

our firm FOUNDATION

Volume 28, Number 3 • March 2013

*The Immutable Law of God • Christ Our Righteousness • The Seventh-day Sabbath
The Three Angels' Messages • The Non-Immortality of the Soul • The Sanctuary*



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Effectual Prayer**
- **Ezra's Dilemma – Solved**
- **Spiritual Formation – Counterfeit Spirituality**
- **The Power of the Truth- Standing Firm for the Bible Truth**
- **The Future Peace And Glory Of The Church**
- **Onward**
- **Health Gem: 7 Skin- Smoothing and Beautifying Foods!**
- **Ellen White's Vision: The Church and the World United**

THE CREATOR

Editorial

Clark Floyd

"Nowhere in the Bible can we find God providing for the changing of the day of rest and worship from the seventh day to the first day through a prophet or by any other means."



Clark Floyd, editor of *Our Firm Foundation* magazine, has been co-host of the radio program *Bible Answers with Clark and Lee* and is a licensed attorney and an ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastor. He has spoken internationally and makes his home in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina.

Sunday is coming! We know from prophecy as well as from current events that Sunday laws are in the not too distant future. But as God's people, do we understand how to speak against such laws, both from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy?

In Amos 3:7, we read, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." How much will He do? Nothing, without revealing it in advance. Nowhere in the Bible can we find God providing for the changing of the day of rest and worship from the Seventh day to the first day through a prophet or by any other means.

He originally rested immediately after the six days of creation—"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

He then codified the seventh day Sabbath as commandment number four of the ten commandment law written in stone by His own finger. (See Exodus 20:8-11, and Exodus 24:12; see also Deuteronomy 5:14 and 5:22 for a second witness.) In Matthew 18:16 we read, "...in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

God did not prophesy that He would change the day of worship, but through Daniel the prophet, he did prophesy that another power would change the commandment dealing

with time.

"Says Daniel of the little horn, the papacy: 'He shall think to change times and the law' (Daniel 7:25, R.V.) And Paul styled the same power the 'man of sin', who was to exalt himself above God. One prophecy is a complement of the other. Only by changing God's law could the papacy exalt itself above God; whoever should understandingly keep the law as thus changed would be giving supreme honor to that power by which the change was made." GC 446.

In addition to changing the day of worship as given by the 4th commandment, this same power eliminated the 2nd commandment dealing with graven images, for obvious reasons—images of saints. This made the 4th commandment as contained in the King James Bible, the third commandment in the Catholic catechism. They then divided the 10th commandment into two commandments to keep the number at ten.

Note what God has to say in regard to the importance of the Sabbath: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: 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."

And Ellen White states: "The Sabbath is a sign of creative and redeeming power; it points to God as the source of life and knowledge; it recalls man's primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God's purpose to re-create us in His own image.

"The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden." Ed. 250.

As a second witness to the importance of the Sabbath, God speaks through the prophet, Ezekiel, "Moreover I also gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them."

Biblically the Sabbath can be traced through history, even before Mount Sinai where God gave the 10 commandments—in Exodus 16:22 and 23, the Israelites were instructed to gather twice as much manna on the 6th day so they would have provision for the 7th day Sabbath without going out to gather on that day. God thus used their eating habits week by week to point out the importance of honoring the 7th day Sabbath: "Every week during their long sojourn in the wilderness the Israelites witnessed a threefold miracle, designed to impress their minds with the sacredness of the Sabbath: a double quantity of manna fell on the sixth day, none on the seventh, and the portion needed for the Sabbath was preserved sweet and pure, when if any were kept over at any other time it became unfit for use." PP296.

Jesus, Himself kept the Sabbath (Luke 4:16). The Apostles, Jews and non Jews kept the Sabbath (Acts 18:4). And the Sabbath will be kept in the new earth (Isaiah 66:23).

Brothers and Sisters, let us know this material as we should for the coming times.

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. —Editor

Executive Director:

Joe Olson
executivedirector@hopeint.org

Editor:

Clark Floyd
editorial@hopeint.org

Copy-editor:

Reen Swindle

Director of Hope For Health:

Heather Olson, N.D., R.N., C.H.
hopeforhealth@hopeint.org

Bookstore Manager:

Georgine Olson
shipping@hopeint.org

About Hope International:

We are 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 (3000 words) for possible publication in *Our Firm Foundation*. We prefer that submissions be submitted in Word.doc format as a computer file. Include a digital picture and a short bio. Please address all correspondence to Editor, *Our Firm Foundation*, 151 Ascension Lane, Marshall, NC 28753, or by email to editorial@hopeint.org.

Subscription Information: See page 31
• Shipping & Sales Tax: See page 31

Content credited in this publication is the property of its respective owner(s) and is licensed or used with permission. Other items are the property of Hope International.

Printing & Design by



cover story

04 The Creator

James Edson White

features

06 Effectual Prayer

Mrs. E. G. White

08 Ezra's Dilemma – Solved

Joe Olson

12 Spiritual Formation –
Counterfeit Spirituality

Allen Barnes

16 The Power of the Truth-
Standing Firm for the
Bible Truth

Emmanuel Machakaire

20 The Future Peace And
Glory Of The Church

22 Onward

departments

02 Editorial

23 Christian Crossword

24 Health Gem:
7 Skin-Smoothing and
Beautifying Foods!

29 News Watch

30 Ellen White's Vision:
The Church and the
World United

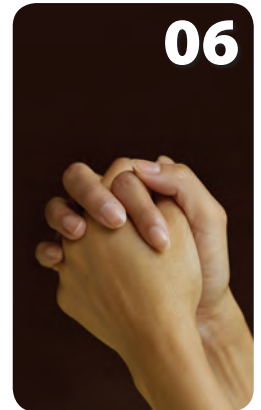
ad features

21 Swedish Bitters Soap

28 Calendula Cream



04



06



08



12



16



20



22





THE CREATOR

By James Edson White

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

Genesis 1:1, 2

How great the Being must be, who could make an earth like ours, who could make the grass and trees, fruits and flowers, to grow and flourish, who could cause to live and move, think and love, the intelligent creatures of the world in which we live.

The way in which God created all things is in harmony with His greatness. The Psalmist says: "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Psalms 33:9.

It is plain from this text that what the Creator did was to speak, and His word, as spoken through Christ, made the world.

THE WORLD WAS NOT MADE OF ANYTHING THAT WE CAN SEE

Referring to the creation, Paul says: "The worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Hebrews 11:3. The world was not made of anything which we can see, but was the product of the Creator's word.

The apostle tells us that life dwells in the Word, and that this life is "the light of men." John 1:4. Men live, and think, and act because of the power of God's Word. This Word, which created the worlds in the beginning, has the same power to-day which it had then.

JESUS CREATED THE VERY WORLD HE WAS BORN INTO

Christ is called the "Word of God." The apostle says: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. The helpless babe, born in a manger at Bethlehem, in reality was the Being who created the world in the beginning. He was the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father, and had been with God before the world was created.

The prayer of Jesus makes the above statement regarding the pre-existence of Christ very plain. "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." John 17:5.

And one of the Old Testament prophets has left the following record: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," [Heb. from the days of eternity], Micah 5:2.

THE PURPOSES OF GOD WERE WORKED OUT THROUGH CHRIST

Christ was from eternal ages a sharer in His Father's heavenly glory, but by a miracle altogether beyond our



comprehension, came to the earth to be a man among men, to carry our griefs, and to share our experiences, that finally we might share His glory. Hebrews 2:9, 14. Jesus said: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." John 17:24.

John also said: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." John 1:1, 2. Christ was with the Father when the world was planned and made. He worked out the purposes of His Father when He spoke the word which created the earth.



BY HIM ALL THINGS CONSIST

These titles, as applied to Christ, are very appropriate when we consider His exalted position as stated by Paul: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Philippians 2:6. Standing equal with the Father in the realm of Heaven, and in all the created universe, it can be plainly seen that He should

bear the titles of the Creator.

Of the glory of Christ Paul says: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Colossians 1:15-17.

The same apostle also says: "God...hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews 1:1-3.



THE SON IS CALLED GOD BY THE FATHER

Of the part which Christ took in the creation of the world the apostle John says: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing

made that was made." "He was in the world, and world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." John 1:3, 10.

In John 1:1 the Word (Christ) is called God. The Father himself declares: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom." Hebrews 1:8; Psalms 45:6. In these texts it will be seen that the Son is called God by the Father.

Isaiah, giving the names that apply to Christ, says: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. These names, and many others, the Bible gives to Christ, to show that He is the Word and Power of God.



CHRIST SUSTAINS, HOLDS TOGETHER, ALL THAT HE HAS CREATED

Jesus, the Son of God, and our Redeemer, created the heavens and the earth, as well as the other planets of the universe, and all they contain. He not only created all things, but He sustains, or holds together, all that He has created. One day follows another, the seasons come and go, because, by the Word of His power, all things consist and remain. It is the Word of His power that keeps the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars in their places.

Such a Saviour may well be trusted with our all. We may rest in His Word as in a faithful Creator, knowing that "there hath not failed one word of all His good promise" (1 Kings 8:56) to the children of men; and that, accepting His Word, we too shall be upheld, even as "all things are upheld by the Word of His power."

Effectual Prayer

By Mrs. E. G. White

Prayer is not an expiation for sin. It is not a penance. We need not come to God as condemned criminals; for Christ has paid the penalty of our transgression. He has made an atonement for us. His blood cleanses from sin.

Our prayers are as letters sent from earth, directed to our Father in heaven. The petitions that ascend from sincere, humble hearts will surely reach Him. He can discern the sincerity of His adopted children. He pities our weakness, and strengthens our infirmities. He has said, "Ask, and ye shall receive."

Educate yourself to have unlimited confidence in God

Many of the human family know not what they should ask for as they ought. But the Lord is kind and tender. He helps their infirmities by giving them words to speak. He who comes with sanctified desire has access through Christ to the Father. Christ is our Intercessor. The prayers that are placed in the golden censer of the Saviour's merits are accepted by the Father.

Every promise in the Word of God is for us. In your prayers, present the pledged word of Jehovah, and by faith claim His promises. His word is the



assurance that if you ask in faith, you will receive all spiritual blessings. Continue to ask, and you will receive exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think. Educate yourself to have unlimited confidence in God. Cast all your care upon Him. Wait patiently for Him, and He will bring it to pass.

Christ has bridged the gulf that sin has made

We are to come to God, not in a spirit of self-justification, but with humility, repenting of our sins. He is able to help us, willing to do for us more than we ask or think. He has the abundance of heaven wherewith to supply our necessities. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." God is holy, and we must pray, "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

We are to pray in the name of Christ, our Mediator. Our petitions are of value only as they are offered in His name. He has bridged the gulf that sin has made. By His atoning sacrifice, He has bound to Himself and His Father those who believe in Him. His is the only name under heaven whereby we may be saved.

We need not tell the Lord the history of our lives in our prayers

God is our King, and we are His subjects. A mere knowledge of His

will does not set aside the necessity of offering earnest supplications to Him for help, and of diligently seeking, by obeying His law, to co-operate with Him in answering the prayers offered. Thus His kingdom is established in our hearts.

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let them return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will

abundantly pardon." We are to seek "first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." We are to be ready to receive the blessing which God will bestow upon those who seek Him with the whole heart, in sincerity and truth. We must keep the heart open, if we would receive of the grace of Christ.



In our prayers we are not to preach a sermon to the Lord. We need not tell him the history of our lives. We can tell Him nothing with which He

is unacquainted. He knows our inmost thoughts. Every secret is open before Him. Nothing can be hid from Him.

Do not neglect secret prayer

High-flown language is inappropriate in prayer, whether the prayer be offered in the pulpit, in the family circle, or in secret. Especially should one use simple language when offering public prayer, that others may understand what he says, and unite with his petition.

God hears the prayers that are offered in the family circle, if they come from devoted hearts. Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

Do not neglect secret prayer. "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Never give in to the thought that it is useless to pray

We are not to be so overwhelmed with the thought of our sins and errors that we shall cease to pray. Some realize their great weakness and sin, and become discouraged. Satan casts his dark shadow between them and the Lord Jesus, their atoning sacrifice. They say, It is useless for me to pray. My prayers are so mingled with evil thoughts that the Lord will not hear them. These suggestions are from Satan. In His humanity, Christ met and resisted this temptation, and He knows how to succor those who are



thus tempted. In our behalf, He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears."

Many, not understanding that their doubts come from Satan, become faint-hearted, and are defeated in the conflict.

Do not, because your thoughts are evil, cease to pray. If we could in our own wisdom and strength pray aright, we could also live aright, and would need no atoning sacrifice. But imperfection is upon all humanity. Educate and train the mind that you may in simplicity tell the Lord what you need. As you offer your petitions to God, seeking for forgiveness for sin, a purer and holier atmosphere will surround your soul.

God will answer your prayer with what He knows is best for you

When you pray for temporal blessings, remember that the Lord may see that it is not for your good or for His glory to give you just what you desire. But He will answer your prayer, giving you just what is best for you.

When Paul prayed that the thorn in his flesh might be removed, the Lord answered his prayer, not by removing the thorn, but by giving him grace to bear the trial. "My grace," He said, "is sufficient for thee." Paul rejoiced at this answer to his prayer, declaring. "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." When the sick pray for the recovery of health, the Lord does not always answer their prayer in just the way they desire. But even tho they may not



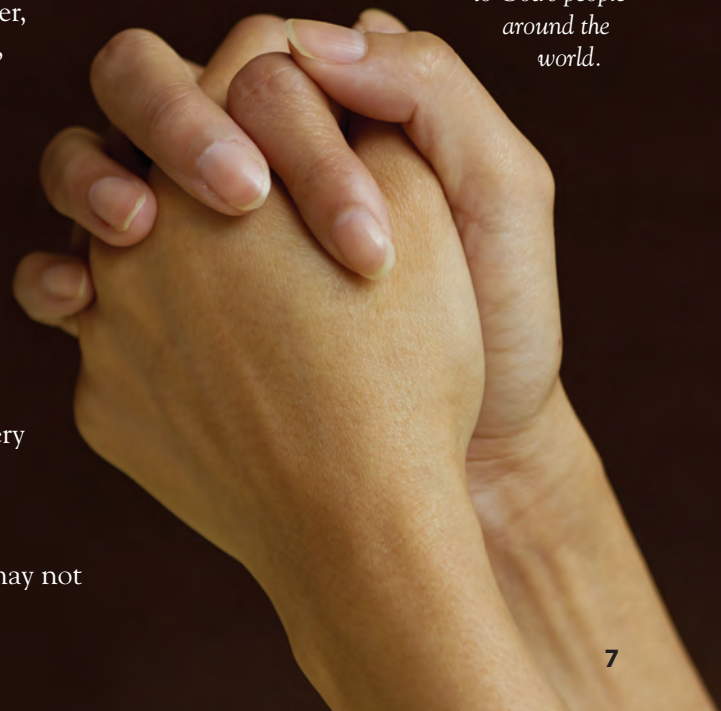
be immediately healed, He will give them that which is of far more value,-- grace to bear their sickness.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 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."

ST, November 18, 1903



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.



EZRA'S DILEMMA - SOLVED

By Joe Olson

Ezra has been confronted with a grievous sin of the people. They have taken strange, or non-Israelite, wives. They have taken wives that do not believe what they believe. And this was a very, very egregious, or horrendous sin. The reason this sin was so offensive to God was because it would cause those who engaged in it to turn from Him. This has absolutely nothing to do with God being the boss and us not doing what He wants. This has everything to do with *us*. Especially in today's society where we are taught to be considerate of others' beliefs and to be tolerant of everything and everybody. There is such an attitude of ecumenism that this "dilemma" hardly seems worthy of notice.

How does God feel about ecumenism?

Ecumenism means to all get along. "Can't we all just get along?" Well, in order to get along... in order for us to be "ecumenical" we have to tone down our beliefs. We have to be willing to compromise. We have to recognize that there are many paths to God and ours is just one of them. Doesn't that sound peaceful and gracious and... ecumenical? Aren't we noble and welcoming and more like Jesus when we accept everyone and their views as equal to our own? Doesn't that just seem right?



Not according to God. God does not accept the view that there are many paths to Him. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6. How many "ways" are there? How many different paths to God?

Who gets to God without going through Jesus Christ His Son? No man. Sounds pretty un-ecumenical to me, doesn't it to you?



Does one size really fit all?

We have been told all our lives that one size fits all. But that has never been true has it? That "one-size" sock or glove or mitt or whatever has always been too tight or too loose or, if you are lucky, just right. But they never fit *everyone* the same. Never. Yet we keep hearing the same ad. And we keep thinking that this time it might be true. We don't want to believe that someone would just lie about it. And, since we have been taught our whole lives to just get along and don't rock the boat, we really don't want to call a person a liar. That's a pretty serious offence... a very serious accusation. So, we smile and we nod our approval and we buy the really tight fitting or loose sock or shoe or mitt or glove or whatever.

Shechaniah admits the sin that has taken place

But Ezra, upon hearing that his people have been very... ecumenical, has flipped out. He obviously does not think too much of this ecumenism. Yet, someone tries to comfort Ezra by saying that there is still hope in Israel. "And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the

land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.” Ezra 10:2. Shechaniah fully admits the wrong that has been done. He comes right out and says we have trespassed against God. But he says there is hope? What does he mean? How is there hope? How do they rectify this situation? I mean, these people are married, some for a long time no doubt. And some of these married couples have children! How do we resolve this problem?

There must be no connection between the believer and unbeliever

Here is his answer... “Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.” Ezra 10:3. “Let’s make a covenant, or a promise, or an agreement with our God...” “Let’s promise to put away all our strange wives.” “Let’s also promise to put away our children born of these strange wives.”

Do you know what he is saying here? He is suggesting that these women and children need to be removed. And by removed, I am not referring to moving to another house in the same community. They need to be gone! They need to be divorced and move away... far, far away. They must no longer be connected. They have to be separated, forever and ever.

Whoa! Isn’t that just a little extreme? Where are all our “get along” feelings here? Why do they have to be totally separated? What about visitation rights and vacations and holidays? I mean, how far does Shechaniah mean when he says, “put away”?

No one wants to be the leader during a crisis like this

Do you see why Ezra was so flipped out over this? Can you see now why he threw himself down on the ground and pulled out his hair? Do you think that Ezra was unaware of what needed to be done? Remember my last message... Ezra was a “ready scribe” in all the law! No one was more aware than Ezra was. And he is absolutely grief-stricken over it. Who wants to be the one to give such a command? Can you



imagine the pain and grief and sorrow over something like this? You know, everyone wants to be the leader when they are on their horse being adored as a glorious commander. But, no one wants to be the leader when these kinds of situations come up.

And I love what Shechaniah says next... “Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.” Ezra 10:4. “You are in charge! You the man! This is your responsibility. Now... take care of it. Oh, and, we are right behind you.”

Ezra knew it was his responsibility to take charge of the situation

Now you can understand a little more of Ezra’s anxiety. Now we have a better comprehension of his agony. He knew what had to be done, and he also knew who had to do it. I’m pretty sure Shechaniah didn’t have to inform Ezra of whose responsibility this was. Ezra knew. But, it helped having someone encourage him to do what needed to be done. Don’t ever think that just because the leader is in charge, that he too doesn’t need your help and prayers.

So, Ezra accepts the position he is in and the counsel given, and he takes the matter into his hands. And look what he does next: “Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they swear.” Ezra 10:5. He says, “If we are serious about this, we all have to be in agreement. Swear before God that you will do according to what Shechaniah has said.” And the Bible says that, “they swear”; everybody... the chief priests, or the church leadership, the Levites, or the pastors, and “all Israel”.

Ezra mourned because of the transgression

“Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib: and when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.” Ezra 10:6. Even after the decision had been made, Ezra was still pretty torn up about it. The Bible says he mourned



because of the transgression.

Do you think there should be more “mourning” for transgressions? Well, if the result was removing your wife and children from you forever there might be. You see, this is such an important lesson here in Ezra. What we expect most of the time is simply to be forgiven, and to just keep on like we’ve been doing. So very, very often, there are no repercussions from our transgressions. We simply say, “I’m sorry,” and it’s all fixed. Is that really all there is to it? Is there no requirement on our part to amend our ways?



feel about us getting to heaven? He gave His only Son to die for us... right? I mean, how much more serious could God have gotten? Then how earnestly should we feel about it?

This is what Jesus

said... “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:” Mark 9:43. “And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:” Mark 9:47. This sounds pretty serious to me. We have to get rid of the sin in our lives, or we will never make it.

Go, and sin no more

Remember what Jesus said to Mary who was caught in adultery? “... And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” John 8:11. Don’t sin anymore. Don’t keep doing what I have just forgiven you for. This is not a free ticket to keep sinning. You have to stop it. The Israelites had to stop it. Why? Why was this such a serious sin... to the point of having to put away their wives and possibly children?

Why couldn’t they have worked something out? Because of what was said at the beginning... remember?

“Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.” Ezra 9:1. “... doing according to their abominations...”

If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off

When these men married these non-Israelite, non-Christian, non-Seventh-day Adventists, they did not lift them up. They were dragged down. And this was exactly what God said would happen. And this was exactly why God did not want them to make these terrible choices. So, who did God want to help by making this ‘law?’ God so badly wanted each of us to avoid this situation. He knew how much it would hurt later down the road. He wanted us to avoid all of this pain. Nobody wants us happier than God Himself! Nobody!



Now, let me ask you a question...

If the men, and obviously the women and children, are “doing according to their abominations”, are they heaven bound? Let’s ask the most serious question of all... will they be saved as a result? Of course not. So, what we are talking about here is eternal life! How urgently does God

We must divorce ourselves from sin or we will not make it to heaven

You can see maybe why Ezra is not a much-studied book. We all want to hear the “it’s okay” from God. We all want to think that we can walk right into heaven with all our sins and bad habits and defects of character. We all want to believe that God has an anti-contamination shower right at the pearly gates where we will be washed clean right before we go in. But if we won’t get rid of the wife now, why would we get rid of her then? Let me say it in a better way... if we won’t get rid of whatever is causing us to sin now, why would we want to get rid of it then?

This is such a huge analogy and this story has been put in God’s Holy Bible to make a point to each one of us today. You have to divorce yourself from sin, no matter how close it is to you. You have to let it go and separate yourself from it. Or... you will be lost. God cannot stand the idea of you not being with Him forever. That’s why He said not to do these things. We try so hard to believe that God is just not that serious. But how much more serious can you be than to allow your only son to die for sin? It IS that serious.

It is God’s pleasure for us to get rid of our sin

Now, as Ezra is addressing this sin, everyone is gathered together. “Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem...” Ezra 10:9. Everyone is there, from all over the country. No one is left out. This is important too. No one gets a pass. No one has “special” circumstances. You are either there, or you are out, that’s

all there is to it. And Ezra gets up to speak...

“And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.” Ezra 10:10, 11. They were to confess their sin, and then separate from the sin. Ezra says it is God’s “pleasure” for us to get rid of our sin. Why? Why is that His pleasure? Because if we allow Him to cleanse us from sin, we will get to be with Him forever and ever! And our being with Him is extremely pleasurable to God! There is nothing, absolutely nothing more important than eternal life. Nothing can be allowed to stand in the way. Nothing can take up our time or interest more.



from the strange wives.” Ezra 10:10, 11. They were to confess their sin, and then separate from the sin. Ezra says it is God’s “pleasure” for us to get rid of our sin. Why? Why is that His pleasure? Because if we allow Him to cleanse us from sin, we will get to be with Him forever and ever! And our being with Him is extremely pleasurable to God! There is nothing, absolutely nothing more important than eternal life. Nothing can be allowed to stand in the way. Nothing can take up our time or interest more.

The sin must be dealt with

So, what do the people say when this is brought to their attention? “Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.” Ezra 10:12. Everyone was agreed. They understood what must be done, and were willing to do it.

Please remember, this whole book is about God’s people getting to go home again. They were in Babylon. They were far, far from home. And they were there because of their sins. Now they want to go home again. Yet, there is this aggravating sin that has to be dealt with. There can be no getting right with God until the sin is dealt with. And the rest of the Book of Ezra deals with how they addressed the problem.

Why was there such an accurate account?

Interestingly, the ones who had taken strange wives were all named. It was recorded and left for our benefit to see who and how many had sinned in this way. Why do you suppose it was recorded? Why not just say, “There were a whole lot of them”? Why so specific? Remember that I addressed that very question in my last message? Do you remember how many people came from Babylon? Forty two thousand, three hundred and sixty. Remember that? Why did God record the number?

Well, I added up all the names of the people who had sinned by marrying strange women. There were 113 men who had committed this sin. Now, as we have been

going over this story, did it ever dawn on you that it was actually so few men? I mean, 113 out of 42,360 is a very, very small percentage. That is one quarter of one percent of the people. One quarter of one percent! Not ten percent of the people. Not even one percent of the people. All of this hubbub and flipping out and mourning and hair pulling was over one quarter of

one percent of the people. And I think that is one of the reasons God gave the specific numbers. We can’t enter into heaven with ANY sin. There is no percentage that is acceptable to God. There was no percentage acceptable with the Israelites. God doesn’t do averages or percentages. He does perfection. He does all or none. He is all the way or no way. And don’t we want that too? Don’t we want someone to love us totally and no one else? Don’t we want it to be right too? Of course we do... we are built that way.

We must be changed back into the image of God

In spite of the devil doing his best to convince us that we should just tone down what we believe... don’t we believe it because it is right? Then why would we tone it down? Why would we try to unify on a few issues and leave the rest in the closet? No, we are built for an all-or-nothing existence. We don’t want part of something, we want all of it. Who doesn’t want the whole enchilada? We were made in God’s image, no matter how defaced we are. The devil has done a great job in trying to get that image away from us, but it is still there. We too want nothing short of all the way.

We are all built to win. Losing is not an option. Any of us losing heaven is not an option for God. It shouldn’t be for us either. He has left us these messages that we might see though the devil’s lies and deceptions. God doesn’t do “half-saved”. He doesn’t do 99 ¾% saved or clean. He only does 100%. And isn’t that what we want, too? Then

let’s give Him 100% of our hearts today! Let’s let the impact of the Book of Ezra change us back into God’s image! And God is 100%!



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

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

BY ALLEN BARNES

COUNTERFEIT SPIRITUALITY

The human heart of every Christian longs to experience God in a supernatural way. However, this longing is not always strong enough to motivate the person to pray, study the Word of God, and be obedient to all it reveals. Self-sacrifice is too often inconvenient, leaving the soul with that unfulfilled longing to be in close relationship with God. This is where Satan provides his counterfeits that will give the soul an experience that is exhilarating and, at the same time, provide a salve for the conscience, leaving the individual with the sense that he has entered into a special encounter and relationship with God.

Feelings are a major component of this counterfeit

The Charismatic Movement is a perfect example of this. When a longing soul encounters the zeal, excitement, and apparent joy experienced in charismatic circles, he is drawn in like a moth to the candle. The counterfeit “baptism of the Holy Spirit”, evidenced by the manifestation of utterances believed to be the gift of tongues, leaves the person with (1) the exhilarating feeling he /she was searching for, (2) a wonderful “feeling” of forgiveness, and (3) the sense that now a special relationship with Jesus has been entered into, an experience that makes him/her a part of an elite group. These experiences are not without a supernatural facet, for Satan and his agents are ready to provide physical sensations to optimize the effect. You will often hear the person speak of a tingling down the spine or a wonderfully warm feeling through the body. Physical phenomena may differ, but the end result is that the individual is convinced that he/she had an encounter with God on a level that they never experienced before, an encounter they think everyone should have. Thus the new initiate becomes a zealous proponent and evangelist for the cause.



The path of the righteous is not void of danger signals

The same applies to Spiritual Formation, only at a deeper and more dangerous level. The conscience is salved, the supernatural is experienced and the “privileged” status is embraced, but beyond that, the mind becomes subservient to another—the spiritual director. Satan provides the good feeling as well as physical effects, but rather than lead the person to repentance and obedience to Scripture, leaves them satisfied with their condition, only longing for more and greater encounters with God. And, like the charismatic initiate, he/she becomes a great disciple of Spiritual Formation, breath prayers, contemplative prayers, Lectio Divina, Spiritual Exercises, or whatever name may be used.

The sincere Christian will undoubtedly feel an initial check in his spirit when considering involvement in Spiritual Formation or these mystical exercises. The path of the righteous is not void of danger signals. Our heavenly Father loves us and longs to protect us. Furthermore, Jesus gave His life to ransom us from the power of Satan and sin. Just as surely as there is the promise, “*And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it,*” (Isaiah 30:21), there will also be the warnings of where not to go.

The Holy Spirit was trying to warn him

Here is an admission from one initiate, Derek J. Morris, a professor of Pastoral Theology. He admitted that he first felt “resistance” from within to submit his spiritual life into the hands of another human, but after reading from a book authored by two Jesuits, he felt ready to take the plunge.

This is understandable, for the Jesuits are gifted writers and word weavers. It is not a good idea to read their works as mind-control is an area where they are specially trained. Incidentally, the book these two Jesuits authored also recommends the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola.

I was experiencing a high level of resistance. I was to learn later that such resistance is common, not only in the context of developing a relationship with a spiritual friend,

but also in the context of developing one's relationship with God. —Derek Morris, *Spiritual Formation in Ministry*, p. 8.

It is no wonder he experienced the doubts and apprehensions, for the Holy Spirit was trying to warn him. Bible Christianity is built on the foundation of Scripture and developing a personal relationship with Christ, not a relationship via hypnosis and another man's mind. As one writer has aptly stated:

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. —White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 324.

The mind is never to be surrendered to any man

This is not to teach that there is no such thing as authority in the church or the world, for the Bible does speak of authorities that we are to obey. However, when it comes to a matter of conscience, "*We ought to obey God rather than men*" (Acts 5:29). The mind is never to be surrendered to any man. The words of Martin Luther, as he courageously stood before the emperor at the Diet of Worms, should be the attitude of every Christian man and woman.

Since your most serene majesty and your high mightinesses require from me a clear, simple, and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to the councils, because it is clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by the clearest reasoning,— unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted,— and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the Word of God, I cannot and I will not retract, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. HERE I STAND, I CAN DO NO OTHER; MAY GOD HELP ME? AMEN! —J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 2, bk. 7, p. 245.

There was no shame when they committed abomination

No matter how well-meaning a brother or sister in the faith may be, they will not be able to answer for you in



the judgment. We each must stand before God individually, not in pairs, groups, congregations, denominations, etc. Thanks be unto God that it is that way. Our eternal destiny is to be based upon our own personal, spiritual development and relationship with Christ, not a relationship directed by another.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2

Corinthians 5:10.

We can see from this verse that we are not only personally responsible, but also that Christ will judge right and wrong, good and evil. His judgment will be in accordance with His written word, not the varying opinions of spiritual directors. As stated earlier, Jesuits practice some strange philosophies, like probabilism, to justify even that which God condemns. With Jesuits as the primary spiritual directors, there is no telling where one's conscience could be led astray. Perhaps this is why we see case after case of child abuse among the Catholic clergy. They have learned to justify almost any action.

Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. Jeremiah 6:15.

Apparently, the Lord thought it best to repeat these very words again in Jeremiah 8:12. When the Lord repeats a thing, we should really sit up and take notice. Leading up to this declaration, God gives the reason for this lack of ability to blush.

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them? ... For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Jeremiah 8:9, 11.

Has God changed His thinking?

Spiritual Formation offers a false peace, a false sense of security, because it is not Christ-centered, but man-centered.



It is one thing to invite Christ into our lives and devote ourselves to His infallible Word, but totally another to empty one's mind and seek for God within us, following the instructions of a director.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. — Colossians 3:16.

Spiritual Formation emphasizes an experience while down-playing doctrine. A mystical encounter coupled with submission to another man's mind is more important than understanding prophecy, keeping God's commandments and overcoming sin. This is one of the things that makes it so popular and builds a bridge across not only denominational barriers, but religious faiths. Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Christians, Catholics, New Agers...all are on board.

Herein lies a question that must be addressed. If these spiritual encounters are truly with God, why are the Catholics not being called out of the idolatry of Mary worship, confession to a priest, transubstantiation in the Eucharist, and bowing to idols? Why are not Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, and New Agers being taught that salvation comes only through Jesus Christ? Is God setting aside His own Word? Has He changed His thinking to make room for all people to simply find Himself within their own conscience?

To be sure, there will come a time when doctrine will become an issue, but not until the various faiths have been jelled together under the guise of spiritual direction. When Rome is ready to strike, she will strike—hard and fast. Those who oppose the supremacy of Rome, those who remain faithful to God, will experience the ire of the dragon, beast and false prophet.



Persecution will be rekindled and brought to a level never before witnessed when the mark of the beast is enforced.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Every faithful soul should be wondering how this movement can be stopped. Unfortunately, it probably will not be stopped, for this appears to be a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy concerning the final days leading up to the Battle of Armageddon. The three-fold union of the dragon, beast and false prophet is on the march, marshalling the nations for that last great conflict.

Fortunately, it can be stopped among groups who are aware of this movement and depend on the Holy Spirit's guidance and power to resist it. We can warn those around us, educating them so that they do not fall prey to this diabolical scheme of the Jesuits. It is important to learn the various terms that are employed, such as those already mentioned: Spiritual Formation, spiritual direction, the silence, contemplative prayer, breath prayers, etc. We must also be aware that some are employing names that do not raise suspicion, such as *Jesus Seminars*, *Jesus 101*, and other innocent sounding titles. Do your homework and investigate new ideas introduced—especially in youth programs.



The Scriptures are our safeguard against the deceptions of Satan

Most important, we can hide God's Word in our hearts that we not sin against Him (Psalm 119:11). We can surrender ourselves to Christ, and be riveted to that Eternal Rock and encourage others to do so. Yes, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" is a great mystery, but it is not

mysticism. The mystery is explained in the Word. Hear Paul:

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for

you, to fulfil the word of God; [to fulfil...: or, fully to preach the word, margin] Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the



riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:25-28.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15.

Study! What are we to study? “The Word of truth”. The Scriptures are our safeguard against the deceptions of Satan. Beware—he knows the Word pretty well, himself. When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he actually quoted from the Bible, but Jesus had rightly divided the Word:

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Matthew 4:5-7.

It is no time to be a surface reader of the Scriptures

We need to take line upon line and precept upon precept, allowing the Bible to interpret itself. The importance of this cannot be over-emphasized. For example, a favorite passage of the contemplative prayer instructors is Psalm 46:10:

Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

This is not an appeal to enter into the kind of stillness the contemplatives teach. We are not to try to enter a mystical silence where we may be inviting in the Troman Horse, opening our minds to unclean spirits. Pray, yes; but we are to allow the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth through the study of the Scriptures.

Listen to the profound words of Adam Clarke. His assessment of Psalm 46:10 is a much more sobering one:

Cease from your provocations of the Divine justice; cease from murmuring against the dispensations of his providence; cease from your labour for a season, that ye may deeply reflect on the severity



and goodness of God-severity to those who are brought down and destroyed; goodness to you who are raised up and exalted: -cease from sin and rebellion against your God; let that disgrace you no more, that we may no more be brought into distress and desolation.

-Adam Clarke's
Commentary

There is certainly no room for pantheism in that verse. The entire chapter refutes any notion of “God in everything” or “everything is God.” The Lord Himself speaks of destruction of the wicked and the earth because of rebellion against Him. One shudders to think of the destiny of those who wind up, by their own choice, in the ranks of the rebellious.

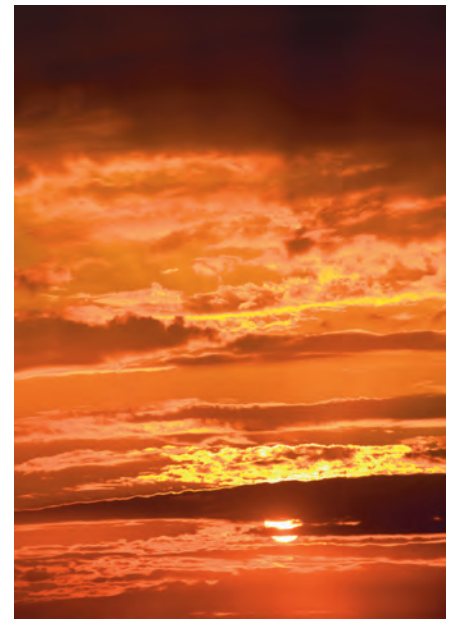
Be as a noble Berean

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” Timothy 4:1, 2.

It is quite possible that these articles have introduced a subject you have never heard of, much less encountered. Praise the Lord if that is your case, for now you have been forewarned and you should be able to recognize it when it comes. On the other hand, perhaps you have already dabbled into this labyrinth of unclean spirits. Be as a noble

Berean. Search the Scriptures and see if Spiritual Formation is from above or from beneath. No true Christian should be deceived by the wonder-working power of Satan. Take your stand on the written Word of God. With Luther we may proclaim:

“HERE I STAND, I CAN DO NO OTHER; MAY GOD HELP ME? AMEN!”





By Emmanuel Machakaire

If we look at our world today, most people love error or lies, and they hate the truth; that's why in most cases those who peddle lies and gossip have more followers and friends than those who tell the truth and stand for the truth. One terrible truth is if you stand for the truth you will stand alone. Think of Elijah on Mt Carmel: "Facing King Ahab and the false prophets, and surrounded by the assembled hosts of Israel, Elijah stands, the only one who has appeared to vindicate the honor of Jehovah. He whom the whole kingdom has charged with its weight of woe is now before them, seemingly without either human or divine support ; apparently defenseless in the presence of the men of war, the prophets of Baal, the monarch of Israel, and the surrounding thousands. But Elijah is not alone. Above and around him are the protecting hosts of heaven -- angels that excel in strength. Realizing his source of power, Elijah could say, "The Lord is with me as a mighty, terrible One: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten."

Each departure from right doing leads us further away from heaven

In that vast multitude the prophet is undaunted. Unashamed and unterrified, he stands before the people, his countenance lighted with an awful solemnity. In anxious expectancy the people wait for him to speak. Looking first upon the broken-down altar of Jehovah and then upon the multitude, Elijah cries out in clear, trumpet-like tones, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

The people answer him not a word. Not one in that vast assembly dare utter a word for God, not one dare reveal loyalty to Jehovah. Like a dark cloud, deception and blindness had covered Israel. Not all at once had this fatal apostasy closed about them; but gradually, as from time to time they had refused to heed the words of warning and reproof that the Lord sent them. Each departure from right-doing, each refusal to repent, had deepened their guilt, and driven them farther from Heaven. And now, in this crisis, they refused to take their stand for God.

The people of God are nearing the borders of the eternal world

"God abhors indifference and disloyalty in a time of crisis in his work. The whole universe is watching with inexpressible interest the closing scenes of the great controversy between good and evil. The people of God are nearing the borders of the eternal world; what is of more importance to them than that they be loyal to the God of heaven? All through the ages, God has had moral heroes, and he has them now; those who, like Joseph and Elijah and Daniel, are not ashamed to acknowledge themselves his peculiar people. Such men make their wills and plans subordinate to the law of God. For love of him, they count not their lives dear unto themselves. Their work is to catch the light from the Word, and let it shine forth to the world in clear, steady rays. Fidelity to God is their motto." RH, September 18, 1913 par. 6 - 9.

The Bible says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. So what then is the truth? The Bible is very clear about the answer to this question. It tells us in Psalms 31:5, Exodus 34:6, that God is the truth, and in John 14:6, that Jesus is the truth, and John 14:14 tells us that the Spirit is the truth, and in John 17:17, the Word is the truth. To know the scripture is to know the truth. To have the Holy Spirit is to have the truth. The Holy Spirit speaks the truth to the believing community. The Holy Spirit points us to Jesus the truth. Jesus Christ is the revealed truth of God. No man can come to the truth outside God and as for us who know the truth we must love the truth. Those who hate the truth and love lies are of Satan the father of lies. John 8:44. Jesus is the truth and Satan is the father of lies.

The truth is not measured by the number of people who support it

In politics, politicians use propaganda (lies or falsehoods) to get followers. If they tell the truth, usually

people will not support them. Propaganda is defined as, “Techniques to influence opinions and to avoid the truth, these techniques omit significant information or distort it.” Truth and lies cannot



coexist. Satan is the mass deceiver; he uses weapons of mass deception. Satan masquerades himself as the angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11:14. From the very beginning Satan’s intention is to deceive people by being religious. He doesn’t deny that God has spoken. He just twists it a bit here and there by making things to please us instead of doing that which pleases God, “obedience”. The truth is not measured by the number of people who support it. The truth remains the truth even if it stands alone. If we all agree to follow lies, it will not turn the lies into the truth. People have always responded to the truth with hate, scorn, ridicule and apathy. One such incident is when God sent Jeremiah with a scroll to King Jehoiakim, notifying him of the disasters the Lord planned to inflict on Judah. Ultimately, the scroll gets to the king. It is read in his presence. Imagine a king hearing that his kingdom will be taken from him and his city destroyed. “And it happened, when Jehudi had read three or four columns, that the king cut it with the scribe’s knife and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the scroll was consumed in the fire.” Jer. 36:23. He burned God’s word!

Have you burned the scroll of God’s word?

King Jehoiakim had an unwillingness to receive God’s word, the truth. It stung too badly and said things he didn’t want to hear. Maybe he thought if he destroyed the words

of the truth, they wouldn’t come true. Whatever his reasoning, it resulted in his refusing to hear God’s truth. The problem of

being unwilling to hear God’s truth did not end with Jehoiakim. Even today, we can burn the scroll of God’s word of truth by flatly refusing to submit to God or by avoiding some scriptures which say things that we don’t want to hear.

Many in denominational error feel no need to change, no matter what God says. “I’m happy where I am.” “You believe your way, I’ll believe mine.” “My parents belonged to this denomination, so it’s good enough for me.” In such a state, what good does Bible teaching do? Can’t we just burn our Bibles or some of their passages? Jehoiakim’s response did not change



God’s mind and His truth. After the king burned the scroll, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: Take another scroll and write on it all the words that were on the first scroll, which Jehoiakim king of Judah burned up. Jer. 36:27, 28. Like all people who do not walk in the light of the truth they are given, Jehoiakim came to a tragic end. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but its end is the way of death.” Prov. 14:12.

The truth will always come true

Therefore, this is what the LORD says about Jehoiakim king of Judah: He will have no one to sit on the

throne of David; his body will be thrown out and exposed to the heat by day and the frost by night. I will punish him and his children and his attendants for their wickedness; I will bring on them and those living in Jerusalem and the people of Judah every disaster I pronounced against them, because they have not listened. Jer. 36:30, 31. No matter what we do to the truth, the truth will always come true.

Great men of God are willing to change when wrong! Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the LORD.” He gave it to Shaphan, who read it. II Kings 22:8. Now we see a totally different response from that of King Jehoiakim. When the king [Josiah] heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes. II Kings 22:11.

Eternal destiny is determined by our response to truth

What resulted from the repentant attitude of King Josiah? Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel,

says concerning the words you heard: Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people, that they would become accursed and laid waste, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD. Therefore I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place.” II Kings 18:20. Imagine that! Jehoiakim throws the scroll from Jeremiah into the fire. Josiah immediately repents.

So it is with Christians today. When some hear the truth of what God is saying to us they ignore it and dismiss it. In some way they always find some explanations not to accept it, or they may even persecute anyone who brings the truth. Others repent and turn to the Lord for the true grace of God that which will enable them to do God's will. Each of these groups determine their eternal destiny by their response to the light of the truth they are given. "When right principles are despised and forsaken, then the true and loyal will show their warmest zeal and deepest love; then they will stand most firmly for truth, unpopular though it may be." TMK 352.5.

Just because we believe something doesn't mean we're right

For many years people believed the great philosopher Aristotle when he said the spider has 6 legs but it was later proven that a spider actually has 8 legs. For many years people believed that the sun rotates around the earth and it was also later proven that its actually the earth which rotates around the sun. For many years people believed that the earth was formed from an explosion or a big bang, and some still believe it today. For many years some people have believed Charles Darwin's theory of evolution which says humans are a product of evolution. There are many these days who are distorting the truth to draw away disciples after themselves. Acts 20:30. Even today many people believe in many false teachings about the truth. The following are some examples:

- Some think truth to be situational ethics – whatever a situation calls for is appropriate truth.
- Some think truth to be relatively personal – whatever a person thinks is right is truth for them.
- Some think truth to be found in sincerity – whatever a person sincerely



- believes is truth to them.
- Some think truth to be found in science – whatever facts scientists can prove must be truth.
- Some think truth to be based in popularity – whatever the majority of men hold must be truth.
- Some think truth to be determined by antiquity – whatever previous generations taught is truth.
- Some think truth to be found in education – whatever the most educated men believe is truth.
- Some think truth to be found in results – if it works, or the end justifies the means, it is truth.

Many believe in false teachings

Truth is certain, in spite of what foolish men may say about it being relative, changing, or flexible. Every issue has one true answer or solution and many false answers or solutions. Prove the one! Apart from false concepts about the truth many people believe in many other false teachings,



error and lies, and the following are just a few examples:

- That those who are dead are in heaven – Instead of awaiting resurrection.
- That all foods are clean – When some are not foods at all.
- That a human priest can forgive sin – When it is only God who forgives sins.
- That Jesus will come as a thief – When the Bible says that all eyes will see Him.
- That the Lord's Day is Sunday – When there is no scriptural evidence.
- That the Sabbath was for the Jews – When it was established before there was any Jew.
- That there are so many types of baptism – When the Bible only teaches the baptism of immersion by water.

Even though we don't like the truth, it doesn't change

Some men despise the truth and try to turn others from the truth by various ridiculing and sarcastic remarks such as: If you say you have the truth, what are you saying of all the other great religious teachers and preachers from other denominations? If you say you have the truth, then you are certainly in a small, lonely minority.

You may say, so you believe that all the learned world is wrong and that a poor company, greatly in the minority, looked upon as ignorant, common people are all that will be saved? I answer: Jesus was among the lowly of the earth. He did not take His position by the side of the learned rabbis or the rulers. He was not found among the potentates of earth, but among the lowly ones. The truth was

never found among the majority. It was ever found among the minority. The angels from heaven did not come to the school of the prophets and sing their anthems over the Temple or synagogues, but they went to those who were humble enough to receive the message. They sang the glad tidings of a Saviour over Bethlehem's plains while the great, the rulers, and the honorable were left in darkness because they were perfectly satisfied with their position and felt no need of a piety greater than that which they possessed. Teachers in the schools of the prophets, the scribes and priests and rulers, were the worst persecutors of Christ. Those who made the highest pretensions to spiritual light were the very ones who slighted and rejected and crucified Christ. Great men and women and professedly very good people may do terrible deeds in their bigotry and self-exalted position and flatter themselves that they are doing God service. It will not do to rely upon them. "Truth, Bible truth, you and I want at any cost. Like the noble Bereans we want to search the Scriptures daily with earnest prayer to know what is truth and then obey the truth at any cost to ourselves, without reference to prominent people or good people. If truth is in the Bible, we can find it there." CTr 78.

Overwhelming majority are opposed to the saving truth

"The nature of man unrenewed by grace is not changed in our day from what it was in Noah's time. Christ has said a similar state of things would be prior to his second coming as existed before the flood. In the days of Noah men followed the imagination of their own hearts, and the result was unrestrained crime and wickedness. The same state of things will exist in this age of



the world. But will not some of the learned, the honored of the world, accept the message of warning in these last days? Will the world as a majority perish in the general impending ruin? How was it in Noah's day? as it was then Christ has said it should be. Of that vast population there was only eight persons who believed the message of Noah and obeyed God's word. In the world today



the majority choose the broad road to death because the way of life is too narrow for them to walk in with their dishonesty, avarice, pride and iniquity. Now, as in the days of Noah, the overwhelming majority are opposed to the saving truth and are fascinated with lying fables." ST, Jan. 3, 1878 par. 2.

Truth is gracious revelation from the God of heaven

Rather than aggressively seeking the truth, men rush with lascivious greed after sin. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many for the truth has and will wax cold.

Personal compromise steals our hearts from steadfast love of the truth and sin in our lives will harden



our hearts to the truth of God's word.

Truth is not a right; it is a privilege. Truth is not an achievement; it is a blessing. Truth is not

a discovery; it is a gift. Truth is not by education; it is not a matter of intelligence, diligence, luck, or other natural basis; it is by gracious revelation from the source of truth, the God of heaven. Jesus praised His Father for hiding the things of truth from the wise and prudent. Matt. 11:25-27.

The truth is no respecter of persons

Today the God of truths is saying to you, come and take the truth and get saved. To refuse to change at God's bidding is like burning the scroll, hoping it will make the truth disappear. The stubborn truth about the truth is it cannot be stopped by death or by killing its messengers, it cannot be consumed by fire, it cannot be changed by closing our eyes from it, it cannot be stopped by persecution or burning its pages, it cannot be corrupted or bribed. The truth is no respecter of persons. The truth is an unstoppable power. Do you want to do God's will, even if you discover that God's will is different from what you want to do? The only way to be safe is to say, "God, I am willing to give up all my preconceived ideas and all my past understanding and follow your truth wherever it leads me. For there is power in your truth to set me free."



Emmanuel Machakaire, originally from Zimbabwe, is a devoted member of the Seventh-day Adventist church in South Africa.

The Future Peace And Glory Of The Church

Hear what God the Lord hath spoken:

“O, My people, faint and few,
Comfortless, afflicted, broken,
Fair abodes I build for you!
Thorns of heartfelt tribulation
Shall no more perplex your ways;
You shall name your walls Salvation,
And your gates shall be all Praise.

There, like streams that feed the garden,
Pleasures without end shall flow;
For the Lord, your faith rewarding,
All His bounty shall bestow;
Still in undisturbed possession,
Peace and righteousness shall reign;
Never shall you fear oppression,
Hear the voice of war again.

“See no more your suns descending,
Waning moons shall never see;
But your griefs, forever ending,
Find eternal noon in Me;
God shall rise, and, shining o’er ye,
Change to day the gloom of night;
He, the Lord, shall be your glory,
God your everlasting light.”

~Selected





Swedish Bitters Soap



Are you tired of looking for the perfect soap that is completely natural? We've got the answer! Relax and enjoy our wonderful 100% natural Swedish Bitters Soap. This soap is made using the unique herbal infusion that contains all the wonderful herbs you love in the Swedish Bitters Extract. It has been used to help with numerous skin problems, and is gentle enough for even the most sensitive skin! It is perfume-free and is formulated to help maintain the skin's natural pH balance.

DISCOVER THE 11 EXTRAORDINARY HERBS IN OUR SWEDISH BITTERS HERBAL INFUSION:

- Aloe - This herb is wonderful for helping relieve burns, sunburns, wounds, and insect bites. It also helps relieve itching from various causes. Speeds the regeneration and growth of healthy skin tissue.
- Myrrh - This herb has direct anti-microbial and antiseptic effects that help fight infection. When applied topically, it accelerates wound repair and decreases pain.
- Saffron - Helps improve skin problems, bruises, and superficial sores.

- Reduces pain and inflammation.
- Senna Leaf - Contains anti-bacterial, antiseptic, and detoxifying properties that help cleanse and improve appearance of the skin.
- Camphor - Helps relieve skin problems, minor pain, and itching. Also helps speed recovery of: bruises, sprains, and strains.
- Rhubarb Root - Helps reduce pain and speed healthy skin regrowth associated with burns and traumatic injuries.
- Zedoary - A natural anti-inflammatory, reduces pain and swelling.
- Manna - Helps speed skin regeneration. Improves appearance of scar tissue.
- Theriac Venezian - Its natural anti-inflammatory effects make it helpful for reducing pain and inflammation.
- Carline Thistle Root - Fights infection. Decreases pain and inflammation.
- Angelica Root - Nourishes the skin and promotes a healthy, vibrant, and blemish-free complexion.

INGREDIENTS IN OUR SWEDISH BITTERS SOAP:

- Swedish Bitters Herbal Infusion, Saponified Vegetable Oil, Saponified Olive Oil, Saponified Coconut Oil, Saponified Castor Oil, Distilled water.

To Order Call Today: 1-800-468-7884

or Visit us on the web at:

www.hopeforhealthusa.com

***Prices listed above do not include shipping and handling or sales tax**

Price:

4 oz. bar\$5.99

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.

Combining nature, faith, and love to bring healing to the world.





ONWARD

Onward, onward, is my cry,
As my days are going by;
Time of work and time of song
God will not for us prolong.

Glory from my heart to God!
Glory for His holy blood—
Blood of life and blood of power,
Blood that keeps me every hour!

Onward on the blessed way!
Onward! Onward night and day!
O the day is drawing near,
Day of light so bright and clear.

When the clouds roll over me
To Thy glorious light I flee.
God can help me, God alone,
Till the days of clouds are gone.

O! I sing my song again,
And I feel no worldly pain,
For my heart is full of light,
Light that warms and shines so bright

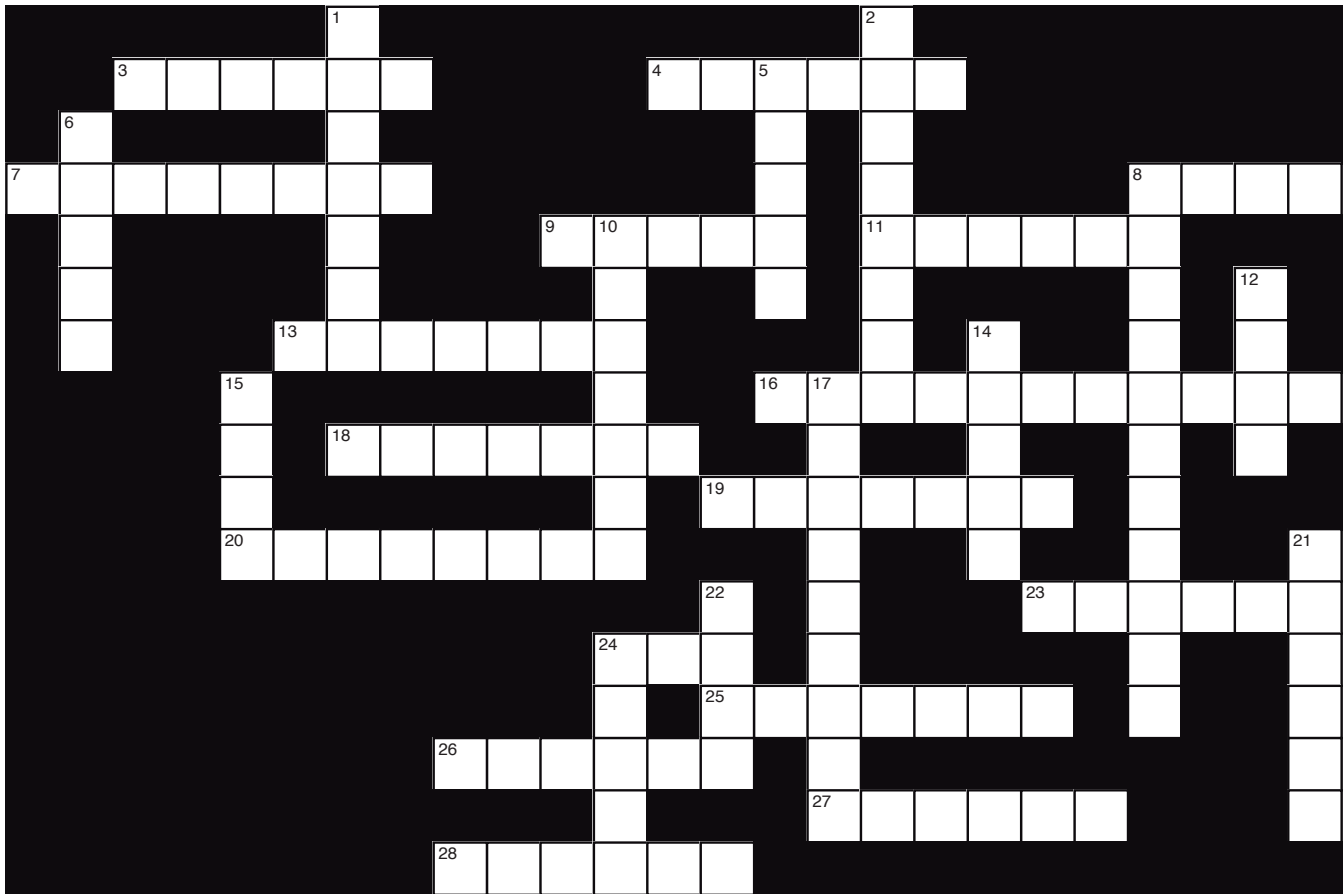
Onward, onward, Lord, for Thee,
Onward, onward, help Thou me.
I will yet before Thee stand,
In Thy sinless Beulah land.

Onward, onward, is my cry,
As the days of blessings fly;
In the deepest, darkest night
Still my star is shining bright.

~ Otto Lundell



Christian Crossword



ACROSS

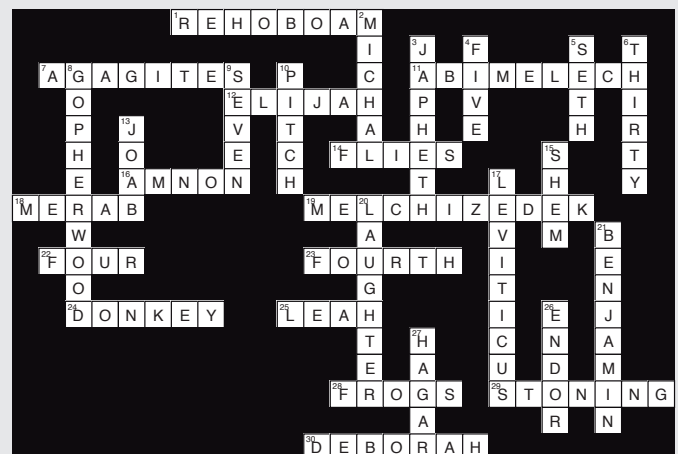
3. An Egyptian magician who opposed Moses
4. The home of Simon the cross bearer
7. Capital of Syria during David's time
8. Ahab's father
9. Home of Amos the prophet
11. Highest mountain in Syria (9,166 feet)
13. The brook by which Elijah was told to hide by the Lord
16. The group that Joseph was sold to by his brothers
18. Disciple at Jerusalem, slain for lying to God
19. He raped Dinah, Jacob's daughter
20. Hebrew name of the river Tigris
23. The Mede who was a son of Ahasuerus
24. One of Jacob's sons by Bilhah
25. David's nurse who was a Shunammite
26. Jacob's eldest son
27. Claudias ____, Roman commander who protected Paul
28. Ruler of Synagogue; Jesus raised his daughter from the dead

DOWN

1. Abraham's second wife
2. Jeremiah's birthplace
5. Samuel's headquarters
6. Father of Enoch
8. Ephesian Christian commended for his service

10. Jezebel's father
12. A prophet of Samaria
14. A son of Zebedee, called as a disciple
15. Father of King Saul
17. The father of Zerubbabel
21. Prophet during reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah
22. Second son of Judah
24. City of Judah, captured by Joshua

Answers from Christian Crossword published in the February 2013 issue of Our Firm Foundation



7 Skin-Soothing and Beautifying Foods!



Dr. Olson comes from a long line of health professionals including MDs, naturopaths, and osteopaths. Having always wanted to help people, especially in the area of health, she was a missionary to Belize and Korea. A national speaker, an RN for years, a certified herbologist, and a naturopathic doctor, Dr. Olson is utilizing this experience and wealth of knowledge for the benefit of people all over the world.



You've probably noticed that the winter months can really do a number on your skin! Not being out in the sunshine, not getting as much exercise, and indulging in those warm (not-so-healthy) holiday foods have all taken a toll on your skin, and by February your skin can look and feel dull and lifeless! Have no fear! The secret to healthier hair and glowing skin is not in your makeup case - it's in your diet! We all know that a healthy and balanced diet can shield our inside from all sorts of bad health problems, but we tend to forget that it also helps our *outside*. Whether you're eating it or putting it on your skin - the foods you choose can make the biggest difference in how healthy your skin looks. The right vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, and oils can shield your skin from the ravages of the environment, time, and even cancer. To address every skin woe, from wrinkles, to acne, to dryness, try to eat foods

in as natural a state as possible. Recently I heard someone say that if you want to look processed, cooked, and dead - then eat processed, cooked, and dead foods; but if you want to look vibrant, bright, healthy, and alive - eat the life-giving raw, healthy, vibrant foods. After all, you are what you eat! Within a week or two you can transform your dull, lifeless skin and appearance

into vibrant and glowing beauty! But prepare yourself—people just might start mistaking you for your sons and daughters! For younger and healthier looking skin, try these amazing skin-beautifying foods:

1. Blueberries



It's true that the best things can come in the smallest packages! This tart little berry was ranked number one in antioxidant activity by the U.S. Department of Agriculture compared to 40 other common fruits and vegetables! Foods rich in antioxidant properties such as blueberries will have a significant impact on your skin! Free radicals caused by pollution and UV radiation that attack skin cells and produce DNA damage, premature aging, and wrinkles are stopped dead in their tracks by antioxidants contained in blueberries and other fresh fruits and veggies! So pick a peck of blueberries to benefit from their powerful antioxidants. Also try raspberries, blackberries, cranberries, and acai berries - they're all delicious, and they give our complexions a healthy boost with phytochemicals that protect skin cells! Red and purple fruits such as cherries, blueberries, blackberries and raspberries are rich in anthocyanidins which increase vitamin C

levels in cells, protect against free radicals, and help prevent the destruction of collagen in skin and connective tissue. Red fruits also contain lycopenes which act as antioxidants to product the skin and slow down skin aging!

2. Spinach

This dark leafy green vegetable is rich in skin-nourishing nutrients and free radical-fighting antioxidants! Spinach has beta-carotene, a super-charged antioxidant that helps repair



skin cells, clears up acne, and gives the skin a youthful glow, while also preventing the signs of aging and slowing down skin cancer



cell growth. Loaded with lutein, spinach also helps keep your eyes healthy and sparkling. No wonder spinach is called a super green food, as it is full of potassium, fiber and folate, which even help with the DNA repair that restores skin cells damaged by the sun and helps keep them cancer-free. Can greens really help prevent cancer? In a study published in the International Journal of Cancer, people who ate the most leafy greens had **half** as many skin tumors over 11 years as those who ate the least! Spinach is also a good source of vitamins B, C, and E, calcium, iron, magnesium, and omega-3 fatty acids! So trade your lettuce for spinach, throw some in your next smoothie, or sauté for a quick healthy side!

3. Tomatoes

Think of tomatoes as “internal sunscreen”! One study reported volunteers who consumed 5 tablespoons of lycopene-rich tomato paste daily for 3 months had a lower risk of sunburn. The team of researchers found significant improvements in the skin’s ability to protect itself against harmful ultraviolet rays in these individuals. Lycopene, the phytochemical that makes tomatoes red, helps eliminate skin-aging free radicals caused by ultraviolet rays, and tomatoes are con-

sidered the best source of this nutrient! Another benefit of eating a lycopene-based diet is that it helps boost collagen production.

Collagen is a protein that keeps skin strong, smooth and supple. Without enough collagen to support structures of the skin, your face will begin to show signs of premature aging – dry, dull-looking, saggy and wrinkly. Surprisingly, the lycopene in tomatoes is more easily absorbed by your body when it is cooked or processed so enjoy some canned tomatoes in your soups and stews during the cold weather!

Tomatoes for Large Pores, Poor Complexion, and Acne

When skin is dull and full of blemishes and it needs some brightening and nourishing, it doesn’t need a



store brand facial mask. What your skin needs is a homemade tomato facial mask! Tomatoes naturally help brighten and nourish dull skin while getting rid of blemishes and returning your skin back to its natural pH balance. All you need is 1/4 a cup of freshly squeezed tomato juice with pulp, 1 tablespoon of freshly squeezed lime juice, and 1 cup of mashed avocado. You should be able to find these ingredients at any local grocery store if you don’t already have them in your fridge.

Directions:

Place all ingredients into a small bowl and combine to form a thick, creamy green mask. You may also add 1 teaspoon each of dried parsley and basil to the mask to help thicken it up and to help draw even more toxins and impurities out of your skin. If you find the tomato mask is too runny for you, add a teaspoon of cornstarch to the mask and that should help thicken it right up, and the cornstarch will also help draw oils out of your skin. Once the mask is made, simply wash your face with warm water and a healthy cleanser (such as Swedish Biters Soap), pat dry, and apply a nice layer of the creamy green tomato mask to your skin and face. The mask will feel cool and may sting a little bit at first, but this is because it is stripping the dead layers of skin from your face and removing impurities. Once the mask is on, leave it on for 45 minutes to an hour to help really brighten, nourish, and purify your skin (just soak in the tub or read a book and relax while the mask works its magic!). After you are done with the mask, rinse it off with warm

water and splash your face with cold water after to help shrink your pores back up. Once you do this you should notice your skin is glowing, brighter, and clearer appearing. The texture of your skin will be soft and supple again! This homemade tomato facial mask can be used on all skin types to help heal up all kinds of skin problems. This mask can be used to get rid of acne, remove oils, relieve dry skin, calm stressed skin, brighten up dull skin, nourish aging skin, and simply keep skin looking its best. The homemade mask can be used up to 3 to 4 times a week since it is a lot gentler than store brand facial masks!

4. Walnuts

Soften your skin with walnuts! Walnuts contain omega-3 essential fatty acids, which improve the skin's elasticity and are vital for flexible, plump, and younger-looking skin! These tasty and healthful nuts are also loaded with copper, a mineral that boosts collagen production! Collagen is a vital element that is responsible for the skin's strength. Aging and other factors, such as sun exposure and smoking,

cause collagen to break down. The elasticity and the suppleness of your skin depend on collagen. If collagen breaks down, your skin loses elasticity, and wrinkles start forming. You don't need to eat cupfuls of walnuts to enjoy their many benefits. Just a handful a day will provide smoother skin, healthier hair, brighter eyes, and stronger bones!

5. Almonds

Almonds are a natural sun-blocker! Stuffed with vitamin E, almonds help defend against sun damage. Volunteers who consumed 14 milligrams of vitamin E per day (about 20 almonds) and then were exposed to UV light burned less than those who took none. And because vitamin E is an antioxidant, it also works to keep your body free of skin-damaging free radicals. Almonds are also rich in monounsaturated fat, which is a "good" fat known for lowering cholesterol and keeping cell membranes strong and intact, which is crucial for keeping skin youthful and



bright! Almonds are a versatile food that can be eaten plain, thrown in with granola, or made into delicious almond milk or almond butter!

6. Flaxseeds

Flaxseeds: Otherwise known as nature's wrinkle-fighters! These little seeds offer a payload of omega-3 fatty acids, which erase spots and iron out fine lines. The British Journal of Nutrition reported that participants in one study who downed about half a teaspoon of omega-3s in 6 weeks experienced significantly less skin irritation and redness, along with better-hydrated skin. According to Anti Aging Project.com, the lubricating effects of flaxseed oil may help diminish the appearance of skin wrinkles. Vitamedica.com says skin that is adequately nourished with essential fatty acids (EFAs), including flaxseed oil, feels softer and smoother, ages more slowly and is less prone to wrinkling. Vitamedica says





back, you can slow it down! Kiwis are a major source of antioxidants that can delay the effects of aging throughout the body.

although topical creams may briefly soften dry skin, internal lubrication is much more long lasting! Grind flaxseeds right before using to experience even more health benefits!

7. Kiwis

These small, brown, fuzzy fruits are loaded with vitamin C and antioxidants, which keep skin firm, help prevent wrinkles, and are great for healthy bones and teeth! Vitamin C not only firms the skin, it repairs it! The large amount of vitamin C found in kiwis helps wounds heal faster and works to prevent rough, dry skin. Vitamin C is also needed for the production of collagen, which firms the skin and decreases the appearance of lines and wrinkles. Kiwis are also rich in vitamin E, a fat-soluble antioxidant that speeds healing time and is essential for the maintenance of healthy, glowing skin. While you can't turn the clock

Antioxidants neutralize the free radicals that can damage healthy cells and hasten the process of degeneration, including changes in skin thickness, elasticity, and firmness. Mayo Clinic doctors recommend getting your antioxidants from food sources, like kiwis, that have a complex mix of vitamins C, E, lycopene and other substances that fight free radicals. So slice some up in your fruit salad or enjoy a big bowl of plain kiwi – your skin will thank you! Did you know you can eat the fuzzy, brown skin? If you don't mind the



fuzziness, the skin of the kiwi also contains valuable nutrients. Try blending it whole in your next fruit smoothie!



- <http://www.fitnessmagazine.com/recipes/healthy-eating/superfoods/top-10-superfoods-for-skin-and-hair/>
- <http://voices.yahoo.com/home-made-tomato-facial-mask-brighter-skin-6307062.html>
- <http://eatthis.menshealth.com/slideshow/10-best-foods-your-skin>
- <http://www.cosmopolitan.com/hair-styles-beauty/skin-care-makeup/a-diet-for-gorgeous-skin>
- <http://www.cosmopolitan.com/hair-styles-beauty/skin-care-makeup/a-diet-for-gorgeous-skin>
- <http://www.care2.com/green-living/five-best-foods-for-skin.html#ixzz26S1Qz6Qn>
- <http://www.livestrong.com/article/469522-kiwi-fruit-for-skin-care/>



Hope for Health

Calendula Cream is a powerful salve that helps improve a variety of skin conditions. You will be amazed at its ability to enhance the tone and appearance of the skin, fight skin infections, and even improve chronic skin problems! A versatile cream that no medicine chest should be without!

Calendula Cream

CALENDULA CREAM IS AN INVALUABLE AID FOR:

- Pimples
- Dry scaly skin
- Uneven skin tone
- Minor burns
- Chronic skin problems
- Skin that has lost its elasticity
- Bee/wasp stings
- Age spots
- And many more!
- Sunburns
- Red, itchy skin

Calendula Cream is truly the miracle worker for the skin, whether for acute or chronic skin problems, lumps, bumps scabs, pimples, sores that won't heal, you name it!

LAB STUDIES:

- In the laboratory, calendula extract has shown to have many properties that make it helpful for skin problems. Calendula helps to fight the causes of skin problems while improving a number of symptoms, such as inflammation and ulceration. Calendula Cream also has the unique property of helping improve the skin's ability to knit itself back together. Some compounds in the plant actually stimulate the rejoining of broken skin, which is just what you need when you have any sort of abrasion!

STEROID CREAM AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

- Steroid cream is a commonly prescribed preparation for problematic skin. Anyone with long-term skin problems knows how quickly it reduces inflammation and speeds the healing process. What they may NOT know is that steroids block the immune system, which is something people living in this killer-bacteria and virus-filled world cannot afford.
- Steroid cream is fat soluble, and every time you apply it, it goes straight into the body and temporarily reduces the functioning of your immune system. Using steroids on chronic skin conditions means using them on an ongoing basis. That means a chronically impaired immune system!
- The good news is, many people have used Calendula Cream for a variety of skin conditions with wonderful success!

DISCOVER SOME BENEFITS OF HOPE FOR HEALTH'S CALENDULA CREAM:

Itchy Skin: Have you ever watched someone suffer from an itchy skin condition that causes discomfort and scratching and more scratching, leading to scabbing? This can really be a problem with children because it is difficult for them not to scratch an itchy, irritated area. Calendula Cream both relieves the itching and speeds the healing of the broken tissue, thus ending the itch cycle. Applying a generous layer of Calendula Cream can be a great relief! It soothes the skin and relieves the itch. So if you or someone you know has an unbearable condition, try our Calendula Cream and get relief!

First Aid: Accidents happen, and it's important to have something in the herbal remedy chest that can be used in first-aid situations. Calendula Cream is one of the best candidates for skin tragedies such as: burns, bites, scrapes, scratches, abrasions and more! It will help the skin heal faster and hurt less. It does this by reducing pain and inflammation while minimizing the chance of infection on the wound site. Just apply Calendula Cream liberally to the affected area for cool relief and protection for the skin. There is no sting or burn, just a feeling of relief (which is especially important for children).

To Order Call Today: 1-800-468-7884

or Visit us on the web at:

www.hopeforhealthusa.com

***Prices listed above do not include shipping and handling or sales tax**

Price:

4 oz. jar\$16.99

Suggested Adult Usage:

- Apply as needed to affected areas.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.

Combining nature, faith, and love to bring healing to the world.



News Watch

worldwide
 stocks tumble assets
 anxiety deepens
 Interest rates
 RECESSION FORECAST



we shall be clothed. Eating, drinking, and dressing are carried to such excess that they become crimes. They are among the marked sins of the last days, and constitute a sign of Christ's

You will have a heart attack just looking at this breakfast

Introducing the “Kidz Breakfast,” so named by Jesters Diner in Great Yarmouth, England, because the nine-pound (!) platter weighs as much as a small child. The beastly breakfast boasts a dozen sausages, a dozen slices of bacon, six eggs, an eight-egg cheese and potato omelette, four slices each

of black pudding, bread and butter, toast and fried bread, two hash browns, potatoes, mushrooms, beans and tomatoes. That’s 6,000 calories. Thus far, only competitive eater Robert Pinto has managed to finish it.

END TIME PERSPECTIVE: “The Saviour presents to us something higher to toil for than merely what we shall eat and drink, and wherewithal

soon coming. Time, money, and strength, which belong to the Lord, but which He has entrusted to us, are wasted in superfluities of dress and luxuries for the perverted appetite, which lessen vitality, and bring suffering and decay. It is impossible to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God when we continually fill them with corruption and disease by our own sinful indulgence.” CD 146,147

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

Subscription Order Line: 1-800-468-7884

Subscription Information

United States	US \$23.99 per year
Canada & Mexico	US \$44.99 per year
Large Print Edition	Black & White US \$29.99 per year
Large Print Edition	Color US \$39.99 per year

Shipping, Sales Tax & Currency
 For all products advertised in this publication (unless otherwise noted): • **USA destinations:** \$0.00-\$25.00=\$6.25, \$25.01-\$50.00=\$9.25, \$50.01-\$100.00=\$13.50, \$100.01-\$200.00=\$16.75, \$200.01 or more \$2.99
 • **To destinations outside the USA:** Actual shipping rate will be charged.
Sales tax: North Carolina residents, please add 6.75%.
All money sent must be in US funds, drawn on US banks.

Subscription Assistance
 We strive to keep our subscription prices as low as possible. We want this material to be available to all. If your finances cannot meet the requested amount, please send whatever you can. Those desiring to assist in providing subscriptions for individuals with limited funds should send a gift marked “Subscription Assistance” to Hope International. Your donations are tax deductible

Ellen White's *Vision*

The Church and the World United

After this I saw Satan consulting with his angels and considering what they had gained. True, they had, through fear of death, kept some timid souls from embracing the truth; but many, even of the most timid, had received the truth, and thereupon their fears and timidity immediately left them. As these witnessed the death of their brethren and beheld their firmness and patience, they knew that God and angels assisted them to endure such sufferings, and they grew bold and fearless. And when called to yield their own lives, they maintained their faith with such patience and firmness as caused even their murderers to tremble. Satan and his angels decided that there was a more successful way to destroy souls, one that would be more certain in the end. Although Christians were made to suffer, their steadfastness, and the bright hope that cheered them, caused the weakest to grow strong and enabled them to approach the rack and the flames undaunted. They imitated the noble bearing of Christ when before His murderers, and by their constancy and the glory of God which rested upon them, they convinced many others of the truth.

The church began to lose favor with God when she received favors and honors from the world

Satan therefore decided that he must come in a milder form. He had already corrupted the doctrines of the Bible, and traditions which were to ruin millions were taking deep root. Restraining his hate, he decided not to urge on his subjects to such bitter persecution, but lead the church to contend for various traditions, instead of for the faith once delivered to the saints. As he prevailed on the church to receive favors and honors from the world, under the pretense of receiving benefits, she began to lose favor with God. Shunning to declare the straight truths which shut out the lovers of pleasure and friends of the world, she gradually lost her power.

The church is not now the separate and peculiar people she was when the fires of persecution were kindled against her. How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! I saw that if the church had always retained

her peculiar, holy character, the power of the Holy Spirit which was imparted to the disciples would still be with her. The sick would be healed, devils would be rebuked and cast out, and she would be mighty and a terror to her enemies.

*If we are Christian in name only,
Satan is not disturbed*

I saw a very large company professing the name of Christ, but God did not recognize them as His. He had no pleasure in them. Satan seemed to assume a religious character and was very willing that the people should think they were Christians. He was even anxious that they should believe in Jesus, His crucifixion, and His resurrection. Satan and his angels fully believe all this themselves, and tremble. But if this faith does not provoke to good works, and lead those who profess it to imitate the self-denying life of Christ, Satan is not disturbed; for they merely assume the Christian name, while their hearts are still carnal, and he can use them in his service even better than if they made no profession. Hiding their deformity under the name of Christian, they pass along with their unsanctified natures, and their evil passions unsubdued. This gives occasion for the unbeliever to reproach Christ with their imperfections, and causes those who do possess pure and undefiled religion to be brought into disrepute.

*Some are no more fit to be in the church
than Satan and his angels*

The ministers preach smooth things to suit carnal professors. They dare not preach Jesus and the cutting truths of the Bible; for if they should, these carnal professors would not remain in the church. But as many of them are wealthy, they must be retained, although they are no more fit to be there than Satan and his angels. This is just as Satan would have it. The religion of Jesus is made to appear popular and honorable in the eyes of the world. The people are told that those who profess religion will be more honored by the world. Such teachings differ very widely from the teachings of Christ. His doctrine and the world could not be at peace. Those who followed Him had to

renounce the world. These smooth things originated with Satan and his angels. They formed the plan, and nominal professors carried it out.

*If the false covering was torn off the members,
there would be revealed such iniquity*

Pleasing fables were taught and readily received, and hypocrites and open sinners united with the church. If the truth had been preached in its purity, it would soon have shut out this class. But there was no difference between the professed followers of Christ and the world. I saw that if the false covering had been torn off from the members of the churches, there would have been revealed such

iniquity, vileness, and corruption that the most diffident child of God would have had no hesitancy in calling these professed Christians by their right name, children of their father, the devil; for his works they did.

Jesus and all the heavenly host looked with disgust upon the scene; yet God had a message for the church that was sacred and important. If received, it would make a thorough reformation in the church, revive the living testimony that would purge out hypocrites and sinners, and bring the church again into favor with God.

EW 228



*"You must master
circumstances, and not
allow circumstances to
master you." - 3T47 -*

*Be not overcome of evil,
but overcome evil with
good. - Romans 12:21*

Hope International
151 Ascension Lane
Marshall, NC 28753

