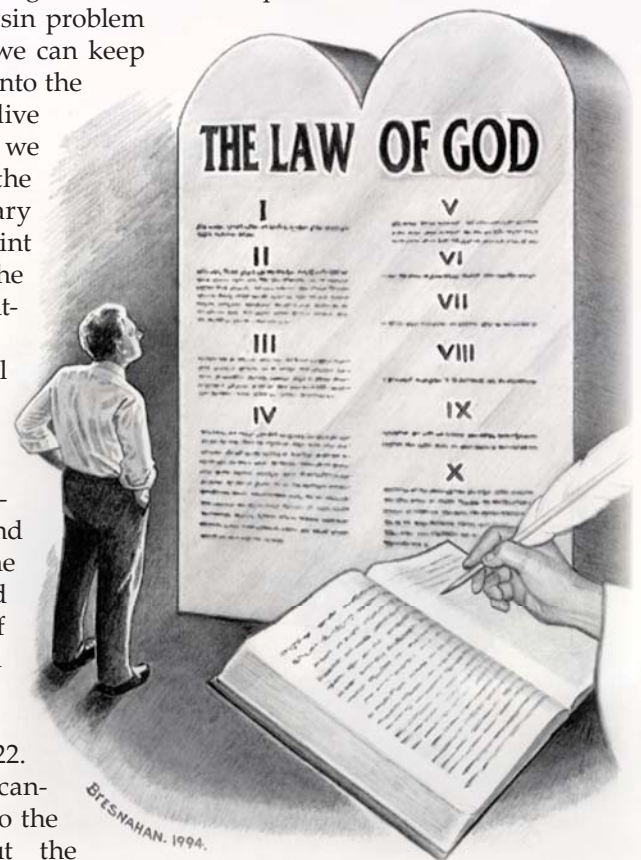
That verse reflects the central issue in the great controversy and the plan of redemption. Satan

Each of the three parts of the sanctuary represents the experience of believers in their Christian walk as they follow Jesus in His ministry for us.

sanctuary to teach them how they could become righteous again and be saved. Through the sanctuary service, God is trying to teach us how He solves the sin problem in our hearts so that we can keep His law and be saved into the kingdom of God to live forever with Him, as we are supposed to do in the first place. The sanctuary is God's unique blueprint for our salvation. It is the only pattern for "righteousness by faith."

The apostle Paul said, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." Rom 3:21,22. He said righteousness cannot come by the law, so the righteousness without the

had declared that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that if the law should be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be



pardoned. DA761. Man's subsequent rebellion and sin provided further opportunity for Satan to bring his arrogant charges against God's character and government. "God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner." DA 761. However, God shows and teaches us through the sanctuary how He justifies sinners and makes them righteous, so that they finally will be able to stand before God and live eternally. God will show that

Christian walk as they follow Him in His ministry for us. And each part shows how God transforms the sinners along the way, that they may be able to stand before the law of God finally and be counted worthy to be considered righteous for eternity.

Justification is probably one of the most misunderstood subjects in the whole theology of the Bible. In the courtyard, God forgives the penitent sinner by not only pardon-

the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul." 1SM 366.

In the Holy Place we see three objects. They are the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. These are to represent the workings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the penitent through the Word of God. The Word of God illuminates, guides and also sustains the spiritual life. And Jesus Christ, our High Priest, the Word of God, mediates for us to maintain our justification experience. He not only applies His blood on behalf of the penitent sinner, but He also enables him to overcome the power of sin.

*The sins of the repentant are forgiven,
but not yet blotted out.*

His plan is powerful enough to make men righteous again. And the whole universe will declare at the end that God is righteous, and He is just and merciful at the same time! That's the sanctuary! Praise God!

Dual Experience Represented In Sanctuary Symbolism

The sanctuary has three functioning parts which represent the ministry of Jesus our Lord. The courtyard represents His life and the death here on the earth. The Holy Place represents His mediatory work from A.D. 31, and the Most Holy Place represents the work of Jesus Christ, Our High Priest, in the judgment process. At the same time, each of the three parts of the sanctuary represents the experience of believers in their

ing, but also by giving him a new heart, a righteous one. God had allowed the Israelites to kill millions of animals in the sanctuary courtyard. Why? Because He wanted to speak to stubborn minds that God so loves the world that He would even give His only begotten Son to die in their behalf. And as they killed and watched the poor innocent animals die away, they began to realize the horrible consequence of sin. They started to hate it and long for the righteousness of God instead.

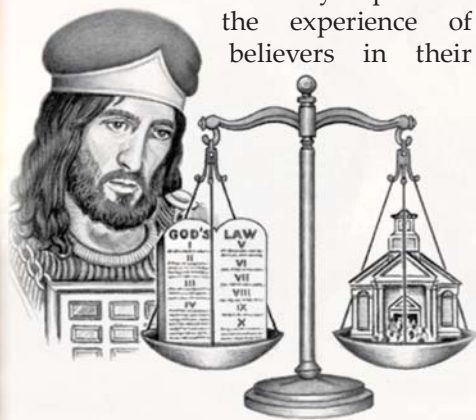
Through the workings of the Holy Spirit, the true repentant experience of the sinner would bring the true righteous experience, which is justification. That is symbolized by the burnt offering in the courtyard, which is a voluntary offering to signify total surrender. The sinner must flay the skin of the animal, open the belly of it, take all the organs out of it and wash them in the water—the whole procedure representing a thorough repentance experience. Then the sacrifice is completely consumed on the altar.

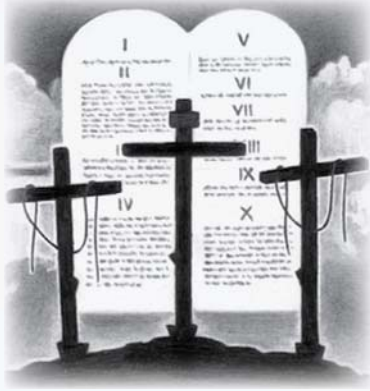
Necessary Sanctuary Work

That activity is one of the functions our Mediator is doing in the heavenly sanctuary, which many Christians do not comprehend. The atonement was not completed on the cross. "The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asks them a reason of the hope that is in them. The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven." GC 489.

Conditional Terms

"But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through





Why a Day of Atonement?

We are now living in the Day of Atonement. The investigative judgment is going on in heavenly sanctuary. The books of record in heaven have been opened for final decision; the cases of first the dead and then the living are the focus of this anti-typical Day.

Why a Day of Atonement? Aren't the sins of the repentant sinners forgiven already? Yes, but they're not blotted out yet. Of what significance is that to us? Essentially, God does not change, but we do. Hence, heaven would like to make sure that we are the same persons as we were when we first came to the cross and repented. Of course, God does not need to open the book and investigate. He already knows about everything. However, the whole universe needs to know and see in order to make sure that the penitent sinners are really safe enough to be their neighbors again throughout eternity. Angels love us very much and yet they are so sick and tired of the sin problem, they do not want it to sneak into the heavenly environment ever again.

Also, the accusation of Satan towards our God needs to be met. It must be proven openly that the law of God can not only be kept, but that it is necessary for the safety and the happiness of the universe. The plan of salvation for humankind needs to be demonstrated to be powerful enough to change sinners to obey the law of God solely because of love in their hearts.

"And this shall be a statute for

ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. It shall be a Sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses." Leviticus 16:29-34.

A Special Work of Purification

Friends, this is the time to afflict our souls! To afflict means to search the heart to see if there's any sin problem still left in the soul that hasn't been overcome. The Bible says clearly that the High Priest makes atonement complete in the Most Holy Place—not in the courtyard, which represents the cross. The cleansing of the records of sins from the heavenly sanctuary is necessary before the atonement is finished.

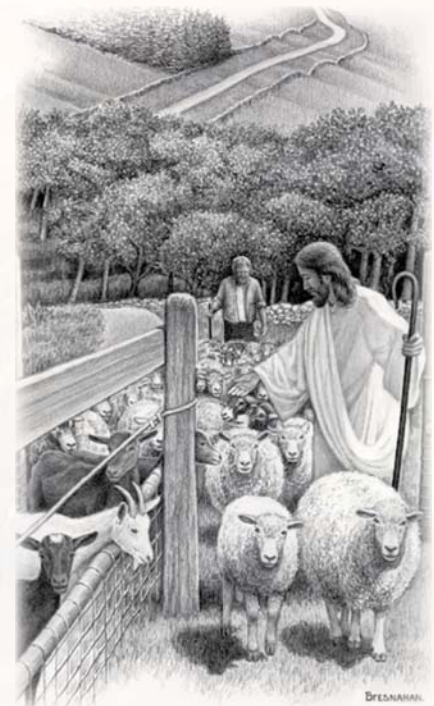
"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be

conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of Revelation 14.

"When this work shall have been accomplished, the followers of Christ will be ready for His appearing." GC 425.

Forward, not Backward!

The Seventh-day Adventist movement was born when it understood the meaning of the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14. But now it seems like it's retreating towards the understanding of the gospel in the Reformation Era of the sixteenth century. Why is Christ's coming so long delayed? Why are there so many different teachings on justification and sanctification in the church? It is because we have departed from an accurate understanding and experience of the sanctuary. It's about time to wake up to the true understanding of the sanctuary! ✱



Words of Warning - #2

Ellen G. White

The Sabbath is the test of today, as Christ was the test when He was in our world.

“**T**hen shall they deliver you up to be afflicted,” Christ continued, “and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.” All this the Christians suffered. Fathers and mothers betrayed their children; children betrayed their parents; friends delivered their friends to the Sanhedrin. Until he himself was converted, Saul of Tarsus was exceedingly bitter against all who believed in Christ. He then began to preach Christ and him crucified, and the enemies of the gospel caused him and Silas to be whipped, and thrown into prison.

Through the apostles, God gave the Jewish people a last opportunity to repent. But they turned away from every entreaty. In the arrest, the trial, and the imprisonment of his witnesses, God manifested himself. He gave them words to speak, and a tongue and voice with which to vindicate the truth and acknowledge him as the Son of God. They were men of whom the world was not worthy, yet their judges pronounced on them the death sentence. They were not allowed to live and serve their God. By killing them, the Jews crucified afresh the Son of God.

So it will be again. But it is over the seventh-day Sabbath that the battle will be fought. The authorities of this world will rise up in their pride and power to make laws to restrict religious liberty. They will assume a right that is God’s alone, and, like Nebuchadnezzar, will think that they can force the conscience, which only God can control. Even now they are making a beginning, and this they will carry forward till they reach a boundary over which they can not step. Then God will interpose in behalf of his loyal, command-

ment-keeping people.

Strength During Betrayal And Apostasy

Christ told his disciples that they would be delivered up to councils; but he told them, also, that they were not to be anxious as to how they should vindicate the truth; for he would give them a mouth and wisdom that all their adversaries could not gainsay nor resist. These words were fulfilled at the trial of Stephen, and at the trial of Paul, who made Felix tremble as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.

Whenever persecution takes place, the spectators make decisions either for or against Christ. Because of persecution, many will be offended. The principles of the truth cut directly across their practise, and they will stumble and fall, apostatizing from the faith they once advocated. Many who have professed to love the truth will then show that they have no vital union with the True Vine. They will be cut away, as branches that bear no fruit, and will be bound up with unbelievers, scoffers, and mockers.

Those who apostatize in time of trial will bear false witness and betray their brethren, to secure their own safety. They will tell where their brethren are concealed, putting the wolves on their track. Christ has warned us of this, that we may not be surprised at the cruel, unnatural course pursued by friends and relatives. “Little children, it is the last time,” John writes, “and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have con-

tinued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” False Christs did arise, deceiving the people, and leading great numbers into the desert. Magicians and sorcerers, claiming miraculous power, drew the people after them into the mountain solitudes. But this prophecy was also spoken for the last days. Companies inspired by Satan will be formed to deceive and delude. This will be a sign of the second advent.

Sabbath Then and Now

“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains [let there be no presumptuous dallying]; let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.” Forty years afterward, at the siege of Jerusalem, the Christians obeyed this warning; and not a Christian perished in the destruction of the city.

“Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.” Christ made the Sabbath, and he never

abolished it. The Sabbath was not rendered null and void by the crucifixion, as many claim. Christ's death on the cross is an unanswerable argument in favor of the changeless character of every precept of God's holy law.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets," Christ said; "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." As the head of the human family, he lived every precept, every jot, every tittle, of the law. He lived in humanity the life that he requires his followers to live, and therefore there is no excuse for any one to fail of reaching the standard of perfection.

Christ emphasizes his words: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." So long as the heavens and the earth remain, so long will the Sabbath of the fourth commandment hold its claim on the human family.

The Sabbath was given to the world as the memorial of creation. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," God says. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Sacred and Profane

God gave explicit directions concerning his Sabbath. "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep," he declared; "for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. . . . Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign

between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh he rested, and was refreshed."

But human lawmakers speak, saying: Verily, the first day of the week shall ye keep, because it is the world's

the great memorial of creation, and a blessing to mankind. But men are trampling it underfoot. It is the test of today, as Christ was the test when he was in our world in human form. It will ever stand unmoved, a rock of offense to the Christian world, as was Christ to

God has given full directions regarding his law, so that none need be left in darkness, unless they choose darkness rather than light.

sabbath. The churches keep this day holy, and those under our supervision shall keep it also, because it is so ordained on our statute-books. We have chosen Sunday as the sabbath, and men must keep it.

But this day so universally exalted is a spurious sabbath, a common working-day. It is accepted in the place of the day that the Lord has blessed and sanctified; but the sure result of this course may be seen in the punishment which fell upon Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron. As priests of God, these men had been commanded to offer always the fire of God's own kindling, which was kept burning before God day and night. This was ever to be strictly observed. But Nadab and Abihu drank wine too freely; and because of this their minds were not keen, but confused, and they were unable to distinguish between the sacred and the common. They took their censers, "and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

God has given full directions regarding his law, so that none need be left in darkness, unless they choose darkness rather than light. But the apostasy of the Jewish nation represents the apostasy that will be made by the world in the last days. Just as the Jews chose darkness in regard to the message that Christ came to the world to bring, so men today are choosing darkness. Sanctified and blessed by God, the Sabbath was designed to be

the Jewish nation. As the rejection of Christ decided the eternal destiny of the Jews, so the rejection of God's holy memorial will decide the fate of many professing Christians.

Compelling, Inescapable Truth

Men may ignore the Sabbath, they may trample it under their feet; but they can not make it less binding upon them. No one has any excuse for accepting the rubbish that has been piled upon the Sabbath of the Lord. No one has any excuse for accepting a human sabbath, created by him whom God designates as the "man of sin," who shall think to change times and laws. He thinks to, but he does not do it; although he may think thus to show his supremacy over God, he can not change God's law; this is God's prerogative only. God is over all kings and rulers. He is God, and besides him there is none else.

The statutes of the Lord are to be revered and obeyed. God is supreme authority; and when his law is set aside as a matter of no consequence, the transgressor must surely bear the results of his own sin, though God bears long with him. *RH*, December 20, 1898. *



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.

Cry, the Beloved Church Part Two



Br. Wellington Chabala

Some issues in our church have the potential to deepen divisions and sidetrack the church from its urgent mission.

In Africa, many church members regard leadership's push for Women's Ministries and women's ordination as unbiblical. Their concerns have led to serious and unfortunate consequences which further the divide.

This [disbanded camp meeting incident] reminds me of a discussion I witnessed between a laywoman and two laymen on one side and a pastor on the other side. (This pastor shares the surname with this writer, and was actually the main speaker during the Kanyama saga referred to above.) The venue of the discussion was a garage of one of the local elders in Kanyama Mission District in Lusaka. The lay people were trying to find out from the pastor why the leadership insisted on ordaining women into ministry, and why they were forcing Women's Ministries on people who were clearly not willing to accept such policies (though at the moment no woman has ever been ordained in the church in Zambia). The lay people emphasized that the Bible was very clear concerning the roles of our women in the church, quoting 1st Corinthians 15:34 and 1st

Timothy 2:11-15. The laymen noted that these and many other scriptures clearly stipulate the status of our women in worship. Therefore, according to them, anything contrary to Biblical principles should be looked at as apostasy.

To answer their concerns, the pastor reminded the three lay people that in Christ there is no Gentile nor Jew nor woman nor man, as we were all equal and precious before the Lord. He went on to say that times have changed and circumstances that prevail at the moment are not the same as those which existed when the apostle Paul gave these instructions. In addition, the pastor pointed out to the three questioners that there were great women in the Bible who had done marvelous acts for the cause of the Lord. Among the many, he referred to Deborah (Judges 4:4), Huldah the prophetess (2nd Chronicles 34: 22) and the virgin prophetesses of Acts 21:9. He didn't neglect to include the end-time prophetess, Ellen Gould White.

To this the lay people answered by admitting that surely there were women of valour who did great

works for the Lord. Nevertheless, these church members maintained that notwithstanding that fact, at no time are we told that they were ordained. They added that it was for the same reason that even Sr. White was never ordained, though she played a very critical role in stamping the foundation of our church.

At this juncture it was evident that the beloved pastor was most of the time at pains to convince these "stubborn" church members. In fury, the pastor lost restraint and invited whoever did not want to respect church policy to go to hell and establish their own churches. He also said that such issues were difficult for the untrained members, that only theologians were capable of understanding and interpreting such portions of Scripture.

Has It Come To This?

All this time I had been just attentively listening to the discussion without contributing a word. At this point, though, I could not keep mute any longer. I asked the pastor to clarify his statements. Was

he saying we should go back to the time of the Dark Ages, when it was taught that only the priests could interpret and understand Scriptures? Unfortunately, my beloved pastor could not provide the necessary answers, as he was already fuming with rage.

All along I have known that tensions of some kind existed between the laity and the leadership of God's church, but I was not ready to convince myself that it was to such terrible levels as would warrant a minister of Christ to utter such blatant statements. I could not just accept that was the view which some of our leaders had concerning the lay people of the church. I kept on asking myself, "How in this world could a minister of Christ instruct the sheep of the fold to go to hell?" How contrary were these statements to the humble and ever-forgiving, loving, tender nature of the Chief Shepherd, Christ.

I was also shaken to my roots, as I never ever imagined that an Adventist minister could ever perceive that the laity of my beloved church are so ignorant as not to understand the basic truths of our faith, founded only on the true Word of God. How could one think of us in such a manner, that none could ever understand certain issues affecting the church that we so much love, except for a few learned theologians?

I looked at this as a very weird way of thinking, especially so for a Zambian pastor in a country where literacy levels are around eighty percent—in Africa, second only to Egypt. In fact, the lay people in this country have done more work in terms of soul winning than the so-called theologians. Moreover, the bulk of the early pioneers who laid such a wonderful foundation for the current work of the church in Zambia were mere non-theologian peasants, but the good Lord in His providence used them mightily. More still, even today we have so many lay people whom the Lord has greatly gifted with His Spirit, men and women whom, when they stand

to tell of the Lord's truth, one cannot resist but can only wonder and thank the Lord for His Spirit which

campaigns, which were the main preoccupation of the laity. Maybe the church has divorced itself from

We really are living in the time of the close of history, where a great falling away is about to happen.

instructs these humble servants, who are willing to be made wise instruments for His own special use.

Such issues and many others only serve to awaken us to realize that the times are evil. We really are living in the time of the close of history, where a great falling away is about to happen.

Lay Preachers Banned; Evangelism Affected

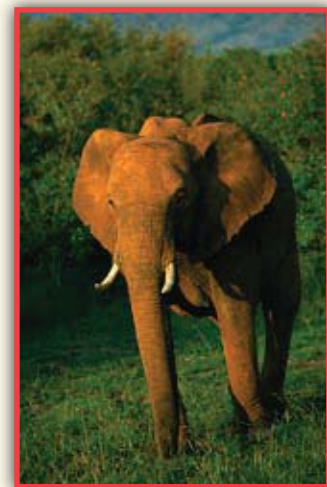
As I write this article, I recall that the conference has issued a memo to all the congregations in the Copperbelt Field, banning the usage of lay preachers in special events which include, among others, crusades, camp meetings, guest days, youth camps, seminars, rallies, etc., until the year 2008! The reasons were not communicated.

The reader is here reminded that we are talking about a conference of about 85,137 baptized members, with more than 334 organized churches (excluding companies and branches, which may be more than 600), against twenty-five pastors—a ratio of close to one pastor to 3450 members.¹ Further, the reader should understand that for the whole of Zambia Union, with a baptized membership of more than half a million, only about two congregations have church pastors. The rest are zoned into mission districts with one pastor in most instances overseeing about forty-five congregations. As a result, pastors' itineraries are so choked with administrative matters that the pastors have no time for evangelistic activities. Now with the new policy I can only wonder what will happen to evangelistic

the Lord's commission of Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore . . ."

Vague Explanations, but Clear Intent

The issue of Women's Ministries remains a very hot and dividing issue in our conference. It is crystal clear that the laity are not ready to accept it, for the simple reason that its intentions are not clearly explained. On the other end, it is also clear that the leadership is very much determined to get its way. The zeal of our leaders in promoting the same makes eyebrows rise among the now ever-suspicious laity, even though Dr. Matandiko, the president of the Zambian Union Conference, recently issued a statement apologizing to the church for the confusion that the introduction of the Women's Ministry department had caused in the past six years.



This issue contains a serious recipe for many more misunderstandings. This is especially true owing to the fact that the Zambia Union,



which until recently belonged to the Eastern African Division (EAD), has now been grouped into a new division called Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID). This new division includes some unions like Southern Africa and Botswana Unions, which already have women elders serving in the church. In fact, current official church publications demonstrate openly how the leadership intends to achieve its intentions. To support this assertion, I here refer to a story carried by *The Advent Echo* (the official church publication of

conducted. I now quote: "He told the people that he had never known that this is the way the Adventist church trains its women." According to *The Echo*, he went on to say, "You Adventist men, how come you had this great truth and for years you never told me?" and "I thank God for women like Mrs. Banda." These quotations may seem innocent, but to those with a spirit of discernment, such quotations speak volumes. They also bring to the fore a multitude of other issues.

Appeals to the Lord

I believe it is issues like these that have potential to deepen divisions and preoccupy the church with irrelevant bickering at the expense of warning the world of the impending dangerous times. The issues consid-

the Lord to enable us carry out our commission. We long for the times prophesied of by the prophet Joel in Joel 2:28.

God Gives Us Hope

Words from the Lord's messenger inspire hope. "In the darkest days of her long conflict with evil, the church of God has been given revelations of the eternal purpose of Jehovah. His people have been permitted to look beyond the trials of the present to the triumphs of the future, when, the warfare having been accomplished, the redeemed will enter into possession of the Promised Land. These visions of future glory, scenes pictured by the hand of God, should be dear to His church today, when the controversy of the ages is rapidly closing and the promised blessings are soon to be realized in all their fullness." *Prophets and Kings*, 722.

Friend, have hope. Not all is lost, though much is at stake. The good Lord is aware of our current state and will ultimately deliver His church. But we have a task before us. Our duty is to pray and plead that He may grant us the outpouring of the Holy Spirit long promised. This will enable us to move forward and preach the last message of hope to the perishing world. The time that remains is so short, it is either we stand up for the Lord, like Joshua of old, or He will raise up rocks in our places, to do that which we have failed to do.

Truly the beloved church is crying for humble, serious-minded, focused leaders and laity! ✨

This makes one always be down on the knees. . . .

SID), Vol. 2, No. 3, of 2004. The back cover carried a story of a woman evangelist in the republic of Malawi, our neighbouring union (another union with a huge membership), being "on fire" when preaching during crusades. The article was entitled "Women Evangelists, Astounding Results." I am not trying to suggest that women should never be evangelists—far from it. I am concerned only about how they conduct those evangelistic campaigns.

The motive of the publishers is also highly questionable, and the wording similarly leaves a lot of questions. For example, I will quote remarks attributed to one of the fifty-eight converts, who also happened to be the chief of the village where the evangelistic work was

ered above cause those who care to be always on guard, watching for signs of the long-prophesied sifting. In turn, this makes one always be down on the knees, asking the Lord to take the reins of his beloved church, or else all the gains so far accomplished at such great cost might go with the wind. We also pray that the good Lord might empower us with the spirit and zeal of yester-years, when the leadership and laity worked in tandem, with one accord.

This is even more desirable when one realizes that during the time of the apostles, the Holy Spirit descended only when the disciples were of one accord. Acts 2:1-4. How I pray that the Master of the harvest shall send us reviving power, lest we perish. We need the refreshing from



Br. Wellington Chabala is a layman in the city of Kitwe, Copperbelt Province, Republic of Zambia.

Notes:
1 www.adventiststatistics.org

Photos: © Hemera Photo Objects CD

The Three Angels' Messages

Part 1

Ron Spear

Seventh-day Adventists have been entrusted to proclaim the most solemn warning the world will ever hear.

Introducing the important topic of the three angels' messages, we must consider the year-day principle and prophetic time. This principle is bound to the waymarks of Adventism. The year-day principle is not an Adventist invention. As Elder Froom's *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* demonstrates, it is a long-established and valid hermeneutic.

We do not need to attempt to prove this principle here, as Jesus Himself has already done so. We read in Mark 1:14-15: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

These words of Christ are significant. Remember, He had by then assumed the role of Messiah. What "time" was involved when He said, "The time is fulfilled"? There is only one possibility—the time of Daniel 9:24-25. This prophecy takes us from the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to "the Messiah, the Prince." This period of sixty-nine literal weeks, symbolizing 483 years, was confirmed by One who has never been wrong, the Creator, the Author of all Scriptures and

prophecy. He became the Anointed when John led Him down into the waters of the Jordan in the year A.D. 27 and when the Holy Spirit rested upon Him in the form of a dove. John 1:41 indicates that He was recognized as such: "He [Andrew] first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ."

Year-day Principle Validated

Jesus' statement "the time is fulfilled" authenticates the year-day principle, as does John's application of the 1260-day prophecy in Revelation. The three angels' messages announce that the hour of God's judgment began in 1844. Just as Jesus' baptism and Messiahship came on time, so did the three angels' messages begin at the exact time God scheduled them.

But there is some lack of understanding concerning the three angels of Revelation 14:6-12 among the remnant people of God in this time of the end. These messages are introduced in Revelation 14 with the portrayal of Christ, the Lamb of God, standing on Mt. Zion with a special group of people. They have

their Father's name written in their foreheads—the character of God. The three angels represent the people who have been commissioned to give God's special message to the world at the end of time.

The Character of Christ in Us

"Christ is coming the second time, with power unto salvation. To prepare human beings for this event, He has sent the first, second, and third angels' messages. These angels represent those who receive the truth, and with power open the gospel to the world." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 978-979.

The presentation of these messages is given with great power in personal testimonies that cannot be shaken. When the messages are presented as they should be, it will be by those in whom the character of Christ has been perfectly formed.

"When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.' Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He

will come to claim them as His own." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 69.

The seal of the living God will have been impressed upon their souls. They will have settled into the truth intellectually and spiritually and they cannot be moved

209-210). The 144,000 must stand for this wonderful truth before the whole world, against great opposition and persecution and in the constant threat of death. The character of God will be vindicated by their words, actions, and

perfect world. The everlasting gospel teaches that every man, woman, and child must die daily. The will must be surrendered moment by moment to God, the heart united with His heart, the mind become one with His mind. Only then can we think the thoughts and live the life of Jesus. Only then will we be clothed with the beautiful garment of Christ's righteousness (see *Christ's Object Lessons*, 312).

Jesus can reign supreme in the life only when we commit ourselves to allow the "old man of sin" to be taken from us. When that happens, by God's grace, our commitment will be total; we will be loving and obedient to all known truth. We will not do the works of obedience in order to be saved, but we will do everything that Jesus wishes us to do spontaneously, because we love Him so much that we cannot help but obey Him. Only when we thus live will the everlasting gospel have accomplished its transforming work in us and make us safe to save.

This everlasting gospel became so distorted through the teachings of Romanism and apostate Protestantism that the world had come to believe, in the false gospel of Satan, the concept that we can be saved in sin, not from sin.

God's Solution: His People

God needed a people to cry out with a loud voice against this abominable heresy, to give His true gospel to the entire world through a people who have become a living testimony of the transforming power of this gospel. It is our lives, more than our words or printing presses, that declare this everlasting truth with a loud voice, leading people to fear God and give glory to Him who created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day.

This message first began to sound when the world was beginning to slip into the bottomless pit of evolution. In our day, we have

"If ever there was a time in the history of Seventh-day Adventists when they should arise and shine, it is now. No voice should be restrained from proclaiming the third angel's message."

(see *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1161). They will be those who weep between the porch and the altar for the sins of the world and the church. They will cry unto the Lord as did the prophets of old, "Spare Thy people, O God" (see *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 266-267; *ibid.*, vol. 5,

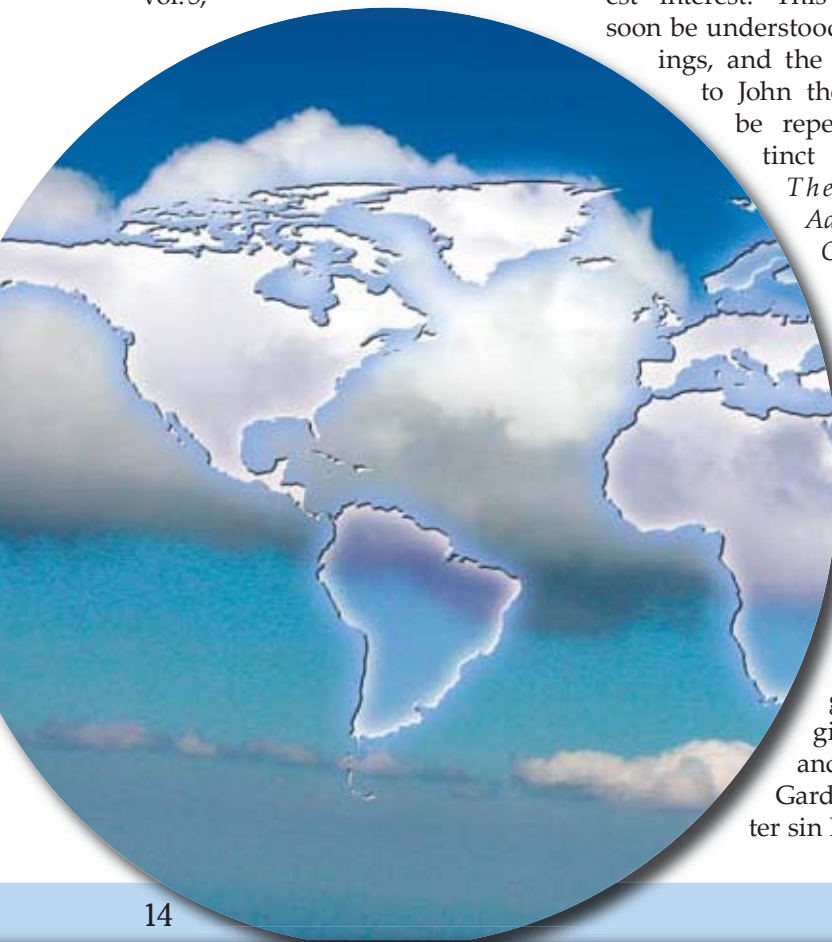
living testimony. They are the real remnant. They will not be bought or sold at any price.

The First Angel's Message

"The fourteenth chapter of Revelation is a chapter of the deepest interest. This scripture will soon be understood in all its bearings, and the messages given to John the revelator will be repeated with distinct utterance."

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 978.

The first angel's message came right on time, and its glorious testimony will soon be completed. What is the everlasting gospel? It is the same gospel that was given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after sin had entered this



seen this diabolical theory captivate the minds of nearly the whole world. In this decade of the year 2006, the world is wondering after the devil's great lie. And very few are refuting that lie by their living testimony. We must now arise and tell the world the truth—that those who will, may fully “worship Him who made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountain of waters.”

Last Prophetic-Time Prophecy

The judgment hour message brings the last prophetic time prophecy into focus in 1844. In Revelation 10 we see another mighty angel, who the Lord's messenger tells us is



Christ Himself, with a little book in His hand (see *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 971). The little book is the last section of Daniel that was sealed up until the time of the end.

When John asked Christ for the understanding of the little book, the Lord told him to eat it. John followed the instructions and found

that it was sweet as honey in his mouth, but exceedingly bitter in the belly. This symbolic prophecy foretold the great disappointment of 1844. The message that Jesus was soon to come to this world was the sweetest music imaginable to the ears of the Millerites, but only a few survived the disappointment. As one of them, Hiram Edson, walked through a cornfield the next day, he was clearly shown that the sanctuary that was cleansed was not the earthly, but the heavenly.

The Doors Were Shut

The message of Revelation 10 did not end with the disappointment. After the disappointment, the message of Christ's soon return was to be “prophesied” to the whole world. On October 22, 1844, Christ, the twenty-four elders, and the heavenly beings portrayed in Daniel 7 began to examine the records of all those who died professing a belief in God's plan of salvation for fallen man. The hour of God's judgment had come. **There was a shut door in 1844 for all who rejected the first angel's message.**

“There was a shut door in Noah's day. There was at that time a withdrawal of the Spirit of God from the sinful race that perished in the waters of the Flood. God Himself gave the shut-door message to Noah: ‘My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years’ (Genesis 6:3).

“There was a shut door in the days of Abraham. Mercy ceased to plead with the inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot, with his wife and two daughters, were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven.

“There was a shut door in Christ's day. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation, ‘Your house is left unto you desolate’ (Matthew 23:38).



“Looking down the stream of time to the last days, the same infinite power proclaimed through John: ‘These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth’ (Revelation 3:7).

“I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a shut door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angels' messages and rejected that light, were left in darkness.” *Selected Messages*, book 1, 63.

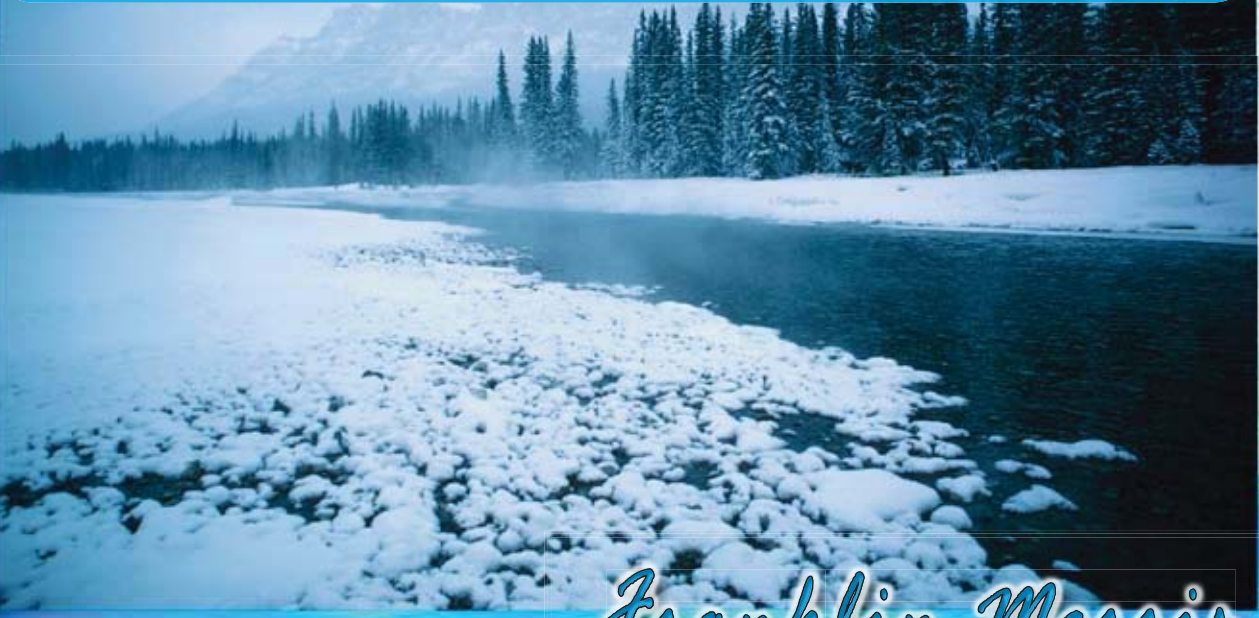
All pastors, all leaders, and all Seventh-day Adventist laymen who reject the first angel's message will go out in darkness. ✽

To be continued.



Ron Spear, author and revivalist, has served the church for over 50 years, in both denominational and self-supporting lines, as a missionary, union department secretary, evangelist, pastor, field secretary for the Review and Herald, and editor of Our Firm Foundation.

Cleanliness is Godliness



Franklin Morris

Neatness, cleanliness and order are more important than we may have realized.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses ‘from all sin.’ *MH*, 90. What a wonderful change is wrought in us when we give our hearts to God! We ask God to

reality. This cleansing process is to be practically experienced by believers. I have learned that Christ’s work of cleansing is so real that it can be evidenced by every one

pers that I accumulated and stuck in it any way I pleased. I remember spending hours approximately every two months or so, trying to organize my room, only to have it look messy once again. This habit did not leave when I went to high school and even the University of Central Florida.

When I attended the University of Central Florida for a year, I was able to stay in an apartment with three other students. I did not have any authority figures nearby, so I decided to throw off all the rules and allow my room to lose all order that it possibly could have. Mounds of books and papers surrounded my bed and television. I did not care.

The only time that it really bothered me was when I invited some other young people from church to come to my apartment. I realized when they came that in order

“God will not acknowledge an untidy, unclean person as a Christian.”

cleanse our hearts full of unrighteousness and filthiness, give our wills to God’s will, and we are clean. The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9.

Praise God that this is not just a theoretical concept but a living

that we come in contact with, even when they come into our homes or dorm rooms.

Ever since I can remember I have been disorganized. I specifically recall in elementary school being so disorganized that it took me about ten minutes to find my homework. I had a huge backpack that contained all my jumbled mass of pa-

to get to the bathroom that was in my room, they would have seen my disorganization. Fortunately, my conception of how God wanted me to represent Him expanded once I attended Hartland College.

The Power of Example

I was privileged to have Sung Hoon Kang as my roommate my freshman year. He has habits of order, and it was hard for him to live in a room with a freshman like me who was disorganized. He knew that angels are “led to linger” in our rooms because of “the prevailing order and cleanliness” in them. *6T* 171. Instead of preaching to me about why I should have a tidy room, he just started cleaning my side of the room, and it melted my heart. I tried to have a standard of cleanliness while I was rooming with him.

As my roommates changed, so did my standards. Over the summer after my freshman year I heard a sermon on organization and cleaned my room in my mother’s house in Florida, but I did not see the importance of having a spotless room in my dorm at Hartland. As a result, I did not make efforts for my room to be neat. It looked nicer than my apartment in the University of Central Florida, but it was still not meeting God’s standard. However, God still made efforts to convict my heart on this issue.

A Life-Changing Study

Brother Sanchez was speaking for the Culpepper Spanish church and wanted me to find some “Thus saith the Lord’s” on cleanliness and organization. I was shocked by what I researched. I learned that it is a serious issue whether or not our rooms are tidy. After I saw what the Lord said about cleanliness, order and organization, I have made great pains to make sure that my room is tidy. I know that God has a high calling for my life, and I want that to be reflected in every area. If I have

an untidy room, how am I reflecting God’s character?

The servant of the Lord told me that “it is impossible for a slack,

230. If my room is a mess, I would be denying the truths of character perfection by showing people that in my heart I truly do not believe that

“[Angels] turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization.”

disorderly person to make a good Christian” *OHC* 230. Furthermore, “God would not acknowledge an untidy, unclean person as a Christian.” *3SM* 273.

Why is this true? God is coming back for a church that is without “spot or wrinkle.” *Ephesians* 5:27. How can I preach a sermon or write an article in *Our Firm Foundation* on character perfection when my room does not resemble the truths that I am presenting?

The Testimony of Appearances

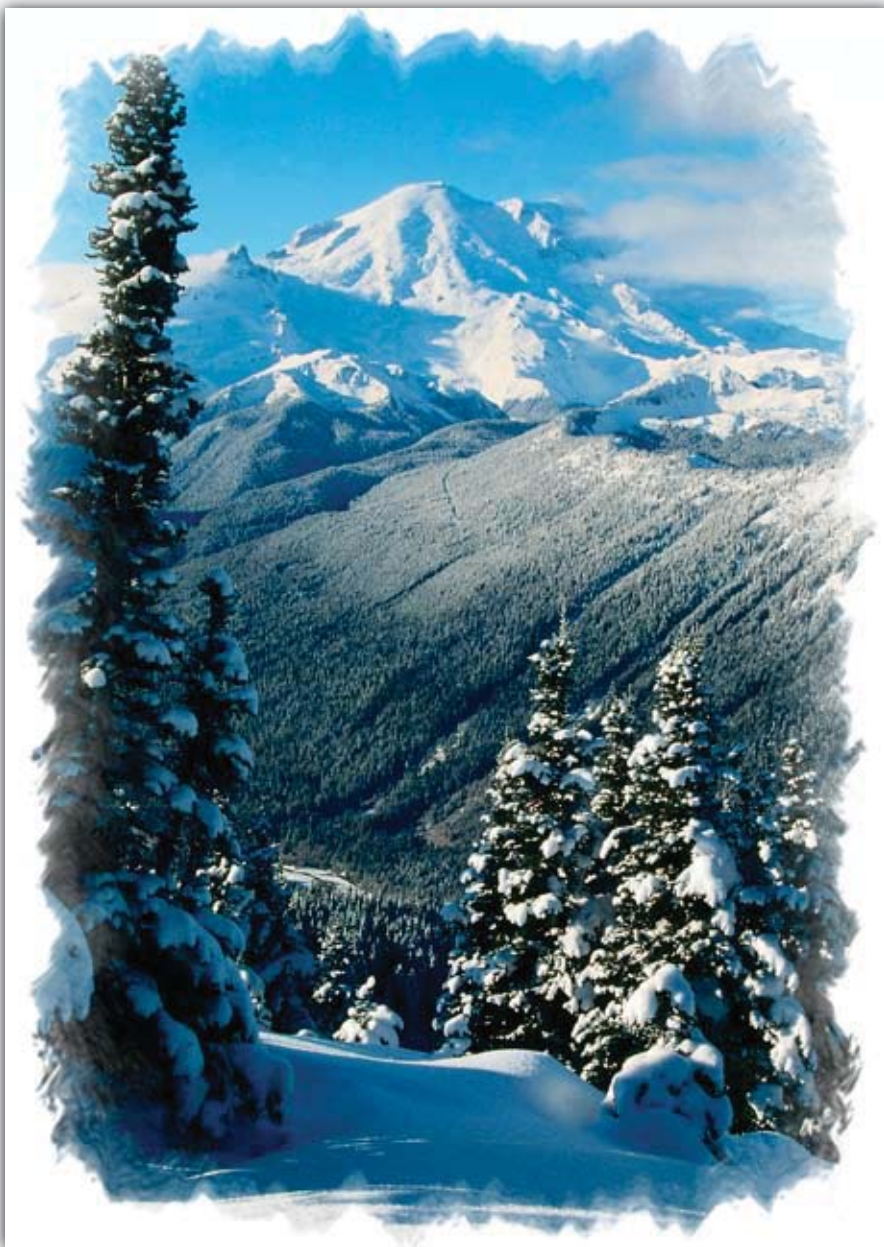
I am amazed to realize my room actually is a picture of my heart and connection with God. “These outside appearances tell the business character of those living in the house, and not only this but the religious character of its inmates.” *OHC*

Christ elevates the sinner. “Religion does not make the receiver coarse and rough, untidy and uncourteous; on the contrary, it elevates and ennobles him, refines his taste, sanctifies his judgment, and fits him for the society of heavenly angels and for the home that Jesus has gone to prepare.” *MYP* 38. “Order is heaven’s first law.” *CH* 101. I want to tell people by my actions that Christ refines and ennobles my life.

Turning God Away

Organization and cleanliness are not novel commands for our time; they find their roots in the experience of the Israelites. The Israelites were to keep their camp clean or God would not be able to work with them; we have the same work to do, as well. *Deuteronomy* 23:14 says “For





the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee." "Special directions were given to the armies of the children of Israel that in and around their tents everything should be clean and orderly lest the angel of God should pass through their encampment and see their uncleanness. Would the Lord be particular to notice these things? He would; for the fact is stated, lest in viewing their uncleanness He could not go forth

with their armies to battle against their enemies. In like manner all our actions are noticed by God. That God who was so particular that the children of Israel should grow up with habits of cleanliness will not sanction any impurity in the home today." 6T 170.

Breaking Bad Habits

If our rooms are untidy, what are we to do? If we are not neat, "God requires all His people who lack these qualifications to seek them and never rest until they obtain them. They must commence

the work of reform and elevate their lives, so that in conversation and deportment their acts, their lives, will be a continual recommendation of their faith and will have such a winning, compelling power upon unbelievers that they will be compelled to acknowledge that they are the children of God." OHC 230. The Bible says ". . . Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD." Isaiah 52:11.

Jesus is coming soon, and I want to be an efficient witness for Him. He has a high calling for my life. "Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children." Ed 18. I see a need for more Seventh-day Adventist restaurants true to principle to be established, and I believe that is where God is calling me to work for Him. If my room is not clean, how can I help open or work for a Seventh-day Adventist restaurant? How can I represent God through restaurant work, which is supposed to be known for cleanliness and order, when my room is not clean? "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." Luke 16:10. A person should be able to come into my room and look at my closet, desk, bed and everywhere else, and say at each place, "I believe that God can make a person holy." Why is it that as Christians we are so slow in learning these ideas, but the world incorporates them immediately?

Principles of Godliness Emulated by Worldly Business

The reason people and organizations are so successful is because they have integrated principles of godliness in their businesses. "Washington, the nation's statesman, was enabled to perform a great amount of business because he was thorough in preserving order and regularity. Every paper had its date and its place, and no time was lost in looking up what had been mislaid." 4T 411.

Photo: © Photos.com



When we go to hotels, the rooms are kept very neat and tidy. When we go to Walmart, every item has its proper place. When we go to the airport, all the flights leave in a precise order. Even the devil himself is organized. "Satan is constantly at work, with intense energy and under a thousand disguises, to misrepresent the character and government of God. With extensive, well-organized plans and marvelous power, he is working to hold the inhabitants of the world under his deceptions." *PP* 78. Must we lose our principles of order and regularity when working for the God of heaven? God forbid.

God wants consecrated workers for His service, but He cannot work with disorganization because "everything connected with heaven is in perfect order." *PP* 376. "If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and

disorganization." *1T* 659.

Biddings are enablings

How can we obtain this order? It is entirely against my carnal nature to be organized, but I claim the victory in this area. Was I supposed to look at my untidy room and be discouraged by God's command to organize it? "All His biddings are enablings." *COL* 333. I am not trusting in my own ability, but Christ's. I cannot do it in my own strength. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." *Jer* 13: 23.

Through surrendering my heart to Christ, I can truly have enjoyment in cleaning my room and maintaining its order. God has made the change in my life. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." *Philippians* 2:13. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." *Psalms* 40:8.

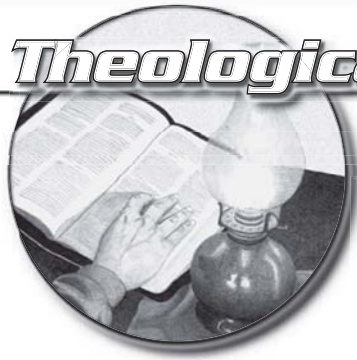
"All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we

consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service." *DA* 668. Whom am I to dwell upon to make those statements a reality? "When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us." *DA* 668. Giving Christ my will and meditating on His character will allow me to show the world that He truly does cleanse me from all unrighteousness. ✽



Franklin Morris is from Florida and is currently at Hartland College pursuing a major in health education with a minor in agriculture.





Heidi Heiks

Conquest of self and complete trust in God's promises are essential to salvation.



Greetings. We are continuing our study, begun in November's magazine, of the progressive steps toward securing eternal life, as designated by heaven. We also will want to recognize and avoid those pitfalls that Inspiration has warned of. In

plan of redemption first requires man's free choice, then his belief, then his obedience. These steps are always left to each individual to make at each and every step of his or her upward walk. Only with our consent can heaven proceed to bring us to conversion.

This brings us to our present discussion. It is conversion that we now seek to understand in its simplicity. "What," we ask, "is true conversion?" We turn to the Bible for the answer to that fundamental question.

Understanding Conversion

In mercy, the Lord has graciously given us a clear definition of conversion, wherein none need err. The Scriptures liken conversion to turning about-face from darkness or sin to light, purity and truth. A partial turnabout—anything less than a full 180° change of heart and direction—will not save

and *we shall be turned*; renew our days as of old." Lam. 5:21.

"For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore *turn yourselves*, and live ye." Eze. 18:32.

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked *turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*" Eze. 33:11.

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts 26:18.

True Conversion

The Holy Spirit, through His end-time prophet, repeats the necessity of a spiritual redirection. "There are few really consecrated men among us, few who have fought and conquered in the battle with self. *Real conversion is a decided change of feelings and motives; it is a virtual taking leave of worldly connections, a hastening from their spiritual atmosphere, a withdrawing from the controlling power of their thoughts, opinions, and influences.* The separation causes pain and bitterness to both parties. It is the variance which Christ declares that He came to bring. But the converted will feel a continual longing desire that their friends shall forsake all for Christ, knowing that, unless they do, there will be a final and eternal separation. The true Christian cannot, while with unbelieving friends, be light and trifling. The

"There are few really consecrated men among us, few who have fought and conquered in the battle with self."

November's edition, we learned how man finds his Creator; indeed, *that* understanding revealed a compassionate Redeemer. Then we saw that if man freely accepts this calling of the Holy Spirit, God will bring man forward to his next step. God will never compel the conscience, for coerced allegiance is of no value to him. We have witnessed and will witness that the

anyone. The stakes are high, and in this race, it is all or nothing. Notice the following.

"I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: *turn thou me, and I shall be turned*; for thou art the LORD my God." Jer. 31:18. (Italics added throughout.)

"Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD,

value of the souls for whom Christ died is too great.

"He 'that forsaketh not all that he hath,' says Jesus, 'cannot be My disciple.' Whatever shall divert the affections from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. Its golden chain binds them to Satan. Reputation and worldly honor are worshiped by another class. The life of selfish ease and freedom from responsibility is the idol of others. These are Satan's snares, set for unwary feet. But these slavish bands must be broken; the flesh must be crucified with the affections and lusts. We cannot be half the Lord's and half the world's. *We are not God's people unless we are such entirely.*" 5T 82-83.

The definition is self-explanatory and the criteria for conversion clear. There must come a willing and intellectual decision to turn from all sin and worldliness. There must be a dying to *self*.

What Hinders Conversion?

This brings us to the crux of the problem. Why will many make shipwreck of faith by not seeing their great need of spiritual cleansing until it is too late? As Ellen White has already given us a view of those who have fallen in idolatry, let us allow her to define the reason for this tragic loss.

"We cannot advance in Christian experience until we put away everything that separates us from God." CT 329.

"God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul." 1SM 366.

"The warfare against *self* is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of *self*, surrendering *all* to the will of God, requires a struggle; but *the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness.*" SC 43.

"Everyone who enters the pearly gates of the city of God will enter there as a conqueror, and his greatest conquest will have been the conquest of *self*." 9T 182.

"The new birth is a *rare experience* in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name

"When self is renounced, then the Lord can make man a new creature."

of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. *Self did not die*, and therefore they *did not rise to newness of life in Christ.*" MS 148, 1897.

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one." DA 324.

"Man must be emptied of *self* before he can be, in the fullest sense, a believer in Jesus. *When self is renounced, then the Lord can make man a new creature.*" DA 280.

Accepted Into God's Family

And if we willingly put *self* on the altar, to be consumed, can we know when heaven accepts us into the family of God? "I have been shown that many have confused ideas in regard to conversion. They have often heard the words repeated from the pulpit, 'Ye must be

born again.' 'You must have a new heart.' These expressions have perplexed them. They could not comprehend the plan of salvation.

"Many have stumbled to ruin because of the erroneous doctrines taught by some ministers concerning the change that takes place at conversion. Some have lived in sadness for years, waiting for some

marked evidence that they were accepted by God. They have separated themselves in a large measure from the world, and find pleasure in associating with the people of God; yet they dare not profess Christ, because they fear it would be presumption to say that they are children of God. They are waiting for that peculiar change that they have been led to believe is connected with conversion. After a time some of these do receive evidence of their acceptance with God, and are then led to identify themselves with His people. And they date their conversion from this time. *But I have been shown that they were adopted into the family of God before that time.* God accepted them *when they became weary of sin*, and having lost their desire for worldly pleasures, resolved to seek God earnestly. *But, failing to understand the simplicity of the plan of salvation, they lost many privileges and blessings which they might have claimed had they only believed, when they first turned to God, that He had accepted them.*" MS 55, 1910.

Belief in Promises Necessary

Here we are given a very loving and encouraging confirmation of the merciful God we serve, yet we experience an element of sadness for those who have not taken Christ at His word. John has proclaimed Christ's invitation in this

way: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. But there is a condition to this promise that we cannot overlook. Ellen White has revealed to us the reason many have stumbled to ruin, and Paul presents another cause of failure: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6.

Simple Trust

Had they *only believed!* According to Paul in the book of Hebrews, it was Christ that said in Genesis, "Let there be light." What produced the light? It was His spoken word alone. When Christ said "Your sins be forgiven you," what caused the guilt to abandon the conscience of

Keeping the smile off my face, I calmly answered, "Yes," and asked him to finish his prayer.

Corey then concluded, "Dear Jesus, please forgive me of all my sins and thank you so very much. Amen."

Standing on the Promises

Like Corey, many may think that some feeling or emotion is to be experienced. They may feel more is expected of them besides repentance, a desire for forgiveness, and a turning from that sin. But is that true?

"Many precious souls, desiring earnestly to be Christians, are yet stumbling in darkness, waiting for their feelings to be powerfully exercised. They look for a special change to take place in their feelings. They expect some irresistible force, over which they have no con-

efforts to advance." MS 55, 1910.

What did inspiration say was our part in the plan of redemption? "He must act his part in order to be accepted by God. He must believe that God accepts his repentance, according to His promise. Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Why?

Imagine if you will, a man about to begin a business. However, he already questions if his business will even get off the ground. How much time, money and energy do you think that individual is going to invest in that business?

Now consider this same man believing with all his heart that his business will prosper and multiply. How much time, money and energy do you think he will invest in that business now? What made the difference? *He believed.*

True Faith Does Not Waver

"But let him ask in faith, *nothing wavering.* For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." James 1:6.

Simply put, with true belief in or about something or someone comes the inference of conviction. It is conviction that provides a motive for our actions, which, in turn, reveals the fruit of the tree. Therefore, our spiritual experience is determined by how we respond to the promises of God. It is clear that our faith must be based on the conviction that we are forgiven and accepted. The Christian's faith is based not upon his or her feelings or emotions, but upon the promises of God, period.

Safe in the Hour of Temptation

Ellen White describes the essential condition which, when attained, will keep us in the hour of temptation. "Only when selfishness is dead, when strife for supremacy is banished, when gratitude fills the heart, and love makes fragrant the life—it is only then that Christ

*"The convicted sinner ... must believe that
God accepts his repentance,
according to His promise."*

the guilty sinner? It was His spoken word alone. Why is it so hard for us to just believe?

One day I sat down with my son Corey, who was then a preschooler. Since he was of an age that could understand in a relative way the topic I would bring up, I asked him if he would like to invite Jesus into his heart and have all his sins washed away. He readily agreed, so next I asked him if he would like to talk to Jesus himself. "Yes," he said. As we knelt together, I held his little hands in mine as I nodded to him to begin. He began with "Dear Jesus," then after thanking Jesus for his cats and dogs, he proceeded to the purpose of his prayer. "And would you please come into my heart and forgive me." At that point he stopped his prayer. He looked up at me and softly asked, "Are you sure that's all I have to do?"

trol, to overpower them. They overlook the fact that the believer in Christ is to work out his salvation with fear and trembling.

"The convicted sinner has something to do besides *repent*; he must *act* his part in order to be accepted by God. *He must believe that God accepts his repentance, according to His promise. 'Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.'* The work of grace upon the heart is not an instantaneous work. It is effected by continuous, daily watching and believing the promises of God. The repentant, believing one, who cherishes faith and earnestly desires the renewing grace of Christ, God will not turn away empty. He will give him grace. And ministering angels will aid him as he perseveres in his

is abiding in the soul, and we are recognized as laborers together with God." COL 402.

"The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow." DA 300.

"There are those who profess to serve God, while they rely upon their own efforts to obey His law, to form a right character, and secure salvation. Their hearts are not moved by any deep sense of the love of Christ, but they seek to perform the duties of the Christian life as that which God requires of them in order to gain heaven. Such religion is worth nothing. When Christ dwells in the heart, the soul will be so filled with His love, with

the joy of communion with Him, that it will cleave to Him; and in the contemplation of Him, self will be forgotten. Love to Christ will be the spring of action. Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With earnest desire they yield all and manifest an interest proportionate to the value of the object which they seek. A profession of Christ without this deep love is mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery." SC 44-45.

"Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God." OHC 152. Once the heart is subdued because of its great need and seeks relief through Christ, then, "let no one despair of gain-

ing the victory. Victory is sure when self is surrendered to God." MS 2, 1903. ✽



Heidi Heiks, editor of Our Firm Foundation magazine, has been a college educator, author, and radio speaker for The People of the Book radio program. He is a current teacher and speaker for Hope International throughout the United States.



Hope International 2007 Camp Meeting & Dynamic Youth Program, May 25-28, 2007

Schedule of Events

Friday 6:00 p.m.	"The Gospel of Judas"	Joe Olson
Friday 7:30 p.m.	"The Abuse of Church Authority Today"	Patrick Herbert
Sabbath 7:00 a.m.	"How To Overcome"	Ron Spear
Sabbath 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast (\$5.00)	
Sabbath 9:30 a.m.	"Healing Through Earth Therapy"	Heather Olson
Sabbath 11:00 a.m.	"The Remnant of the Woman"	David Kang
Sabbath 12:30 p.m.	Lunch (\$5.00)	
Sabbath 2:00 p.m.	"When Michael Stands Up"	Clark Floyd
Sabbath 3:15 p.m.	"The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism"	Heidi Heiks
Sabbath 4:30 p.m.	Music Concert	Selected
Sabbath 6:00 p.m.	Light Supper (\$4.00)	
Sabbath 7:00 p.m.	"The Parable of the Fig Tree"	Joe Olson
Sunday 7:00 a.m.	"Why Are We Here?"	Lee Forbes
Sunday 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast (\$5.00)	
Sunday 9:30 a.m.	"Is Soy Dangerous?"	Diane Herbert
Sunday 11:00 a.m.	"The Gospels in the Old Testament"	Clark Floyd
Sunday 12:30 p.m.	Lunch (\$5.00)	
Sunday 2:00 p.m.	"The Fit Man"	David Kang
Sunday 3:15 p.m.	"Forming Solid Family Foundations"	Patrick Herbert
Sunday 4:30 p.m.	"Health Through God's Garden"	Heather Olson
Sunday 6:00 p.m.	Light Supper (\$4.00)	
Sunday 7:00 p.m.	"What Do Nazi Germany & SDA's Have in Common?"	Heidi Heiks
Monday 7:00 a.m.	"To Be Prepared"	Ron Spear
Monday 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast (\$5.00)	
Monday 9:30 a.m.	"Where Do We Go From Here?"	Lee Forbes
Monday 11:00 a.m.	"Diet & Degenerative Diseases"	Diane Herbert



Forgetful Benny

"Benny, time to set the table!"

"Okay, Mom. I'll do it in a minute!" Benny called back. But then he turned back to the model car he was painting, and very quickly forgot Mom's call and his promise. When he heard "Dinner's ready!"

though, he put down his paintbrush and hurried downstairs. He was hungry, and dinner smelled great!

As soon as he saw the table was set, he felt guilty. His busy mother must have set it for him. "Sorry, Mom. I guess I forgot again."

Did you notice that word "again"? Benny had a careless habit of "forgetting" to do what he said he

would do. That bad habit made

Benny dishonest, so his parents decided something had to be done to help Benny become honest.

Benny got a weekly allowance which was tied to his helping with certain chores around the house. This week, when Benny asked for his allowance, his father gave him only a few cents. "Dad, what's this? Where's the rest of my allowance?"

"Son, it went to the person who did your work."

Benny was upset. Never before had his parents withheld his weekly allowance for not doing his work. "That's not fair!" he objected loudly.

"Why isn't it?" his dad immediately asked. "Do you think it's fair to expect an allowance when someone else has to do the work you said you'd do?"

Benny had to think fast, or else he would lose his spending money. Quickly he had an idea. "I would have done it!" he insisted. "Mom was probably in a hurry so she set the table herself. If she had given me a chance, I would have done it!"

"There," he thought to himself. "I made it Mom's fault for not giving me enough time to do it. Now Dad can't take away my allowance."

Dad looked very sad. "Benny, do you know what you just did? Remember what Adam and Eve did when God asked them why they had eaten the forbidden fruit? First Adam blamed Eve and then he blamed God for making Eve. Eve blamed God for letting the serpent tempt her. They made their sin to be God's fault—after all the love He had shown them. And now you're blaming your mother, who shows her love for you all the time."

Benny hung his head in shame, but Dad wasn't done yet. "I heard her call you to come set the table, and I heard you say you'd be right

down, but you never came."

In guilty sorrow, Benny realized he was feeling the way Adam and Eve must have felt when they tried to blame each other and God—anyone but themselves. But all along, they knew their sin was their fault—just like Benny knew it was his fault that someone else had set the table. Tears welled up in his eyes, and his voice trembled when he said, "I'm sorry, Dad. I guess I owe Mom an apology for doing my work."

"You don't have to apologize to her," Dad said softly, with his arm around Benny. "Since I love you, I'm the one who took your place setting the table."

Benny looked into his father's kind face. "Just like Jesus took the punishment for Adam and Eve?"

"Not exactly, but you've got the right idea. Jesus died for us so we could have another chance for eternal life. I set the table and talked with you so you could have another chance, too. Do you want another chance to do what's right?"

"Oh, boy, do I!" Benny jumped up and hugged his father. "Next time I'll come right away and do what I'm supposed to do! Thanks, Dad! Thanks for setting the table for me; you won't have to do it again."

Happily, Benny kept that promise, and his parents finally had a son they could trust to do what he said he would do. *





Amazing Green Clay

Last November I began to tell you the health benefits of taking green clay internally for a number of ailments. This month I continue with more uses, including dietary benefits. You will be amazed again and again, as it seems there is nothing clay is not good for! Anyone and everyone can benefit from taking green clay internally for healing a specific problem, or simply to maintain optimal pH and overall homeostasis.

Picking up where I left off, the analysis of clay's composition is not adequate to explain its rebuilding of red blood cells in anemia. Interestingly enough, however, lab tests prove that in about a month's time, an impressive increase in red blood cells is present.

Again regarding its composition, another amazing wonder of clay is that *wherever* there is a deficiency, clay seems to supply the needed substance, *regardless of whether or not the clay itself is rich in that substance!* What a magnificent Creator we serve!

In regards to supplying needed nutrition, a wonderful example of clay's dietary benefits can be seen among the Otomac Indians who live along the Orinoco River in Venezuela. When the water is low, they fish in the river using bows and arrows. During this time they maintain a diet that consists almost wholly of fish. However, during the

high water season, the river can swell to a breadth of twenty-two kilometers and a depth of 100 meters, which puts a damper on fishing with bows and arrows!

During this period, which lasts a couple of months, they can "seldom procure a lizard, a root of fern, or even a dead fish on the surface of the water," so the Indians survive on a diet that consists almost entirely of clay! They make the clay into round balls five or six inches in diameter and slightly bake them in a fire. This becomes their principle food for nearly two months out of each year.

The fact that they can live on this diet is amazing enough, but what is most surprising is that during this time of clay eating, the Indians do not become lean. On the contrary, they are "extremely robust, and far from having the belly tense and puffed up." When the balls were examined closely, no trace of any organic substance was found to explain why it contained such quality nutrients. It was simply the clay itself.¹

I could go on and on about the health benefits of clay. However, there simply is not enough room on this page to hold them all. Healing clay is one of the many amazing remedies that God has supplied for us to use for healing and sustaining our bodies. He would only have the best for his children. Even

Jesus, while on earth, made use of clay: He "spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle" when he healed a man's blindness. John 9:6. And if we think about it, since we were created from dust, doesn't it make sense that clay would be "at home" in our bodies?

Many of clay's benefits cannot be proved even by modern science. Scientists say, "We don't know why it works, but it does!" Well, there is One who *does* know how and why it works, and He has provided it to be used by all of His children all over the world. You don't have to be rich to afford it, either. It's literally "dirt" cheap! *



If you have any questions about how clay can benefit YOU, call Heather Olson at 309-343-5853. She will be happy to talk to you and answer any questions you might have.

Green Clay 8 oz - \$6.00 plus S&H
Green Clay 5 lbs - \$29.00 plus S&H

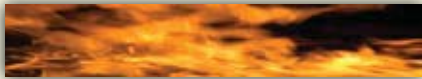
Note: These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration.

Notes:

¹ "Alexander von Humboldt on Geophagy," *South American Explorer*, Spring 1999, No. 55, p. 23. <http://ponce.sdsu.edu/geophagy22.html>.



"To Hell With Limbo," Say Theologians



News item: "The Roman Catholic Church may soon jettison a disputed but long-held belief in an ethereal bit of real estate on the outskirts of heaven known as limbo. According to Catholic tradition (though not official church doctrine), limbo is the dwelling place of worthy nonbelievers and babies who die before they can be baptized. But a commission of theologians that met in Vatican City last month is expected to recommend to Pope Benedict XVI that limbo be officially dropped from church teachings.

"The idea of limbo originated in the Middle Ages, but it has been contested for years. In 1984, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the current pontiff said the concept of limbo had 'never been a definitive truth of the faith.' The word itself comes from the Latin *limbus*, meaning edge or hem. This hemline of heaven was reserved for those who do not deserve heaven or the suffering of purgatory and hell.

"While an official doctrine on limbo is still, well, in limbo, a draft catechism reportedly says that unbaptized babies who die—and, presumably, aborted fetuses—will be seen as fit to enter heaven. An official announcement is expected within a year or so." *U.S. News & World Report*, January 9, 2005.

End-time perspective: One can only hope that readers consider the significance of this potential reversal of tradition. The fact that

a church which declares emphatically that its pronouncements are guided by God would consider a retraction is intensely telling. Their teachings are clearly of men.

"A brother came to me and asked me what I thought about the salvation of infants. . . . I said, 'That does not concern you or me.' There are points on which we must be careful not to mar present truth. All those who are to engage in the work of God must bind about their minds. . . .

"If any of you should be asked to give your opinion on some point and you should not know just how to answer it, do not be ashamed to say you do not know, but you do know what we must do to be saved. 1 SAT 48.

Proselytizers Are Obsessed



News item: "All should heal themselves from the obsession of converting others."

Quoted from "Conversion: Assessing the Reality," a document released by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the World Council of Churches Office on Interreligious Relations and Dialogue. *Christianity Today*, July 2006.

End-time perspective: Dare we ignore—would we want to ignore the divine commission: "Go ye, therefore. . . .?"

"We are answerable to God for the souls of those with whom we are brought in contact, and the closer our connections with our fellow men, the greater our responsibility. We are one great brotherhood, and the welfare of our fellow men should be our great interest. We have not one moment to lose. If

we have been careless in this matter, it is high time we were now in earnest to redeem the time, lest the blood of souls be found on our garments." LS 206

Interpretations of Founders' Intentions Vary Widely



News item: "When U.S. Rep. Katherine Harris recently told a religious journal that separation of church and state was 'a lie,' many critics cited this as another sign she was out of the mainstream. But, experts say, she was reflecting a common view in religious conservative circles—that the idea of separation of church and state was concocted by 20th-century courts, not the Founding Fathers. 'This notion, the denial of church-state separation, is gaining ground among politically conservative evangelicals,' says Randall Ballmer, professor of religion at Barnard College.

"Conservative activists point out that the words 'separation of church and state' appear nowhere in the Constitution—and they're right. The phrase came from a letter Thomas Jefferson wrote to a group of Connecticut Baptists in which he praised the First Amendment's 'wall of separation between Church and State.' (The Supreme Court quoted that letter in a key church-state ruling in 1947.) Conservative scholars have long argued that the 'wall' was mostly intended to block the creation of official state religions—not to completely close the door between government and religious life.

"A cottage industry has grown in recent years to push a more radical argument that the Founders intended virtually *no* separation."

Newsweek, Sept. 11, 2006.

End-time perspective: For what purpose would anyone argue to tear down the wall between church and state, if not to make legal the cooperation of churches in promoting political aims, and the legislative power of the state in promoting church aims? History attests that the former tends to manipulation; the second to control of conscience.

Jesus made a clear distinction between church and state when He said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Mat 22:21. "Herewith Jesus sets for the fundamental principle that determines the Christian's relationship to the state. He is not to ignore the just claims of the state upon him, because there are certain 'things which are Caesar's. . . .' But there are certain 'things' in which Caesar has no right to interfere. God's jurisdiction is absolute and universal; Caesar's, subordinate and limited." 5BC 482.

"God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan's constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God. . . .

"The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth, and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected." GC 591-2.

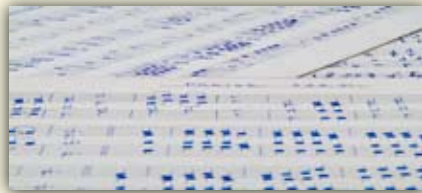
Survey Results

92% Percentage of Americans who say they believe in God or some other higher power.

75% Percentage who believe their family will get into heaven.

19% Percentage who believe that God favors the U.S. in world affairs.

Christian Worship Goes Hip-Hop for God



News item: "Popular Christian music styles have always paralleled the sound of secular hits, from grunge to techno. Now hip-hop is finding its way into the liturgies of traditional churches. The white, middle-aged Rev. Timothy (Poppa T) Holder doesn't look like someone who would shout 'Holla back!' in his priestly blessing. But, noticing the power and ubiquity of rap in his South Bronx neighborhood, Holder created a hip-hop mass in his Trinity Episcopal Church of Morrisania. Now he wants to help other churches get in the act, and has devised a hip-hop service for the more buttoned-up St. Paul's Chapel of Trinity Church.

"Hip-hop services are popping up all over. Lawndale Community Church in Chicago packs the house with its rap-inspired version. The leaders of Minneapolis's Sanctuary Covenant Church do hip-hop services six times a year to boost youth attendance. In Tampa, the Rev. Tommy Kyllonen's Crossover Community Church gained 10 times as many congregants when it started using hip-hop in youth outreach programs. Holder has developed 'The Hip Hop Prayer Book,' inspired by the Book of Common Prayer, which he wrote with help from dozens of rap-

pers, musicians and poets. Here's their version of the 23rd Psalm: *The Lord is all that, I need for nothing. He allows me to chill. He keeps me from being heated and allows me to breathe easy. He guides my life so that I can represent and give shout outs in His name. And even though I walk through the hood of death, I don't back down, for You have my back. The fact that He has me covered allows me to chill. He provides me with back-up In front of player-haters, and I know that I am a bailer and life will be phat. I fall back in the Lord's crib for the rest of my life.*

"Not surprisingly, plenty of bloggers, columnists and fellow priests have criticized the approach. Eric Turner, the assistant pastor at Bible Baptist Church in Creedmoor, N.C., says that when you alter Biblical passages, 'you take the author of those writings down. God is completely different from us, and trying to make him like us is incorrect. . . . Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever.' But proponents argue that using vernacular language in services is a way to draw young people to church. Everyone's down with that." *Newsweek*, July 31, 2006

End-time perspective: Defenders claim the end justifies the means, thus admitting the flaws of the "means." Inspiration gives a clear warning: "You cannot mingle with worldlings, and partake of their spirit, and *follow their example*, and be at the same time a child of God." 2T 44 (italics added). Yet they persist. But at what point will it be "bait and switch"? When will the "switch" be made to a better style of music? If hip-hop music is successful in increasing youth attendance, won't that increase the likelihood of its continuance? "Conformity to worldly customs converts the church to the world; it never converts the world to Christ." GC 509.

"Behold, the eye of the LORD [is] upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine." Ps. 33:18,19. ✽

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.”

Taken from *Ellen White: Woman of Vision*, by Arthur L. White

1. What organization’s secret sign, which few men know and no woman is supposed to know, did Mrs. White unknowingly give to a gentleman, which convicted him her warning was from God?
 - a. The Black Knights, a Satanic lodge
 - b. The US’s largest labor union at that time
 - c. Freemasonry’s Knights Templar
 - d. Catholicism’s Knights of Columbus
2. How much did James White pay for a “fine pair of mules” circa 1879?
 - a. \$180
 - b. \$50
 - c. \$150
 - d. \$75
3. What was the destination which compelled the Whites and their traveling company to endure a flooded camping tent, a warning about quicksand, and the possibility of an Indian attack?
 - a. the Grand Canyon
 - b. General Conference session
 - c. Willie White’s wedding
 - d. Kansas camp meeting
4. Pantheism depicts God not as “a great personal being but as a mysterious essence—an impersonal influence pervading all nature.” It is the basis of Hinduism. This view of God was first introduced publicly in 1897 in a series of talks prior to the

General Conference session of that year. Who gave those talks?

- a. E. J. Waggoner, MD
 - b. W. A. Spicer
 - c. Elder Daniells
 - d. John Kellogg, MD
5. For what organization did Ellen White consent to serve on the board of directors—the only time she ever did so?
 - a. Battle Creek Sanitarium
 - b. Madison School
 - c. Avondale School
 - d. Loma Linda Medical School
 6. What type of property was purchased in order to establish Pacific Union College?
 - a. former hospital
 - b. former farm
 - c. former warehouse complex
 - d. former resort
 7. On Sabbath, February 13, 1915, Mrs. White fell at home and broke her _____. By early June, her health had greatly deteriorated. On July 16, 1915, she passed to her rest.
 - a. hip
 - b. forearm
 - c. left ankle
 - d. collarbone
 8. After James White had been sick about a year, Ellen White became convinced he would not recover

while remaining inactive. Therefore, she planned a winter preaching tour in _____.

- a. northern Michigan
 - b. southern California
 - c. central Texas
 - d. the northeast
9. In April 1847, James White’s first major publishing effort was completed: *A Word to the Little Flock*. Its type was small and the margins were narrow, yielding a twenty-four page pamphlet with ____ the content of a similar book today.
 - a. one-and-a-half times
 - b. triple
 - c. double
 10. Elder Joseph Bates, former sea-captain-become-minister, had some doubts about Ellen’s visions until he saw and heard her, while in vision, describe in some detail _____.
 - a. creation
 - b. various planets
 - c. his home
 - d. an event from his past

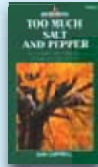


Answers: 1-c, 2-a, 3-d, 4-d, 5-b, 6-d, 7-a, 8-a, 9-c, 10-b
Source: For specific references to any answer, please contact Hope International.

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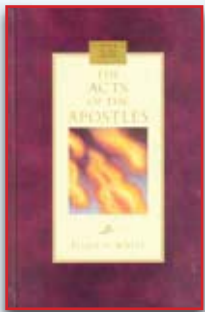
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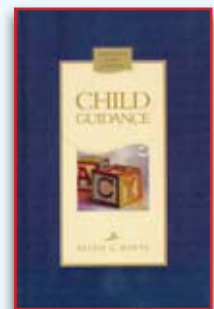
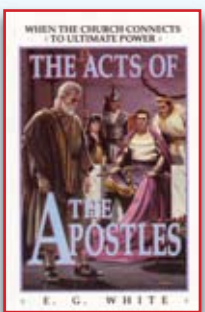
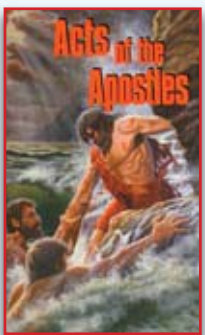
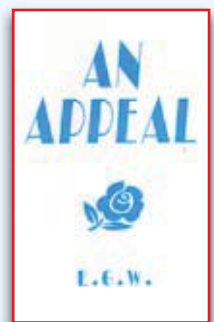
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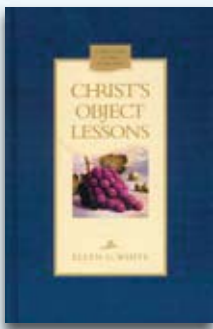
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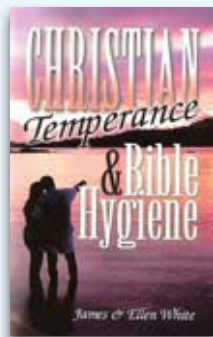
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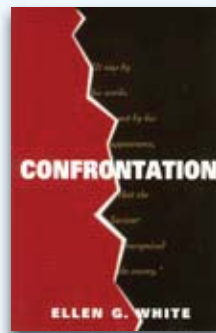
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LETTERS

✉ I think *Our Firm Foundation* is one of, if not the best, spiritual magazines to date.

BM, Oregon

✉ I've been reading *OFF* since 1987. I appreciate having a genuine "historical Adventist" resource. The recent DVD's sent are appreciated, also. I could go on and on about my past and the tremendous strength Hope has been in my pursuit of Jesus. MANY THANKS!

RB

✉ Thanks so much for your magazine. I eagerly look for it from the first day of each month until it arrives. And then, I don't waste any time, but look through it immediately to see what you have for me this time. I am never disappointed; it gets better each month.

JG, South Dakota

✉ Thank you for your magazine, ministry, and advice.

RW, British Columbia

✉ Souls are hungry for the truth. . . In this place are men and women who have been completely changed by *Our Firm Foundation*, who are living evidence of its power.

NMM, Kenya

✉ Please renew our subscription. We are always blessed by *Our Firm Foundation*. When we have finished reading it, we send it to our son in college, who also receives a blessing. Thank you!

RH, Kansas

✉ The last DVD arrived in top condition. The new cases seems to hold them better. I also like the new paper. Very nice! May the Lord continue to bless your ministry.

B

✉ I never knew that you received tithes and offerings. In that case, I will support your ministry from now on. Thank you for being a beacon of light through the years.

WB, Florida

✉ Enclosed please find an international money order. . . . Please accept this donation for subscription assistance. I'm hoping this will help you with your wonderful magazine, *Our Firm Foundation*. Wishing you God's blessing as you continue to work for Him.

DL, Australia

✉ Please send me a case of *Final Conflict*. I have longed for *The Great Controversy* in smaller size to hand out. Thank you for such a reasonable offer.

May God continue to bless each one of you. Time is fast running out on this world in rebellion.

I had a lovely eighty-seventh birthday yesterday. God is SO good all the time!

KH, Georgia

✉ Saints,

Please kindly may you start sending me the saving grace magazine. May God bless your entire [staff].

NBM, Zambia

✉ I just want to say thank you for sending me *Our Firm Foundation*. I did not have money to renew, but I just had my 83rd birthday and as one of my gifts from my friends, I got \$20. I am sending it to you for the magazine you have been so kind to send me. I pray I have the money when it comes due again. I get such a blessing from and look forward to each one.

Thanks for the DVD's. I don't get to church every Sabbath because I don't drive any more and have to depend on friends. God bless them. So I read and I would have a DVD to watch.

I thank God for people like you who put the message out there straight.

WG, North Carolina

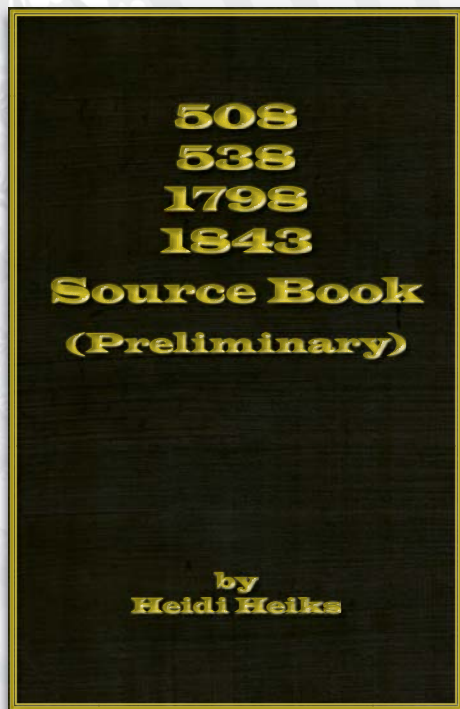
✉ Thank you for your concern that many receive the three angels' messages through these inspirational magazines of *Our Firm Foundation*. My appreciation and thanks are for the gift of these magazines.

JM, Kenya

✉ The second DVD arrived in excellent condition. . . . We've been enjoying the "old fashioned" preaching so much. It's like a breath of fresh air. Keep up the good work and tell it like it is.

SK *

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Herbert E. Douglass, Th.D.
Former editor, Review and Herald
Former professor, Pacific Union College, Atlantic Union College

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