

Our Firm Foundation

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 19, Number 5

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Wanted:

An Easy Religion



Walking in the Light

“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.” 1 Thessalonians 5:5-7.

The word of God is very clear that only those who walk in the light by the power of the Holy Spirit are His true disciples—the true and faithful Seventh-day Adventists. Those who are in the Laodicean condition do not know that they are wretched, miserable, poor, and spiritually blind.

“So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” Revelation 3:16-18.

The disciples of Christ are called out of darkness into the marvelous light—developing a Christlike character through righteousness by faith and victory over all temptation and sin by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” 1 Peter 2:9.

God has chosen us to be a peculiar people, walking continually in

the light of God’s salvation and His requirements—His sacred law.

What makes us His peculiar people?

It is perfect obedience to all truth without a single compromise with self.

It is seeking for all truth daily in the word of God. “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13.

It is the Holy Spirit working in us—justification and sanctification.

“Walk continually in the light of God. Meditate day and night upon His character. Then you will see His beauty and rejoice in His goodness. Your heart will glow with a sense of His love. You will be uplifted as if borne by everlasting arms. With the power and light that God imparts, you can comprehend more and accomplish more than you ever before deemed possible.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 514.

It is striving to imitate the character of Christ; not by what we can do, but by what God can do in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“I was shown that God’s people dwell too much under a cloud. It is not His will that they should live in unbelief. Jesus is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. His children are the children of light. They are renewed in His image, and called out of darkness into His marvelous light. He is the light of the world, and so also are they that follow Him. They shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The more closely the people of God strive to imitate Christ, the more perseveringly will they be pursued by the enemy; but their nearness to Christ strengthens them to resist the efforts

of our wily foe to draw them from Christ.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 405-406.

All who are now in the state of Laodicea are in spiritual darkness. They believe they are walking in the light, but they are calling their darkness light, and they are lost.

“The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness.” *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 253.

They are not seeking with heart and soul to know the truth and to live all truth by the power of the Holy Spirit. All who retain the Laodicean spiritual blindness will be spewed out of the mouth of God, and lost for eternity. What a tragedy!

What does it mean to be spewed out—rejected?

“To those who are indifferent at this time Christ’s warning is: ‘Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.’ Revelation 3:16. The figure of spewing out of His mouth means that He cannot offer up your prayers or your expressions of love to God. He cannot endorse your teaching of His Word or your spiritual work in anywise. He cannot present your religious exercises with the request that grace be given you.” *Ibid.*, vol. 6, 408.

Let us seek God with our whole heart and repent of our Laodicean condition while probation lingers a moment longer.



Our Mission

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

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About Hope International

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Invitation to Writers

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

Wanted:

An Easy Religion

Marshall Grosboll



The gospel of Jesus has never been popular. The gospels reveal that Jesus “came to His own, and [even] His own did not receive Him.” John 1:11.¹

Thus Jesus tells us to “enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” Matthew 7:13–14.

Although there has always been a mass of professors of religion, there have been but few who have been willing to be truly converted thereby, willing to be broken on the Rock and to crucify self.

Religion has never lacked popularity. Throughout history, most people had “religion,” and have even been proud of it. But “the religion that is fashionable, that is popular in the world, is not the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus.” “The religion of Christ permits no compromise, no yielding to the influences of the world.” *Review and Herald*, June 14, 1892.

One of Satan’s goals in our church is to make religion fashionable; to lower the standards of truth so that our church may be filled

with those who are professors of religion, but not truly converted. “It has been the continual endeavor of the enemy to introduce into the church persons who assent to much that is truth, but who are not converted. Professed Christians who are false to their trust are channels through whom Satan works. He can use unconverted church members to advance his own ideas and retard the work of God. Their influence is always on the side of wrong.” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 159.

The book of Revelation reveals that Satan has succeeded in diluting this church with professors of religion who are not converted. In prophecy, this church is pictured: “You are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot . . . and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” Revelation 3:16–17. But because of their profession, Laodiceans viewed themselves as being rich and having need of nothing.

No more fearful delusion can take a people captive, and no more accurate description could depict our church today. We are more intent on maintaining a good name than on living a godly life. We want to feel good about ourselves

while maintaining our worldly lifestyle.

We want to be popular as are the churches of the world. Typical is our turning to non-Adventist church-growth experts to teach us how we can become popular and grow like the other churches. In the process, the offense of the cross has ceased. No longer is there persecution from without, only that which comes from within when someone raises his voice calling for reform.

And yet for all the endeavors toward popularity, we are not growing, at least not in the Western countries. Why should this be? In all our efforts to learn the secrets of growth employed by the churches from which we as Seventh-day Adventists were called out, is it possible that we have missed something? We have become Laodicean relatively slowly—adopting the ways of the churches which compose mystical Babylon by default rather than by intent.

As Elijah said, “How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.” 1 Kings 18:21, KJV. Let us choose to have a pleasing, popular religion, or accept the offense of the cross. And so,

for those who want a pleasing and popular religion, not by default but by intent, here are three ways to have a pleasing religion like the world:

1) Preach Jesus But Do Not Require Perfect Obedience

Everyone has some besetting sin. From birth, Satan has been cultivating certain sins within each one of us.

I remember in a baptismal class, as we were reading from the Bible about jewelry, one young woman spoke up and said: "If I have to take off my wedding ring to go to heaven, I can't go!" She had been married just six months and had a new diamond wedding ring. When I visited with her in her home two days later, she had two non-Adventist ministers there helping her to see that a little jewelry was not wrong.

She came to the baptism, with all her jewelry on. She asked me to explain again the reasons why wearing it was wrong. We then went into the study and spent the next hour and a half reading again all the texts and discussing their meaning. Finally, with tears, she said, "I surrender!" From that moment on the Lord used her, and within a relatively short period of time she had brought several other people into the church.

But she had to overcome her besetting sin. Probably some evil angel had worked to develop this love in her from the time she was a little girl. Presents of jewelry had probably been given to her. Proudful comments had undoubtedly been made about wearing jewelry, and how good it made one look. Jewelry had become associated with femininity, sex appeal, marriage, wealth, success, and attractiveness.

How easy it would have been to have brought her into the church without counseling her about jewelry! And although she eventually made the decision to take it off, how many do not!

I remember another young woman who had three hundred pairs of earrings, several hundred pairs of shoes, and three mink coats. She was a personal acquaintance of some well-known movie stars. She came to every meeting and accepted every truth—but one. That, again, was wearing jewelry. Consequently she found a church that would accept her with her one besetting sin.

Some are lost when standards are held high. Jesus lost the rich young ruler. How much credit he could have been to the fledgling church! He had money, influence, and leadership. Moreover, he kept all the commandments, and even accepted Jesus openly. He came to

nor the crowd of 5,000 when "many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more." John 6:66. Jesus seemed to lose more disciples than He kept. Somehow He had never been taught the secrets of church growth. His standards were too high, in Judas' estimation.

Numerically, Jesus could have had much more success, and we can, too, if we will just be content to preach more of "Jesus," and not concern ourselves with obedience. As long as a person will accept Jesus as his Saviour, and accept "most" of the standards of the church, surely the other points of godly living will come along as he sits in church Sabbath after Sabbath.

"When Jesus presented to the rich young ruler the condition of discipleship, Judas was displeased. He thought that a mistake had been made."

Jesus in broad daylight and knelt down before him—more than Nicodemus did!

Judas' keen perceptions immediately grasped what it would mean to their little group to have this respected leader in their company. If the young man needed any reforms, he felt these could come later.

"When Jesus presented to the rich young ruler the condition of discipleship, Judas was displeased. He thought that a mistake had been made. If such men as this ruler could be connected with the believers, they would help sustain Christ's cause. If Judas were only received as a counselor, he thought, he could suggest many plans for the advantage of the little church." *The Desire of Ages*, 719.

If Jesus had listened to Judas, the small group of disciples would not have lost the rich young ruler,

The only trouble is that as long as there is even one point not fully surrendered to the Lord, Satan has control of the life. Because conversion "requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him. . . . We are not God's children unless we are such entirely." *Steps to Christ*, 43–44. The more areas of godly living displayed in the life, while one sin is being cherished, the more deceptive is the Christian experience. As long as one point is unsundered, all the preaching in the world will not avail. Judas was not converted by his association with Jesus.

"Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire, persistently cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. Every sinful indulgence strength-

ens the soul's aversion to God." Ibid., 34.

Sin is like a cancer. Either it is completely eradicated, or it completely eradicates Christ. There are only two roads we can travel: one is the road of total victory, the other is the road of total defeat. All we have to do is take one step down, and the next one becomes easier. "After every advance step in the downward road, Satan has some special temptation to lead them [professed Christians] still further on the wrong track." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 287.

2) Tell People to Wait for Jesus to Overcome Their Sins for Them

If the lie that perfect obedience is unnecessary doesn't work, Satan has another scheme that is just as effective. If he cannot deceive us into thinking we can be saved while maintaining that one cherished sin, then this philosophy is sure to work. Preach Jesus. Preach perfect obedience. Preach sanctification. But tell the people that Jesus will do the perfecting for them. Teach them just to read the Bible and pray, and Jesus will do the rest.

"When we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit."

But here is the problem: We do not know when we have been totally defeated. "When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character." *Steps to Christ*, 40. Sin blinds the perceptions. The Jewish leaders in Jesus' day came under Satan's complete control, but thought they were the guardians of the faith.

All Satan needs is for us to reject one standard. "The removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the failure to do the very thing that the Lord has marked out, one step in the path of wrong principle, often leads to an entire change of the life and action." *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 320.

And so, if we want to be popular like the other churches, just preach "Jesus." Call it "Christ our righteousness." Make the people active, happy Christians. But allow them to retain their one cherished sin.

This is a most deceptive, alluring philosophy. I remember talking with a leader in the church who was addicted to a certain caffeinated drink. She drank it all day long. She said she knew it was wrong, but could not quit. I asked her why she bought it. She said that she was waiting for God to take the sin away from her. She even suggested that it would be wrong for her to quit unless God took it away. She had imbibed this masterful deception.

It is true that we have no power to overcome sin in our own strength. But God has called us, with His power, to put it out of our lives. Jesus gives us the power, but we must do the overcoming.

"In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when

the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom. The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 466.

When Judas came to Jesus, he thought that if he just associated with Jesus, all his sinful traits would be washed away. How wrong he was!

"He [Judas] felt in his own person the evidence of Christ's power. . . . He loved the Great Teacher, and desired to be with Him. He felt a desire to be changed in character and life, and he hoped to experience this through connecting himself with Jesus. The Saviour . . . endowed him with power to heal the sick and to cast out devils. But Judas did not come to the point of surrendering himself fully to Christ. He did not give up his worldly ambition or his love of money." *The Desire of Ages*, 717.

Judas wanted to be changed. He thought that by associating with Jesus he would be changed. He heard the words of Jesus day after day, and talked with Him face to face. But because he himself did not give up his sins, his life was not changed as he hoped it would be. How many are going through a Judas experience today because of the Judas philosophy! They have accepted the idea of just spending time with Jesus and letting Him change the life apart from their own endeavors.

"Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. . . . Desires for goodness and holiness are right as far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Many will

be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians." *Steps to Christ*, 47–48.

There is a work for man to do in overcoming sin that God will not do for Him. God gave Samson superhuman strength, but he had to exercise every ounce of his own energy to lift those gates off the city wall. He had no power to do it himself. But neither could he merely kneel beside those gates and wait for them to move. He had to exercise the power that God had given him. And we must also exert effort in the expulsion of sin from the soul.

"There must be an earnest effort to conquer through the grace freely given of God." *Review and Herald*, January 24, 1893.

"The pleasing fable that all there is to do is to believe, has destroyed thousands and tens of thousands, because many have called that faith which is not faith, but simply a dogma. Man is an intelligent, accountable being; he is not to be carried as a passive burden by the Lord, but is to work in harmony with Christ. Man is to take up his appointed work in striving for glory, honor, and immortality. God calls upon men for the use of every talent He has lent them, the exercise of every power He has given; for man can never be saved in disobedience and indolence." *Ibid.*, April 1, 1890.

"Divine help is to be combined with human effort, aspiration, and energy. But we cannot reach the battlements of heaven without climbing for ourselves. . . . Not even divine power can lift one soul to heaven that is unwilling to put forth efforts in his own behalf." *Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1884.

"God will work for His children, but not without their co-operation. They must have indomitable energy." *Review and Herald*, April 8, 1890.

"God will never deliver those who will not strive to free them-

selves [from temptation]." *Signs of the Times*, October 8, 1885.

The counsel is clear. We must overcome as Jesus did, first by uniting our weakness to His strength, our human frailties to His divine omnipotence, our nature to His, and then, thus empowered, we must overcome sin by refusing to do evil and choosing to do right.

"If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Romans 8:13.

But this work requires the crucifixion of self, not pleasing to the natural heart. It will not make for

became their mother, and their final allegiance was to their mother.

Do we have the same danger? In Laodicea Jesus is pictured as standing outside the door, while the church within continues to function as though it needs nothing. The church has replaced Jesus.

Do we need the church? Yes, just as we need the sun, moon, and stars. But the church must never take the place of God. There must never be a creed to take the place of the Bible. There must never be a system to take the place of personal obedience. There must never be an

*Do we need the church?
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a large, popular church. If we want to have a pleasing doctrine that will gain more adherents, preach victory through Jesus, call it "righteousness by faith," but teach that Jesus will do the overcoming for us.

3) Lead People to Worship the System

In all ages, worshiping the system has worked effectively. Get people to transfer their allegiance from the Creator to the created. In ages past men worshiped the works of creation in the sun, moon, and stars, all in the name of religion.

But in the New Testament era Satan has found something new—the church. Throughout the Dark Ages, the idol and opiate of mankind was the church. People looked to the church to interpret the Scriptures, to set guidelines for their daily lives, and to fulfill the vacuum existing in the heart of every man and woman. They worked and sacrificed for the church. God was their father, but the church

official interpretation to take the place of personal conviction. This concern was one of Ellen White's great burdens for the church, especially following 1888.

"The Jewish nation were not brought suddenly into their condition of thought and practice. From generation to generation they were working on false theories, carrying out principles opposed to the truth, and combining with their religion thoughts and plans that were the product of human minds. Human inventions were made supreme. . . . Let no plans or methods be adopted in any of our institutions that will bind mind or talent under the control of human judgment. . . . The high-handed power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever and by whomsoever it is exercised. . . . We are not to bargain away our stewardship." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 359–362.

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Our Perfect Example

Harvey Steck

“**F**or even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” 1 Peter 2:21–24.

Here Peter says that Christ has left us an example, that we should follow His steps. Verse 22 says that He “*did* no sin, neither was guile found in his *mouth*.” Jesus’ life is an example for what I am to *do* and for what I am to *say*.

I would like to share with you some gems from the Spirit of Prophecy that I found as I studied the words “sinless” and “sinlessness.” These gems have gleamed even brighter in the context of the controversy over *Questions on Doctrine*. All emphasis is mine.

Now what does it actually mean—to be my “example”? If I cut some lumber with a power tool,

and then I give my nine-year-old daughter Hannah a handsaw and ask her to do what I just did, can I expect her to do her part just as well and quickly as I did mine? Is she fully equipped to follow my example? No!

Hannah is much smaller and weaker, not to mention less experienced. Even if we both had the same tools it would take her longer to do the job. I have such an advantage that it is ridiculous for me to require her to follow my example.

We read from 1 Peter 2 that Christ left us an example, that we should follow in His steps. It would be unfair and cruel to us if we were expected to follow Christ’s example without the “tools” that He had at His disposal. Thankfully, we may be assured that His example is not out of our reach, if we will fully surrender to Him and take advantage of the heavenly grace He has offered us:

“As one of us He was to give an *example* of obedience. For this He took upon Himself *our nature*, and passed through our experiences. ‘In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.’ Hebrews 2:17. If we had to bear anything which Jesus did not endure, then

upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore Jesus was ‘in all points tempted like as we are.’ Hebrews 4:15. He endured every trial to which we are subject. And *He exercised in His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. . . .*

“By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. *As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey.*” *The Desire of Ages*, 24.

“Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was.” *Ibid.*, 664.

A Sinless Example

What kind of example did Jesus give us? He lived a sinless life, which demonstrated a sinless character.

“He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us *the example of a sinless life.*” *Ibid.*, 49.

Some have suggested that Jesus’ example is something that I should

be striving to follow, but I cannot actually live a sinless life—one of perfect obedience. I will always be relying upon Christ's covering robe of righteousness to make up for my own deficiencies. But is this what Inspiration teaches?

"Christ has left us a perfect, sinless example. His followers are to walk in His footsteps. If they are not transformed in character, they can never dwell with Him in His kingdom. Christ died to elevate and ennoble them, and those who retain hereditary tendencies to wrong cannot dwell with Him. He suffered all that it is possible for human flesh to suffer and endure, that we might pass triumphantly through all the temptations Satan may invent to destroy our faith." Sons and Daughters of God, 294.

Truly we are considering a matter of salvation here. Christ's atonement that offers justification to the repentant sinner for his past sins is vital for our salvation; but it is just as vital that we take the next step of complete transformation and submission to God's revealed will. Those who neglect this latter step "can never dwell with Him."

"Christ has made every provision for the sanctification of His Church. He has made abundant provision for every soul to have such grace and strength that he will be more than a conqueror in the warfare against sin. The Saviour is wounded afresh and put to open shame when His people pay no heed to His Word. He came to this world and lived a sinless life, that in His power His people might also live lives of sinlessness. He desires them by practicing the principles of truth to show to the world that God's grace has power to sanctify the heart." Review and Herald, April 1, 1902.

"Every one who believes on Christ, every one who relies on the keeping power of a risen Saviour that has suffered the penalty pronounced upon the transgressor, every one who resists temptation

and in the midst of evil copies the pattern given in the Christ-life, will through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Every one who by faith obeys God's commandments, will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression." Signs of the Times, July 23, 1902.

Please notice, we are called to "the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his trans-

gression." Heaven requires that you and I reflect the character of the pre-fall Adam while we still have the sinful flesh of the post-fall Adam—and God has made every provision necessary to make it possible.

It Is the Thought that Counts!

Jesus showed what is the result of continually keeping the thoughts and feelings pure and elevated. While he had to rely upon His heavenly Father for strength to resist temptations just as we do, He did not have the same desire for sin that exists in the unconverted heart; instead, He recoiled from sin.

"Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He

endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin." Testimonies, vol. 2, 201–202.

God has called us to reflect the character of Christ, "to be conformed to the image of his Son." Romans 8:29. "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." *Christ's Object Lessons, 69.*

Heaven requires that you and I reflect the character of the pre-fall Adam while we still have the sinful flesh of the post-fall Adam—and God has made every provision necessary to make it possible.

What does it mean to reflect the character of Jesus? It means to have the principles of the Ten Commandments—God's law of love—written upon the heart, which will be reflected in our words and actions. It also means that when faced with temptation we will also "recoil from evil." We will be disgusted at any thought of sin, and temptation will lose its power over us.

There was a time when I focused almost all my attention on my outward actions, trying my best to make sure that I was perfectly obedient, while inside I still cherished sinful thoughts. At times I lost my temper and then apologized, but I would still tell myself that I was justified, that the other party was in the wrong. This mixture of success and failure, victory and defeat, was a confusing witness for the Lord:

"A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring." Proverbs 25:26.

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?” James 3:10–11.

I had not fully realized that the key to a truly victorious experience has everything to do with what goes on in the mind and heart—how we think and feel. Solomon said, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” Proverbs 4:23.

Christ said to the Pharisees, “O generation of vipers, how can ye,

thoughts and feelings, you are brought under the influence of evil angels and invite their presence and their control. If you yield to your impressions and allow your thoughts to run in a channel of suspicion, doubt, and repining you will be among the most unhappy of mortals, and your lives will prove a failure.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 310.

If we desire to reflect Christ’s character, we need to give proper attention to thinking like Christ thought, to feeling like Christ felt. “Let this *mind* be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:5.

your heart shall be employed.” *The Adventist Home*, 54.

When I began to see that victory over temptation begins with right thoughts, then I started experiencing victory over my besetting sins.

“You may think that there can be no sin in permitting your thoughts to run as they naturally would without restraint. But this is not so. You are responsible to God for the indulgence of vain thoughts; for from vain imaginations arises the committal of sins, the actual doing of those things upon which the mind has dwelt. *Govern your thoughts, and it will then be much easier to govern your actions.* Your thoughts need to be sanctified. Paul writes to the Corinthians: ‘Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.’ 2 Corinthians 10:5. When you come into this position, the work of consecration will be better understood by you both. Your thoughts will be pure, chaste, and elevated; *your actions pure and sinless.*” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 82–83.

Did you catch that? If we keep our thoughts in submission to Christ, the result will be that our actions will be “pure and sinless.” If you are frustrated by a “yo-yo” experience of victory and defeat, then lay the axe at the root of the tree (Matthew 3:10), rather than trying to pick off the ugly fruit. Focus on your thoughts.

“There is earnest work before each one of us. Right thoughts, pure and holy purposes, do not come to us naturally. We shall have to strive for them.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 656.

How to Control the Thoughts

There are two simple principles that I have discovered that help me to control my thoughts:

“**You are what you eat**”—Your life will show what you are feeding your mind on. Therefore, dedicate time for study and prayer at the

When I began to see that victory over temptation begins with right thoughts, then I started experiencing victory over my besetting sins.

being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” Matthew 12:34–35.

Listen to what Ellen White said to some who were allowing their feelings to run continually in a negative channel:

“Through Christ you may and should be happy and should acquire habits of self-control. Even your thoughts *must* be brought into subjection to the will of God and your feelings under the control of reason and religion. Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way without any effort at restraint or discipline. *If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character.* When you decide that as Christians you are not required to restrain your

“As God works upon the heart by His Holy Spirit, man *must* cooperate with Him. The thoughts must be bound about, restricted, withdrawn from branching out and contemplating things that will only weaken and defile the soul. *The thoughts must be pure, the meditations of the heart must be clean, if the words of the mouth are to be words acceptable to Heaven* and helpful to your associates.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 657.

“Gird up the loins of your mind, says the apostle; then *control your thoughts*, not allowing them to have full scope. The thoughts may be guarded and controlled by your own determined efforts. *Think right thoughts, and you will perform right actions.* You have, then, to guard the affections, not letting them go out and fasten upon improper objects. Jesus has purchased you with His own life; you belong to Him; therefore He is to be consulted in all things, as to how the powers of your mind and the affections of

beginning and end of the day. Don't let anyone or anything take away that time. In addition to feeding on God's Word, you must also refrain from feeding the mind on sinful and worldly things. Resist that temptation from the enemy that says you won't be affected by watching that movie, reading that book, or listening to that music. Be always on guard, for Satan is looking for us to just crack the door open, and then he will be inside before we realize it.

The Replacement Principle—When you are tempted to think wrong thoughts, first send up a quick prayer to God for help. Then

don't just try to stop those thoughts; focus your mind on something better. Memorize scripture; sing songs; converse with God in prayer—out loud if no one is nearby. Let your imagination picture the scenes that you have studied in the Scriptures—particularly the life of Christ and the beauties of the New Earth. Use the time to think about ways to work more effectively for the Lord.

As we follow these principles in keeping all of our thoughts into submission to Christ, He will work in us the fulfillment of this powerful promise:

"Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of

Himself, 'I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.' Psalm 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, 'I have kept my Father's commandments.' John 15:10. By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; *we live His life.*" *Christ's Object Lessons*, 312.

May this experience be yours and mine is my prayer. ✨

...continued from page 7

Ellen White's great fear following 1888 was that we would do as did the Jewish nation in putting the system where God should be. She therefore warned: "Battle Creek is not to be the center of God's work. God alone can fill this place. When our people in the different places have their special convocations, teach them, for Christ's sake and for their own soul's sake, not to make flesh their arm. . . . To place men where God should be placed does not honor or glorify God. Is the president of the General Conference to be the god of the people?

. . . When the Lord shall work upon human hearts and human intellects, principles and practices different from this will be set before the people. 'Cease ye from man.' Isaiah 2:22. The Lord has a controversy with His people over this matter. . . . Just as soon as man is placed where God should be, he loses his purity, his vigor, his confidence in God's power." *Ibid.*, 375–376.

She counseled us to teach our people, in all their important convocations, not to put confidence in human leaders, but in God. "Our churches are weak because the members are educated to look to and depend upon human resources." *Ibid.*, 380. "For many years an

education has been given to the people which places God second, and man first. The people have been taught that everything must be brought before the council of a few men in Battle Creek." *Ibid.*, 325. "Men have assumed authority, but the people should not depend upon poor, finite, erring men. . . . The Lord alone is to be exalted." *Ibid.*, 319–320.

But it is easy to turn our power of thought over to a committee. And it is easy to work for something more tangible than God. Moreover, it seems so much more rewarding to work for man than for God. We can climb the system of human organization, but we cannot climb into prominence in God's vineyard. He said, "Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matthew 20:27–28.

Organizational worship and service is easier, more pleasing, and more rewarding to the carnal heart than doing all for the Master. It is particularly deceptive because God has ordained organization. God is not leading discordant elements into the kingdom, but a well-disciplined army. But when we give al-

legiance to the army *instead of* to the King, then organization becomes a curse instead of a blessing. Because of this problem, organization in the New Testament was kept very simple and unassuming. There was enough organization to propel the church into all the world, united by the cords of love for God and humbleness of service to mankind. All were servants of the One who had given His life for them. All were students of the Word. All were looked upon as brethren. As Jesus said, "All ye are brethren." Matthew 23:8, KJV.

Thus, though this list does not claim to be exhaustive, there are three leading ways, all equally successful, of making the church popular and Laodicean:

Preach Jesus, but do not require perfect obedience.

Tell people to wait for Jesus to overcome their sins for them.

Lead people to worship the system. ✨

The late Marshall Grosboll was the director of Steps to Life, Wichita, Kansas, at the time this article was first published.

Note:

¹ All Scripture texts, unless otherwise noted, are from the New King James Version.

The Incredible Realities, Part 2

Ralph Larson

While we are still reeling from the shock of this revelation of wrong doing,¹ our attention is directed to the *Ministry* magazine of April, 1957.² In this issue we find an editorial announcing a “new milestone” in the history of our church. “Evangelistic brethren in Christ” (Calvinist) had accepted our position regarding the human nature of Christ, and had agreed to no longer classify us as a “cult.”

In the same issue there were two articles on the nature of Christ. Both gave great emphasis to the *mysterious* character of Christ’s incarnation. Both strongly affirmed the divinity of Christ. Both strongly affirmed the humanity of Christ. But the clear voice of Adventism in regard to Christ having taken the *fallen nature* of man is no longer heard in either, and one firmly states that:

“When the incarnate God broke into human history and became one with the race, it is our understanding that He possessed the sinlessness of the nature with which Adam was created in Eden.”³

So the *new milestone* in the history of Adventism turns out to be a direct repudiation of the clear testi-

mony of the church for a hundred years, 1852 until 1952, that Christ had come to earth in the fallen nature of man. This had been testified to by four hundred published statements by Ellen White, and eight hundred published statements by other prominent church leaders.

These leaders constituted Adventism’s *first line of leadership*. They included General Conference presidents White, Daniels, Spicer, Watson, McElhany, and Branson. They included six of the seven *Review* editors who served during those years, and five of the six *Signs* editors. They included a galaxy of general conference vice-presidents, division presidents, union presidents, conference presidents, college presidents, college Bible teachers, and pioneer missionaries. According to Donald Barnhouse, our four self-appointed representatives referred to the above persons contemptuously as a “*poorly informed minority*” of our church membership, our “*lunatic fringe*.”⁴

What in the world was happening here? A gigantic fraud was happening!

This gigantic fraud would compare favorably with some of

the great frauds of Roman Catholic history, such as the Donation of Constantine. This fraud would be used as the projectile to place the book *Questions On Doctrine* into orbit. This “*guided missile*,” with its 140,000 copies, would scatter the seeds of deception completely around the world. Those seeds have germinated, grown, and are bearing their evil fruit in the chaotic confusion in the world-wide church today.

How could it happen?

As we have seen, a small group of firmly determined men at our world headquarters were engaging in a dialogue with some Calvinist theologians. Although their names had not been officially announced until recently,⁵ we now know that the group included Dr. Leroy Edwin Froom, Elder Roy Allen Anderson, Elder W. E. Read, and Elder T. E. Unruh. Some reports include Dr. Edward Heppenstall as well. The Calvinist theologians were Dr. Walter Martin and Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse.

These theologians, we were told, had accepted as true the monstrous misrepresentation that our church,

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Be Ye Therefore Perfect

Ellen G. White

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him.” Colossians 2:6–7, 9–10.

There is opened before all Christians a path of continual advancement. They have an object to reach, a standard to gain, which includes everything good, and pure, and noble, and elevating; and they should make constant progress toward perfection of character. The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. The religion of Jesus Christ never degrades the receiver, never makes him coarse or rough, discourteous or self-important, passionate or hard-hearted. On the contrary, it refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and softens the heart. It purifies and elevates the thoughts, bringing them into captivity to Christ.

The living God has given us in His law a transcript of His character, and this law He calls upon us to obey, saying, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48. As God is perfect in His high

sphere of action, so man may be perfect in his human sphere.

The case of Daniel may be studied with profit by all who desire perfection of character. He and his companions were sincere, faithful Christians. To them the will of God was the supreme law of life. They knew that in order to glorify God all their faculties must be developed, and they sought to gain knowledge, that they might perfect a Christian character, and stand in that heathen nation as fitting representatives of the true religion. In order to preserve health, they resolved to avoid the luxuries of the king’s table, they refused to partake of any stimulating drink, but practiced strict temperance in all things, that they might not enfeeble brain or muscle. They exerted all their powers to work out their own salvation, and God worked in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. Under His training, their faculties were able to do the highest service for Him; and of them it is written: “As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.” Daniel 1:17.

When Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image was set up on the plains of Dura, Daniel’s three companions

were commanded to fall down and worship it; but their principles forbade them to pay homage to the idol, for it was a rival to the God of heaven. They knew that they owed every faculty they possessed to God, and while their hearts were full of generous sympathy toward all men, they had a lofty aspiration to prove themselves entirely loyal to their God.

These faithful witnesses were cast into the fire for refusing to obey the command of the king, but God manifested His power for the deliverance of His servants. One like unto the Son of man walked with them in the midst of the flame, and when they were brought forth, not even the smell of fire had passed upon them. “Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him.” “Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.” Daniel 3:28, 30.

Thus these three Hebrew youth, imbued with the Holy Spirit, declared to the whole nation their faith that He whom they worshiped was the only true and living God. This demonstration of their faith was the most eloquent presenta-

tion of their principles. In order to impress others with the power and greatness of the living God, His servants must reveal their own reverence for Him, making it manifest that He is the only object of their honor and worship, and that no consideration, not even the preservation of life itself, can induce them to make the least concession to idolatry.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10), and all who live in communion with their Creator, will have an understanding of His design in their creation, and a sense of their own obligation to employ their faculties to the very best purpose.

God . . . has given His Holy Spirit as a power sufficient to overcome all man's hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong.

They will seek neither to glorify nor to depreciate themselves, but they will glorify God; for the man who consents to be molded and fashioned after the divine similitude, is the noblest specimen of the work of God.

The Divine Agent

But without the divine working, man can do nothing toward the perfection of his character. God calls every man to repentance; yet man cannot even repent unless the Holy Spirit works upon his heart. A principle of divine origin must pervade his conduct, and bind him to God. But the Lord wants no man to wait until he thinks he has repented, before he turns his steps toward Jesus. The Saviour is continually drawing men to repentance; they need only to submit to be drawn, and their hearts will be melted and subdued,

fit temples for the indwelling of Christ.

The Holy Spirit comes to convince of sin, and to soften hearts hardened by estrangement from God. It comes to reveal the love wherewith God loves us, and the possibilities that open before every believing child of God. But are not some afraid of this heavenly guest? At times it comes with an all-pervading influence, but is it received? Do those to whom it comes bow before God with contrite hearts, pleading that they may be prepared to receive the blessings He is presenting to them? I entreat of all to receive this Heavenly Visitant as an abiding Guest; for It will guide you

into all truth, and give you joy and peace in the Lord.

God calls upon all men to avail themselves of the blessings He has set before them, that they may cooperate with him in carrying forward the great work of redemption. He has given His Holy Spirit as a power sufficient to overcome all man's hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong. By yielding his capabilities to the control of this Spirit, man will be impressed with God's perfect character, and will become an instrument through which He can reveal His mercy, His goodness, and His love.

The Culture of the Mind

In the attainment of a perfect Christian character, the culture of the intellect is necessary, in order that we may understand the revelation of the will of God to us. This cannot be neglected by those who

are obedient to God's commandments. In our intellectual faculties, we possess God's endowment. These faculties were not given us for the service of self, but for the service of God; and they are to be treated as a higher power, to rule the things of the body. They are derived from God, not self-created, and should be consecrated to His work.

The knowledge which will give the highest culture, is obtained from God's word. The words of revelation, carefully studied, strengthen the intellect as well as the heart. The experimental knowledge of true godliness, found in daily consecration and service for God, gives true culture of the mind, soul, and body. This consecration of our powers prevents self-exaltation; and the impartation of divine power honors our sincere striving after wisdom in order that we may know how to use our faculties to honor God and to bless our fellow men.

This is the will of God concerning every human being, even your sanctification. In urging our way heavenward, every faculty must be kept in the most perfect condition, in order that it may do the most faithful service. The powers with which God has endowed man are to be put to the test. That which God requires of those whom He has created and redeemed, is summed up in the words: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.” “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Luke 10:27; Philippians 2:12–13.

Cooperating with God

Man is allotted a part in the great struggle for everlasting life. He must respond to the working of the Holy Spirit. It will require a struggle to break through the powers of darkness, but the Spirit that works in him can and will accom-

plish this. Man is no passive instrument, to be saved in indolence. He is called upon to strain every muscle in the struggle for immortality, yet it is God that supplies the efficiency. No human being can be saved in indolence.

Christ assumed human nature, to demonstrate to the fallen world, to Satan and his synagogue, to the universe of heaven, and to the worlds unfallen, that human nature, united to His divine nature, could become entirely obedient to the law

of God, that His followers by their love and unity would give evidence that the power of redemption is sufficient to enable man to overcome. And He rejoices to think that His prayer that His followers might be sanctified through the truth, will be answered; they will be molded by the transforming influence of His grace into a character after the divine similitude. All who would possess a perfect Christian character must wear the yoke of Christ. If they would sit together in heavenly

places in Christ Jesus, they must learn of Him while on this earth. Christ says to all such: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Luke 13:24; Matthew 7:13-14. ✠

...continued from page 12

apart from a "poorly informed minority," our "lunatic fringe," had always believed and taught the same doctrines about the human nature of Christ that the Calvinists believed.

The "evidence" presented to Martin consisted of the misrepresentations and falsifications discussed in previous parts of this series, which were a methodological monstrosity and a historical fraud.

The "group" at our world headquarters had a very difficult assignment. They had to produce a *double deception*, for two different audiences. They had to prove to the Calvinists that we had *changed* our doctrines, and at the same time prove to the Adventists that we had *not changed* our doctrines. This took some "doing." How do you convince anyone that Ellen White, who had written *four hundred times* that Christ had come to earth in the fallen human nature of man, had actually intended to say exactly the opposite? Who would accept such a representation as this? *No one. Absolutely no one.* No one except a person, that is, who was a party to the conspiracy and was only role-playing in pretending to be a critic. I am referring to Dr. Walter Martin.

This is my explanation for the weird arrangements, the self-contradictions, and the outright falsifications and misrepresentations of fact that are in the announce-

ments about the book, *Questions On Doctrine*. And it also helps us understand the strange mantle of secrecy that enshrouded the entire project. For over 45 years the names of the authors of the book had not been officially revealed.

Before we go any farther, we need to look again at what Ellen White wrote on page 57 of her book, *Education*:

Leroy Edwin Froom, could put forth such a mass of mangled, misrepresented and misstated materials as this without knowing what he was doing. No Ph.D. is that dumb. This "presentation" could not have been an accident. It had to be a deliberate and intentional deception.

Fact number two: *There is no way, absolutely no way, that a trained scholar with a Doctor's degree, like Dr. Walter Martin, could accept such a*

How do you convince anyone that Ellen White, who had written four hundred times that Christ had come to earth in the fallen human nature of man, had actually intended to say exactly the opposite?

"The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall." (Emphasis supplied.)

Friends, we must unflinchingly force ourselves to face the facts.

Fact number one: *There is no way, absolutely no way, that a trained scholar with a Doctor's degree, like Dr.*

mass of mangled, misrepresented, and misstated materials as this without knowing what he was doing. No Ph.D. is that dumb. This "acceptance" could not have been an accident. It had to be a deliberate and intentional deception.

I see only one possible conclusion. I am convinced that when the great scroll is finally unrolled, and "earth and sky stand presently at God's great judgment seat,"⁶ it will be seen by all that Dr. Leroy Edwin Froom and Dr. Walter Martin, while pretending to be opponents, were in fact working in collusion with

one another, with one on one side of the bargaining table and one on the other side. Under the guidance and supervision of the great master mind of Satan, they succeeded in deceiving and doing enormous damage to the Seventh-day Adventist church.

As stated previously, I found all of this information in the Ellen White Repository in our seminary library in the Philippines. It is still there, ready for use by any person who wants to verify the shocking facts. And of course the same materials are in the archives of the White Estate in Washington, D.C.

I put all of the results of my research into a 365-page manuscript for a book, and offered it to our two publishing houses: the Review and the Pacific Press. Both rejected it. So I put a mortgage on my house and published twenty thousand copies myself.⁷ Thousands were sent to high-ranking church officers and thousands more went to loyal church members who shared my concern about conditions in the church that had been produced by the book, *Questions On Doctrine*.

By rare good fortune, or by the providence of God, a copy came into the hands of a highly qualified Seventh-day Adventist scholar named Jean Zurcher, of Switzerland. His scholarly credentials are impeccable, as are his

impressive achievements in the scholarly world. He read my book carefully, and decided that it was a good beginning, but that the subject needed more enlargement and development. He therefore addressed himself to the task of completing what I had started. The result is a new 308-page book, *Touched With Our Feelings*, published in 1999 by (are you ready for this?) the Review and Herald Publishing Association.⁸ To call this progress would be an understatement.⁹

In my research work in the Philippines I was limited to certain materials. These were primarily Ellen White's published books and magazine articles. I did not have access to all of the books and articles that were in the archives at the denominational headquarters in Washington D. C. These were all available to Dr. Zurcher, and he made good use of them. Thus he was able to add a great deal to the evidence that I had published, and to verify my findings.

Zurcher also examined the statements that were written in our European journals and found no disagreement in them. In fact, he found no sign of any disagreement among Seventh-day Adventists anywhere, regarding the human nature of Christ, before the 1950s. He uses the words "*remarkable una-*

nimity"¹⁰ to describe the testimony of our people on this subject until the 1950s.

Another item of interest that he points out is the fact that some of the most highly respected Protestant theologians of our time have taken the same position that our people took regarding the human nature of Christ. Among these theologians he lists: Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, Oscar Cullmann, and J. A. T. Robinson. Are these persons also to be seen as part of a "lunatic fringe"? ❄

Notes:

- ¹ See the previous article in this series.
- ² Louise C. Kleuser, "Adventism's New Milestone," *Ministry*, April 1957, pages 31-32.
- ³ Roy Allan Anderson, "God With Us," *Ministry*, April 1957, page 34.
- ⁴ See Donald Barnhouse, "Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians?" *Eternity*, September 1956.
- ⁵ See George Knight, ed., *Questions on Doctrine: Annotated Edition*, xiv.
- ⁶ Rudyard Kipling, "The Ballad of East and West."
- ⁷ *The Word Was Made Flesh: One Hundred Years of Seventh-day Adventist Christology 1852-1952*, Cherrystone Press, 1986.
- ⁸ Available from Hope International and from your local Adventist Book Center.
- ⁹ They did, however, include a disclaimer on the copyright page: "The views of this book are those of the author and not necessarily those of the publisher. They are presented to facilitate further exploration of this subject. The author assumes full responsibility for the accuracy of all facts and quotations as cited in this book."
- ¹⁰ Page 146.

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The Study of the Testimonies

part 4

John N. Loughborough

At the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference of 1893, John N. Loughborough, church pioneer and historian, reviewed some of the experiences which confirmed the authenticity of the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy through Ellen G. White. His sermons were transcribed and recorded in the General Conference Daily Bulletin. This article concludes the series. —Editors.

January 12, 1861, just three months to a day before the first gun was fired on Fort Sumpter, the Seventh-day Adventist meeting-house in Parkville, Michigan, was dedicated. At the close of a discourse by Elder White, Sister White gave a stirring exhortation, after which she took her seat in a chair. In this position she was taken off in vision. The house was crowded with people, and it was a most solemn place to be in. After coming out of the vision, she arose, and looking about the house she said:

"There is not a person in this house who has even dreamed of the trouble that is coming upon this land. People are making sport of the secession ordinance of South

Carolina, but I have just been shown that a large number of States are going to join that State, and there will be a most terrible war. In this vision I have seen large armies of both sides gathered on the field of battle. I heard the booming of the cannon, and saw the dead and dying on every hand. Then I saw them rushing up engaged in hand-to-hand fighting [bayoneting one another]. Then I saw the field after the battle, all covered with the dead and dying. Then I was carried to prison, and saw the suffering of those in want, who were wasting away. Then I was taken to the homes of those who had lost husbands, sons, or brothers in the war. I saw there distress and anguish."

Then looking slowly around the house she said:

"There are those in this house who will lose sons in that war."

Many of the leading journals of the North at that time, particularly Horace Greely's paper, the *New York Tribune*, made sport of the idea of there being any war, and said that "If a few old women with broomsticks should go down to South

Carolina, they could quickly quell all the rebellion there is there." But how was it? Just one year from that time I was preaching in that same house, and there sat before me in the audience two men who were present at the dedication, and who had expressed to me their disbelief in what Sister White had said. I alluded to the subject of spiritual gifts and spoke of what had been said in that house just one year before, and as I did so, both of those men buried their faces in their hands, and one of them began to sob aloud. And no wonder. Six weeks before he had buried his only son, brought home from the war a corpse, and the man beside him had lost one son in the war and had another one in a rebel prison. Brother Kinne said there were at least five persons in the house that day of the dedication who afterward lost sons in the war.

Now turn to the forty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and we will see how God works in the case of a true prophet. Verses 3–7: "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I

did them suddenly, and they came to pass. . . . I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them."

are not a revelation to take the place of the Bible, the church is edified by the light given from the Scriptures from this source. We have seen this abundantly illustrated in the lessons already given by different speakers during this institute. We have made a comparison of the gift, as manifested among this people, with that of the ancient prophets.

There is another feature to which I wish to call your attention today, which I will introduce by quoting from 2 Kings 8:8–13: "And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the Lord by him,

hundreds of cases where she has delineated the character of persons whom we knew she had never seen before, only as she had seen them in vision.

The first case I will refer to is a vision which was given to her in Tyrone, Michigan, in May, 1853, the first meeting she ever held here in this state, and which was the first time she had ever been west of Buffalo, N. Y. In this vision she had a view of all the Sabbathkeepers in the State, which comprised five or six companies, numbering in all about 150 persons. This vision she wrote out in Jackson, June 2. I had been laboring three weeks in the western part of the state, and met Brother and Sister White at Jackson that evening, and obtained a copy of the vision, which consisted of eight pages of foolscap.¹ In the vision was described a woman who made great pretensions to holiness, but who at the same time was shown to her as living in adultery with a young man with whom she was traveling. The vision stated just what the woman would say when she would reprove her, namely, "The Lord knows my heart."

In company with Brother and Sister White I held meetings in Jackson, Battle Creek, and Bedford. Next we came to Vergennes, Kent County, which proved to be the place where the said woman lived. The meetings were held in a new barn. This woman came into the meeting fifteen minutes after it commenced, from three miles in an opposite direction from which we reached the place. Her husband, and the young man with whom she was traveling, came in at the same time. Sister White, as her husband was speaking at one end of the stand, whispered to me, as I was sitting next to her on the rostrum, calling my attention to the woman and the men, and said, "That is the woman I saw in the vision." She also told me that as soon as Brother White got through speaking she would relate the vision, adding,

I could refer in the experience of Sister White to hundreds of cases where she has delineated the character of persons whom we knew she had never seen before, only as she had seen them in vision.

The Lord tells something that is going to come to pass suddenly, which the people don't know and don't expect. That was just the way it was with what Sister White was shown about the war. It is one of God's signs, that you may know when He has spoken. I thank God that the God of heaven deigns to speak to His people. Some persons may be glad they are not associated with people that have this manifestation amongst them, but from the depths of my heart I am glad that I am associated with people that have such a gift.

"For the Edifying of the Body of Christ."

Ephesians 4:12: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

From this text we see some of the features of true gifts. While they

saying, Shall I recover of this disease? So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die. And he settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do. . . . The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."

We see in this case that as he had a view of this man's countenance it brought to view what he had seen concerning him before. I could refer in the experience of Sister White to

"We then will see whether she is the one or not."

After a short discourse, Brother White gave liberty for others to speak. Sister White arose, and commenced by speaking of the deportment of persons preaching, how careful they should be to shun every appearance of evil. She said that if God called women to preach they should not travel around the country with some other man than their husband, and adding, "What I am speaking of is right here in your midst; that tall woman who just sat down near the door is traveling around through the country with this young man who is seated on the front seat, and this old gentleman who sits by her side, God pity him, is toiling at home to raise the means to support them in their iniquity." She added, "I am ashamed of my sex. For all this woman's pretensions to holiness, God has shown me that she and this young man are guilty of violating the seventh commandment."

As Sister White sat down every eye in the barn was turned toward the woman, expecting of course if she was guilty she would deny the charge, and if she was not guilty she would certainly deny it. I confess my heart was filled with anxiety to see what the woman would say, for I had in my pocket a writing written nearly three weeks before, which I knew was written more than a hundred miles from that place by a person that never had seen the woman with her natural eyes, telling just what she would say. The woman slowly arose to her feet, and in a very sanctimonious manner, said "The Lord knows my heart."! She did not utter another word, but took her seat.

"There Is No Use . . . Trying to Play Hypocrite!"

Among many other instances I might mention, I refer to a case where Sister White bore testimony in Greenville, Michigan. Coming into a room where Brother John

Byington and myself were organizing a church, she noticed that there were other persons present. She knew the name of but one of the persons in the room aside from Brother Byington and myself, never having seen them before. She said they must excuse her if she pointed them out by describing their persons. "I will first speak," she said, "of that man in the corner of the room, the one with one eye." Someone spoke his name—Pratt. "Well," says she, "I will call him Mr. Pratt. Don't ever take that man into your church unless you want trouble, for he never has been converted; he doesn't live up to his agreements; he makes promises to his neighbors that he doesn't fulfill, spends most of his time around

you knew of, and the Lord told me to say to you that He had forgiven your sins thirty-five years ago if you had only believed it." This poor old man, on whose countenance had been a look of great sadness, when this expression was made, said with a smile, "Has He?" "Yes," said Sister White, "Your sins are forgiven, come along and go with the church." The brother cried out, "I will." We had been trying for half an hour to get him to even give his name for the church, but he thought he was not worthy. Sister White said, "This man's case was presented before me in contrast with the other: he is a man that is punctual in all his obligations, deals uprightly with all his neighbors, provides well for his family, and the

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the stores and shops arguing on the truth, sitting around on the dry goods boxes, talking theology, while his wife is at home cultivating the garden, digging potatoes, or providing the man's dinner for him when he gets home, or perhaps pulling brush out of the snow to cut up for firewood. His talking the truth merely disgusts the people. They think he would better be at home engaged in some honest labor to pay his debts."

Turning to another, an old gentleman, who sat nearer to her, she said, "This aged brother,"—here some one spoke and said, "Brother Barr." "Yes," said she, "Brother Barr, your trouble has been that you could not think the Lord could be merciful enough to you to forgive your sins. You have confessed to the Lord many times all the sins

community have perfect confidence in him. He fears to say anything about the truth for fear he will mar it," adding, "Brother Barr, talk the truth to your neighbors, it will have a good effect." She then turned again to Mr. Pratt, and said, "If you could feel for about six months as Brother Barr has felt for years, as though there was no help for you, it would do you good."

Other cases were delineated in the same meeting; a man and his wife, between whom there had been some variance, were reconciled by the testimony that was brought in. At the close of the meeting this Mr. Pratt, who had been seated on the wood-box in the corner of the room, jumped down on the floor, and with great vehemence said, "I will tell you what it is, there is no kind of use in going with this people and

trying to play hypocrite: you cannot do it.”

“For the Work of the Ministry”

Another feature of our text is the expression that these gifts are for the work of the ministry. There is not a minister among our ranks, who has carefully read the Testimonies, but who must acknowledge the benefit derived in many directions in his work from what is pointed out through this gift. [The speaker held up a copy of the book, *Gospel Workers*,] Here is a volume filled with instruction of this character, not giving us a new Bible, but bringing to us the instructions of Scripture, and showing

showing that what might be called economy in New England would be considered penny-wise dealing in California, “that the people must be met with the liberal spirit they possessed, yet not in a spendthrift manner.”

We saw the result of heeding this admonition in our very first meeting. When the people were questioning how we would sell penny tracts and five-cent books when there was no change made in the country less than a ten-cent piece we were led to make calculations, and so commenced on this liberal plan, and gave them away by scores. The people shortly met us by saying, “This isn’t like the

enter upon a mission there, as I was laboring in Reno, Nevada, I received another testimony from Sister White, stating that I could not labor in the same manner as in California, calling attention to the habits of the people, and giving most valuable instructions, which I found a great aid in entering upon that mission. But, while we speak of what might be called temporal blessings from this source, we would especially emphasize those instructions through this gift that pointed the laborer to Christ as the only source of help and strength in the work.

In concluding this last of the series of lessons appointed to me on this subject, I will state that during the last six months, since receiving notice, I have prayed much over the line that I should pursue. My attention would invariably be called, even while praying, to the fourth chapter of Ephesians, and with it the impression, “Compare what is said there of the work of the true manifestation of the gifts, with what has been manifested in connection with this gift for the last forty years and over, and it will show a complete fulfillment in every particular.” So, I will say today, as my subject was to be “The Study of the Gifts,” *Study* them, their connection with this work, the manner of their manifestation, what has been accomplished by them in bringing a people to the unity of the faith, and what they are accomplishing, by the grace of God, in what is allotted for this time; and we can but acknowledge that the gift of prophecy, manifested in connection with the third angel’s message, is the work of God. ✠

Concluded.

Note:

¹ Foolscap: A sheet of printing paper approximately 13 by 16 inches in size.

There is not a minister among our ranks, who has carefully read the Testimonies, but who must acknowledge the benefit derived in many directions in his work from what is pointed out through this gift.

us how we can be more efficient laborers for God. Even taking the one point of how to care for our health, how to use our voices to preserve strength, it is invaluable. Scores, who are now sleeping in their graves might be with us today had they given heed to instruction of this character.

I humbly acknowledge benefits received from this source in entering upon new missions. As I went to California with Elder Bourdeau, via Central America, in 1868, the Lord gave Sister White instruction concerning our work, which being sent overland we received on arriving at San Francisco. This gave us instructions concerning the habits of the people, how to labor to reach them, holding it up in contrast with the New England field in which I had been laboring more or less,

preachers that have been coming across the plains to this country.” They rushed up to buy our books, and favored us in every way they could. In that one tent-meeting the people bought over three hundred dollars’ worth of books.

A lumberman, who before we commenced the meeting, refused to trust us with a dollar’s worth of lumber on the ground that he had no confidence whatever in preachers, said, “Sir, I will lend you 36,000 feet of lumber, if you want it, without any security whatever.” If Sister White had lived in that country five years, she could not have given better counsel than was given in that testimony, which was simply the result of what the Lord had shown in her in vision.

In 1878, when it was decided that I should go to Old England, and

'Til the Work Is Done

Anonymous

Nehemiah had a problem, a big problem. He was called by God to reconstruct the wall of Jerusalem and that work alone was very difficult. The walls were to be twelve feet wide and three miles around. From the ashes of the old city the workmen salvaged the useable stones and the rest of the stone had to be hewn from the nearby mountains. It was a massive amount of hard work. However, Nehemiah faced a greater challenge than the difficult physical labor. He faced opposition on every side—from within and from without.

The opposition from without came from their close neighbors, the Samaritans. The Samaritans certainly did not want to see the Israelites reestablishing themselves in the land. When it became clear that the Israelites were in earnest about rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem the leaders of the Samaritans came to see what they could do to stop the work and discourage the workmen.

“But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.” Nehemiah 2:19–20.

They first attacked Nehemiah, the leader, because Satan knows that if he can discourage the lead-

ers, he can have great influence to ruin the entire group. When Nehemiah stood firm, these surmising men brought their threats against all of the Israelites.

“But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we built the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.” Nehemiah 4:1–3.

These enemies of God mocked the people, in an effort to discourage them in their work, but again they were unsuccessful. When words failed, they turned to force and gathered their army. Together they plotted to attack the builders on the wall. Nehemiah heard of the plan and took steps to protect his people. He instructed each workman to arm himself and continue his work with a sword in one hand and a hoe or shovel in the other. Guards were also placed at intervals to protect the people. So once again the plotting of the enemies of God’s people failed.

Angered by their repeated failure to turn Nehemiah and the people from their work, Sanballat and his cohorts tried one last tactic—to blacken Nehemiah’s reputation by falsely accusing him

of treason. Nehemiah knew that if the king heard the accusations it would mean immediate death for him, and that the work he had come to do would be stopped. Jerusalem was known as a city that always rebuilt. King Artaxerxes had placed trust in Nehemiah, but if he was led to believe that the Israelites, under Nehemiah’s direction, were building up the walls of Jerusalem so that they could resist an invasion from Artaxerxes and become an independent nation, you can be sure that he would send his army very quickly to crush the rebellion.

Yet Nehemiah would not be turned aside from his work. Threats against his life and the blackening of his reputation did not cause him to give up or even to come down from the walls for a short time to parlay with the enemy. We can praise the Lord that this last tactic failed to drive Nehemiah from his work. However, Satan has and is using it successfully to overcome many.

Think of Peter and his denial of Christ. Peter was ready to fight for Christ—to do anything for Him, but when Christ was humiliated and Peter’s reputation was tarnished because he was His disciple, Peter denied Him three times.

If you choose to work for the Lord, you can be sure that you will face great opposition. There will be those who will mock and try to tear down the work you are seeking to establish by God’s grace. Sometimes they may even use force to stop the work from going forward. But be especially on guard when they seek to destroy your reputation. Many

can stand against other forms of opposition; yet they cannot endure to have their reputations trampled on by others.

Let your answer be like Nehemiah's. "And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand; Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it,

give His message to this world. He needs builders who, like Nehemiah, will not be distracted no matter what opposition they face. Builders who will not be discouraged even though they do not see all the fruits of their work. God needs men and women who will purpose in their hearts to labor until the work is done. Let us study the life of Nehemiah so that we may understand the secrets of his success.

1) Nehemiah understood the importance of his work.

"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down."

Be especially on guard when they seek to destroy your reputation. Many can stand against other forms of opposition; yet they cannot endure to have their reputations trampled on by others.

that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together. Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart. For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands." Nehemiah 6:3-9.

Nehemiah was called to build a physical wall, but each of us is called to be a builder for God. God is looking for builders who will restore the breach in His Law and

The first secret to Nehemiah's success was that he understood the importance of his work. I believe that many of us do not achieve great things for God because we do not understand the importance of the work that God has assigned to us. If you do not understand the importance of your work you will be no match for Satan. Temptations will come; distractions will come; oppositions from friends and foes will come, and if you have not decided in your heart that the work that you are doing is vitally important, you will fail.

Remember, the importance of your work is not measured by your title, your salary or how many people praise you. It is determined by God. He has a work for you to do, and if you do not fulfill it faithfully the consequences can only be measured in eternity. Consider this

solemn statement from the inspired pen, "Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 464.

The Bible tells us that if we have been blessed with the light of precious truth, we have an obligation to share it. If you withhold your light, someone will be left in darkness. Maybe God has not called you to be a minister known and heard by thousands, but if you faithfully fulfill the work of saving souls that God has given you, then someday in heaven there will be people that will line up to shake your hand, and say, "I am here today because of you."

2) Nehemiah had a sense of urgency.

Nehemiah said to his opposers, "Why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

Nehemiah sensed the urgency of the important work he was engaged in and he was unwilling to have it slowed. Today we are living in the antitypical Day of Atonement and we are commissioned to press forward untiringly. It is easy to become distracted from our work, and sometimes the things that call us away from our task are not wrong in themselves. However, if you understand the time that we are living in, slowing for these side issues or activities is wrong. We need to pray that God will help us to press forward with singleness of purpose.

The first decree to rebuild Jerusalem was given 538 B.C. After a number of years the restoration of the temple was finally completed under the leadership of Haggai the prophet. However, from the time of the completion of the temple until Nehemiah came to oversee the rebuilding of the walls 76 years passed. The men of Jerusalem might have asked Nehemiah why he was in such a rush to rebuild the walls—they had lain in ruins for 76

years. Nehemiah was determined to see the work completed quickly because he knew that if a group of people set out in earnest to rebuild the walls, opposition would soon arise and it would not be long before King Artaxerxes put a stop to it. He knew his hours of probation were short and so he pressed on, refusing to be distracted by anything that would pull him away from this important work.

Sometimes when I talk with church members they say, "You know when I was a child, I was taught that Jesus was coming back very soon and they were even preaching it when my father was a baby. How do you know we still don't have years to go? What is the rush?"

I was talking to a dear friend of mine who is about 90. I asked her, "When you were young, did you think Jesus was going to come soon?" She said, "Yes, I thought Jesus was going to come very soon. I was not sure if I would even get married. Surely, I did not dream that I would reach the year 2000." I replied, "Jesus has not come. Maybe He is not going to come for a long time." "No," she said, with a far distant look in her eyes, "He is coming soon!" She sensed the urgency.

3) Nehemiah had a love for God and a love for His people

Nehemiah chapter one describes how Nehemiah received the news of the affliction of the Israelites who were living in Jerusalem and the deplorable condition of the city. As he heard the sad news he wept and in prayer beseeched the Lord to show mercy on His people. In his prayer he took personal responsibility for the condition of the city and the people. He prayed, "I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the

prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: *both I and my father's house have sinned.*" Nehemiah 1:5-6. (Emphasis supplied.)

Nehemiah chose to unite himself with the struggling people of God and he faithfully served and encouraged them. When he could have rightfully collected taxes from the people he chose not to because of his care for them and in Nehemiah chapter five you can read of how he fed 150 of the people from his own table, at his own expense. Nehemiah truly loved the people of God.

I replied, "Jesus has not come. Maybe He is not going to come for a long time." "No," she said, with a far distant look in her eyes, "He is coming soon!"

God is looking for builders. He is looking for people that are willing to be spent and to spend themselves for His service. He is looking for builders that understand the importance of the work. Though, they might not have reputation, or title, or pay, or recognition, or popularity He is looking for builders that will be able to sense the urgency of the work that is ahead; men and women who will not be slack, not fall into mediocrity, but will know that the eternal destiny of souls is hanging in the balances, and that people will be lost if their work is not fulfilled faithfully and diligently. And last but not least, God is looking for builders that have the strongest motivation for doing good: love for God and a love for His people.

If you understand the importance of the work you might work

for six months or one year before you stop. And if you understand the urgency of the work you might press forward a little longer, but if you lack a love for God and a love for souls there will come a time when you will be overwhelmed by opposition and will give up.

I am so grateful that Jesus too was a builder. He understood the importance of His work. He had a sense of urgency and He had unmeasured love for us too. And sometimes when I behold Christ, and I see Him on the cross, I am impressed by the thought that Christ did not have to stay on the cross, He could have returned to heaven to enjoy the company of His Father and holy angels for eternity.

A teacher describing Christ's death to a class of children said, "Those evil guards, they put mean nails in Jesus' hands." A little girl in the group said, "Oh, those guards were so bad, if I had been there I would have given them a punch in the face." But the teacher told the girl, "No Susie, it is not the nails that kept Jesus on the cross; it was love—love for you and a love for His Father."

God is calling for builders. Opposition will come; trials will press us from within and without. Are you willing to labor for God? Are you willing to serve, not for six months or two years, but until the work is done? May God help us to be faithful. ✠

The young man who wrote this article is currently employed as a colporteur leader in one region of North America.

An Appeal to Ministers

Ellen G.
White



“**A**nd Enoch walked with God.” Genesis 5:22. This is the path of safety to all who profess to follow Christ, but in a special manner to those who profess to be watchmen upon the walls of Zion. I am deeply convinced that there must be greater piety among those who teach the truth of God. Those who labor for the truth in word and doctrine should closely examine themselves for the purpose of purifying and improving their character. Many study books to perfect themselves in knowledge, while they neglect to become acquainted with themselves. Christ said, in the prayer just prior to His betrayal, “I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” John 17:19. If the minister would present those for whom he labors, perfect in Christ, he must himself be perfect. This work of becoming perfect through the merits of Christ requires much meditation and earnest prayer.

I have felt grieved at hearing some ministers talk of Christ’s life and teachings in as common-place a manner as though recounting the incidents in the life of some great man of the world. When I hear this sacred subject treated in such a manner, I feel a grief that I cannot

express; for I know that although these men are teachers of the truth, they have never become acquainted with Christ and learned of Him. Had they exalted views of Jesus Christ, they would not express themselves in the common-place manner in which they do. They have not that elevation of thought which would give them a clear conception of the divine character of the world’s Redeemer. They have little faith, little godliness, and bring down the standard of holiness to a level with their own narrow comprehension. This tends to lower the appreciation of the exalted character of Christ in the minds of the people.

It is not unusual for ministers, in their discourses, to treat of Christ as though He were a man like themselves. As a rule such ones place a high estimate upon themselves and that which they accomplish. While professedly servants of Jesus Christ, they are not partakers of His divine nature; they are wrapped up in self, and do not discern sacred things.

The ministers of Christ, who bear the message of truth to men, will never become self-sufficient or self-exalted if they have correct views of the character and work of Christ, the Author of man’s salvation. The unworthiness, weak-

ness, and inefficiency of their own efforts in contrast with those of the eternal Son of God, will render them humble, distrustful of self, and will lead them to rely upon Christ for strength and efficiency in their work. Habitually dwelling upon Christ, His exalted character, and the all-sufficient merits of His sacrifice, increases the faith, sharpens the imaginative power, strengthens the longing desire to be like Him, and creates holy earnestness in prayer, that makes it efficacious.

I see that great reformation must take place in the ministry before it shall be what God would have it. Ministers in the desk have no license to behave like theatrical performers, assuming attitudes and expressions calculated for effect. They do not occupy the sacred desk as actors, but as teachers of solemn truths. There are also fanatical ministers, who, in attempting to preach Christ, storm, halloo, jump up and down, and pound the desk before them, as if this bodily exercise profited anything. Such antics lend no force to the truths uttered, but, on the contrary, disgust men and women of calm judgment and elevated views. It is the duty of men who give themselves to the ministry to leave all coarseness and

boisterous conduct outside the desk at least.

Awkward and uncouth gestures are not to be tolerated in the common walks of life, how much less, then, are they to be endured in the most sacred work of the gospel ministry. The minister should cultivate grace, courtesy, and refinement of manner. He should carry himself with a quiet dignity becoming his elevated calling. Solemnity, a certain godly authority, mingled with meekness, should characterize the demeanor of him who is a teacher of God's truth. Ministers should not make a practice of relating anecdotes in the desk; it detracts from the force and solemnity of the truth presented. The relation of anecdotes or incidents which create a laugh or a light thought in the minds of the hearers is severely censurable. The truth should be clothed in chaste and dignified language; and the illustrations should be of a like character.

Point Sinners to the Lamb of God

The minister who has learned of Christ will ever be conscious that he is a messenger of God, commissioned by Him to do a work both for time and eternity. It should not be any part of his object to call attention to himself, his learning, or his ability. But his whole aim should be to bring sinners to repentance, pointing them, both by precept and example, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Self should be hidden in Jesus. Such men will speak as those conscious of possessing power and authority from God, being a mouth-piece for him. Their discourses will have an earnestness and fervor of persuasion that will lead sinners to see their lost condition, and take refuge in Christ. Such ministers will partake of the sympathy and love flowing from Jesus, the great fountainhead, and souls will be touched by their words, prejudice will melt away, and sinners will be converted.

Were the gospel ministry what it should and might be, the teachers of Christ's truth would be working in harmony with the angels; they would be co-laborers with their great Teacher. There is too little prayer among the ministers of Christ, and too much self-exaltation. There is too little weeping between the porch and the altar, and crying, "Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach." Joel 2:17. There are too many long doctrinal sermons preached, without one spark of spiritual fervor and the love of God.

boring before God. We may see the heavens opened, and the glorified Son of God, the High Priest of our salvation, pleading for sinners.

Doctrinal discourses should be well savored with the Saviour's dying love to men. This will make the truth spoken tenfold more efficient. Let your own heart be filled with the Spirit of God and the love of Christ, and then let your hearers feel that you deeply appreciate their danger, and that you would sacrifice even life itself, if it were necessary, in order to turn their feet from the path of perdition into

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There is too much gesticulation and relation of humorous anecdotes in the pulpit, and too little said of the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.

It is not enough to preach to men; we must pray with them and for them; we must not hold ourselves coldly aloof from them, but come in sympathy close to the souls we wish to save, visit and converse with them. The minister who conducts the work outside the pulpit in a proper manner will accomplish tenfold more than he who confines his labor to the desk.

Christ is constantly interceding in Heaven for poor sinners upon earth; if ministers would be co-laborers with him they must do the work on earth which corresponds with that which their Master is doing in Heaven. Jesus has opened the gates of Heaven for us, and we may make intercessions at the throne of grace, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting, and bear the cases of those for whom we are la-

the path of life and peace. Those who forget self, and rely on God alone for success in the task of saving sinners, will have divine approval, and the fruit of their labors will tell gloriously in the harvest of souls.

Work Earnestly, Depending Upon Divine Power

Ministers should be instant in prayer; they should walk with God in spirit, as Enoch did of old. The divine light shining upon their countenance, and shown in their words, will illuminate the truths uttered by them, and the treasures of infinite mercy, and the Redeemer's boundless love, will be the theme of their hearts. The fervor and earnestness which characterized the work of Christ should also distinguish the efforts of His ministers. Their hearts should be subdued and filled with the Saviour's love, if they would break down the prejudice and melt the coldness of those who listen to their words.

Converts seldom rise at once in spirituality above the level of their teachers. How important, then, that those teachers should habitually put their trust in God, and seek for the manifestations of His divine power upon their labors; that they should be meek, spiritual-minded, and in constant communion with Heaven. Then those who are converted under their labors will partake of their spirit, and emulate their graces.

Divine power alone will reach and melt the sinner's heart, and bring him, a penitent, to Christ. Neither Luther, Melancthon,

from the altar, that they might with heartfelt expostulations, warnings and tears, seek to arouse perishing souls to a sense of their danger. It is fearful to contemplate the carnal security which is taking possession of souls. While the ministers of the truth are half asleep over their work, souls are perishing around them in darkness and error.

Ministers of Christ, with your own souls aglow with love to God, and love for your fellow-creatures, seek to arouse men from the stupor of death. Let your heart and mind be imbued with the spirit of your work. Let your entreaties and

ties. He would employ them for His honor and glory, and for the salvation of souls. You dishonor Him if you are not continually growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth.

Whatever sufferings or trials you may be called upon to bear, you should not permit a breath of murmuring to escape your lips. You should reflect that the Majesty of Heaven endured far more for your sake than it is possible for you to be required to bear. He has redeemed you by His boundless mercy, by His blood, and agonies, and death. When the Master calls you, "Go work today in My vineyard" (Matthew 21:28), let no selfish desire, no worldly ambition or projects, deter you from instant, cheerful, and unqualified obedience.

A Representative of Christ

The life of the gospel minister should be a living representation of the life of Christ. The Christianity that is manifested in the life and character, that beams out in divine loveliness from the countenance, and from every action, is a power that will attract sinners to the Saviour, and dispel the dreary shades of doubting and distrust. The corruptions existing in the ministry have made thousands of infidels. When men see the selfishness and sin of the professed teachers of Christianity, they are apt to lose confidence in Christianity itself.

God calls upon ministers who accept His truth, and bear, in His name, the most solemn message ever given to the world, to lift the standard of Bible truth, and exemplify its precepts in their daily lives. Such a course would charm into believing many who have entrenched themselves behind the breast-works of infidelity. The influence of a true Christian character is like the cheering rays of sunlight that pierce to the remotest corners of the dark places into which they are allowed to enter. The light emanating from the example of the true Christian

*Ministers of Christ,
with your own souls aglow with love to God,
and love for your fellow-creatures,
seek to arouse men from the stupor of death.*

Wesley, Whitefield, nor any other great reformer and teacher, could of himself have gained such access to hearts as to accomplish the grand results these men did. But God spoke through them. Men felt the influence of a superior power, and involuntarily yielded to it. The ministers of the truth should ever represent the life and teachings of Christ; then will they have power over the hearts of men.

I feel constrained to say that ministers are greatly deficient in their labors, and in their spiritual attainments. God is ready to bestow His grace upon them, yet they pass on from day to day, possessing a cold and nominal faith, presenting the theory of the truth, but without that vital force which comes from connection with Heaven, and which would send the Word preached home to the hearts of men. May God awaken ministers from their lukewarm state! Oh, that their lips might be touched by a live coal

earnest warnings pierce the ears of the sinner. Let your fervent prayers and expostulations melt his ice-bound heart, and cause him to go in penitence to the Saviour. There are sacred obligations resting upon you as ambassadors of Christ, preaching the message of salvation to an erring world. Few in the ministry have a proper appreciation of their weighty responsibilities. They go on indifferently with their sacred work, and it is like the blind leading the blind.

Ministers of Christ, will you awake to your obligations to God, and to your fellow-men? You are not your own; you belong to God; your Redeemer paid the price of agony and blood for your redemption, and He has just and sacred claims upon you, and demands your full co-operation with Him in the work of salvation. He has a right to all your powers, your means, and your time, and He requires your services to the fullest extent of your capabili-

minister should not be fitful and uncertain like the flash of a meteor, but it should have the calm and steady radiance of the heavenly stars.

The minister of Christ should be encircled by an atmosphere of spiritual light, because he is connected with the world of light, and walks with Christ, who is the light of the world. Arguments may be resisted; persuasion and entreaty may be scorned; the most eloquent appeals, supported by the rigor of logic, may be disregarded. But a living character of righteousness, a daily piety in all the walks of life, an anxiety for the sinner wherever found, the spirit of truth burning in the heart, beaming from the countenance, and breathing from the lips in every word, constitute a sermon which is hard to resist or to set aside, and which makes the strongholds of Satan tremble. Ministers who walk with God are clad with the panoply of Heaven, and victory attends their efforts.

Bible Students and Men of Prayer

Ministers who would labor effectively for the salvation of souls must be both Bible students, and men of prayer. It is a sin for those who attempt to teach the Word to others to be themselves neglectful

of its study. All who feel the worth of souls will flee to the stronghold of truth, where they may be furnished with wisdom, knowledge, strength, and divine power to work the works of God. They should not rest without the holy unction from on high. Too much is at stake for them to dare to be careless in regard to their spiritual advancement.

Ministers of Christ, your coldness, your lack of prayer, of fervor, and of heavenly wisdom may turn the balance with a soul, and send it to perdition. Ye messengers of the truth, ye cannot afford to be indifferent in these last days! Our feet are on the borders of the eternal world, and every probationary moment is more precious than gold.

Ministers of Christ whom God has made the depositaries of His law, you have an unpopular truth. You must bear this truth to the world. Warnings must be given men to prepare for the great day of God. You must reach those whose hearts are calloused by sin and love of the world. Continual and fervent prayer, and earnestness in well-doing, will bring you into communion with God; your mind and heart will imbibe a sense of eternal things, and the heavenly unction, which springs from connection with God, will be poured upon you. It will

render your testimony powerful to convict and convert. Your light will not be uncertain, but your path will be luminous with heavenly brightness. God is all-powerful, and Heaven is full of light. You have only to use the means God has placed in your power to obtain the divine blessing.

Be instant in prayer. You are a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. You occupy a fearfully responsible position. I entreat you to redeem the time. Come very near to God in supplication, and you will be like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf is always green, and whose fruit appears in due season.

Ministers of Christ, you need divine power, which God is willing to give without stint, when the draft is made upon Him. Only go to God, and take Him at His Word, and let your works be sustained by living faith in His promises. God does not require from you eloquent prayers and logical reasoning; but only a humble, contrite heart, ready and willing to learn of Him. The praying minister, who has living faith, will have corresponding works, and great results will attend his labors, despite the combined obstacles of earth and hell. ✠

Review and Herald, August 8, 1878.

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The great enemy of souls is seeking to deceive mankind regarding God's character of love and His immutable law. *The Passion of Love* and *Final Conflict* reveal what the issues were at Calvary and also what the issues will be in the crisis ahead.

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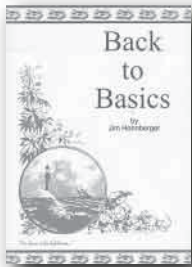
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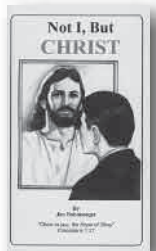


Selected Publications

available from the

Hope International Bookstore

The following items represent a much larger selection available from Hope International. If you would like a free 2004 catalog, please give us a call or drop us a line, and we will be happy to send you one. *You will be pleased to see that prices have been slashed on most items!* You may also browse online at www.hopeint.org. Please see page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.



Family Publications

Hohnberger, Jim

Back to Basics

Are we really "living Christians," or are we merely professed Christians? Why are so many Christian marriages and families falling apart today? How do I slow down and redeem my time? These questions and many more are answered in this series on practical Christianity.

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See how biblical principles can turn personal differences into a balanced unity rather than opposition. Learn to love others without an "if," rectifying imbalance and intolerance in personal relationships.

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Making of a Man, The

Break through the false image of manhood portrayed by today's society, and discover what God wants you to be. Find out how to prioritize a chaotic life and find time for God, your marriage, and your family.

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Mastering the Basics

If you can't add and subtract, you can't multiply and divide. Likewise, until you have mastered the basics of the Christian walk, you can't grow in the stature of men and women in Christ.

Set, 6 Audio Cassettes per Set, Regular price: ~~\$24.00~~
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Not I, But Christ

Learn to go from full reliance on self to a life hid with Christ in God.

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Hohnberger, Jim / Hohnberger, Sally

Christ All and in All

We need to learn how to make Christ all-in-all in our daily lives. These tapes give simple principles that, if applied, will help us make Christ the focus—the Center—of our lives—our all-in-all.

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AEHJ-CAIA \$17.99

Hohnberger, Jim / Hohnberger, Sally / Waters, Tom / Waters, Alane

Why Country Living?

These tapes contain sound biblical counsel on the importance of country living. Find out what the country lifestyle can do for you—and how to live it where you are, before you even move.

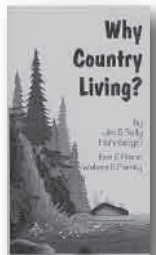
Set, 6 Audio Cassettes per Set, Regular price: ~~\$24.00~~
AEHJ-WCLI \$17.99

Hohnberger, Sally

Indulgent Parent Delivered!, The

Are you frustrated with raising your children? Learn how you can be delivered from the tendency to indulge your children, and learn how to be a godly parent.

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AEHS-IPDE \$17.99





Parenting Infants to Teens

Learn how to be a godly parent – no matter what age your children are. Learn how to submit to God, in order to show your children how to submit to you.

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AEHS-PITT \$17.99



Cultivating Christian Character in Children

In this series Alane Waters presents the important role of the parent as the gardener of the heart. Then she discusses 18 different character qualities, showing some of the common pitfalls, as well as how to practically plant and cultivate the right seeds of character.

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AEWA-CCCI \$17.99



Gospel Applied in Parenting, The

Have you been following man's philosophies or God's principles in parenting? Alane Waters shares with you how the gospel can be practically applied in raising children.

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AEWA-GAIP \$17.99



Practical Helps for Parents

Parents everywhere are in desperate need of help and encouragement in the challenge of raising children. This series will help us as parents avoid the common pitfalls in parenting and show us practical ways to guide and direct our children to Christ.

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AEWA-WHCA \$17.99



Waters, Tom

In Times Like These

We have a Saviour who loves us and is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him in living faith. Find out how real surrender brings real power to obey, and creates joy in obedience!

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The principles in these six tapes will lead you to higher ground in your Christian walk. These messages will challenge you to take your Christian walk seriously.

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Talks With Youth

Discover the practical application of God's Word to the challenges that young people face every day. Sample topics include: "Taming the Tongue," "Let's Talk About Courtship," and "Companionship with Christ."

Set, 6 Audio Cassettes per Set, Regular price: \$24.00

AEWT-TWYO \$17.99

Waters, Tom / Waters, Alane

Marriage: Heart to Heart

In this series Tom and Alane Waters discuss and illustrate how Christ, working in the individual life, will move us from the "me" focus of selfishness to the blessing of the "us" in our daily interactions of marriage. Begin now to cooperate with Christ to implement His principles in your home today!

Set, 6 Audio Cassettes per Set, Regular price: \$24.00

AEWT-MHTH \$17.99

Waters, Tom / Waters, Alane / Waters, Allison / Waters, Emily / Waters, Josiah

Work That Lies Nearest, The

While trying to do something great for God, do not forget the work that lies nearest.

Set, 6 Audio Cassettes per Set, Regular price: \$24.00

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Video

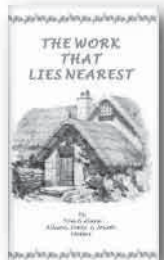
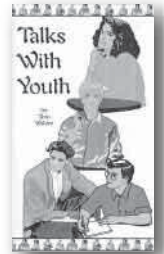
Restoration International

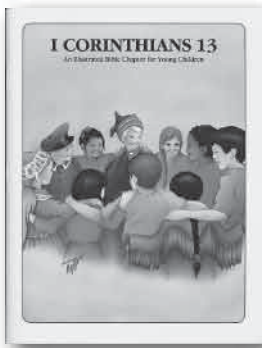
Family Campmeeting 2002 Video Set

Inspiring, family-oriented messages on practical Christianity from Restoration International's Family Campmeeting 2002 at Loon Lake, WA.

Set, 7 Video Cassettes per Set, 2 Hours per Video, VHS NTSC Format, Regular price: \$95.00

VERI-FC2V \$34.95





Audio

Thy Word Creations

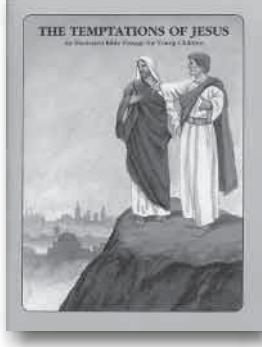
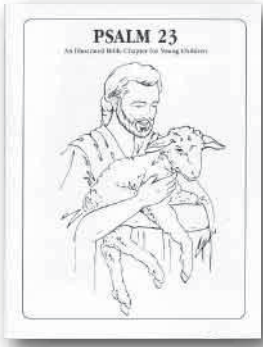
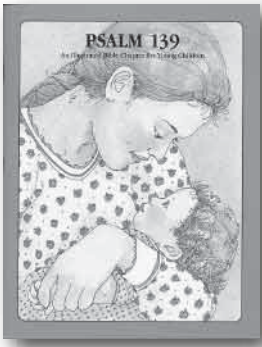
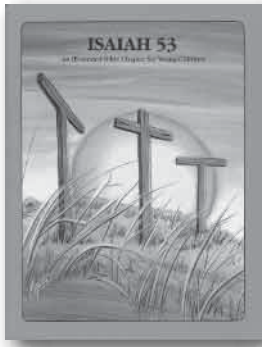
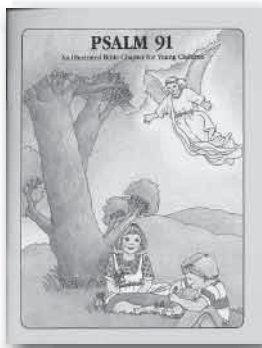
Would you like to help your children fix God's Word in their minds? One of the best methods to memorize Scripture is by putting it to song.

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Thank you for the gift subscription. This is truly a magazine we all need in these last days. We really are sacrificing to order a subscription, as we are totally dependent on Social Security and have had a lot of medical expenses. We are sending three names for trial subscriptions and thank you for them.

DH, U.S.A.

I am incarcerated at the — County jail. I was reading your book *Final Conflict Between Truth and Error*. I have been doing Bible studies, and when I get one done I find someone else. By the grace of God I have been able to continue these for a year now. I would really appreciate if you would send me yours.

BC, Indiana

Thank you for the copies of *Our Firm Foundation*. What a true blessing and food for the soul. Keep up the good work. Enclosed is a check for my subscription. I read it from cover to cover and can't wait for the next copy.

JC, Maryland

God bless you in the great work that is being done. Our Lord is coming soon, and we all need to keep each other in our prayers and to keep looking to our God.

FS, Oregon

In your July-Aug 2001 newsletter you asked what we, the reader, would like for you to address, improve, add, or delete, in *Our Firm Foundation*? The other night I awoke from my sleep thinking about what you were asking. I asked the Holy Spirit for guidance in this matter. I believe He gave me the answers I was looking for.

The main reason I have supported Hope International with my money and prayers is because of the March '91 and May '95 issues, as I have stated before. Being out of the main stream of the Seventh-day Adventist church I am sorry to say I knew nothing about the Alpha and Omega of Apostasy and how the omega of apostasy has permeated every level of our church. These issues and the September 2000 issues opened my eyes to what the hierarchy of our church has allowed to happen. The saddest part is that some members of the hierarchy have been the ringleaders.

The Holy Spirit began to give me an understanding of how Hope International is playing a part in the closing scenes of earth's history, spiritually speaking. I think what I was shown was that Hope International's ministry parallels with that of Elijah and John the Baptist as well as Noah, Jonah, the disciples, and Christ Himself. All of these ministries have one thing in common—they were called of God by the Holy Spirit to awaken the church to their terrible apostasy at an epoch time in the church's history.

We know when we are willing to stand tall for our Lord, to fight iniquity wherever it abounds we are going to be ridiculed, slandered, laughed at, persecuted and possibly slain. But we know that if we are going to be part of the Remnant, the 144,000, we have to stand in the trenches, totally united as a body of believers. Believing that our Lord will sustain us with His mighty power. We will have our "upper-room" experience and finally receive the out-pouring of the "latter rain."

I believe that Hope International and its voice, *Our Firm Foundation* is the voice of "one crying in the wilderness," make the paths straight.

I see in Hope International a body of "grass root" believers, as myself, wanting to see our church united in Christ, with the power of the Holy Spirit ready as a body of believers having the characters of Jesus to make the final cry of the Three Angels' Message.

In Mrs. White's letter to Elder Baker while he was in Australia, one of the things she addressed was his lack of zeal and courage. She admonished him to stand up and be strong, vibrant, and an unyielding man for God's work.

The reason for writing this letters is to let you know how I feel about the last few issues. Even though the articles are well written and informative, I feel they have lost their strength. They seem "watered down," as though you are afraid of what people in the church may be thinking and saying.

My hope is that you at Hope International will re-read some of your past articles to see if there is some merit to what I am saying. As always, may God continue to bless your ministry.

LB, Florida

I cannot begin to tell you how much I am enjoying the two magazines you have sent me on a trial basis. I am looking forward to the next one! I am definitely going to subscribe to it. I am learning so much from them.

BM, Alabama

The pragmatic equation of the nations has blindly foreseen a peaceful future; I haven't seen it. Because it is an illusion. How sad! As you say, "What we have to do, must be done quickly."

Please accept this small remittance to the gospel commission. I will do my best.

PW, Montana

End-Time Delusions

by Steve Wohlberg

"Since Sept. 11" many "have begun to ask questions about what the Bible has to say about the end of the world." *Time*, July 1, 2002, 42. What does it say?

Twentieth-first century bestselling prophecy books and Christian-produced apocalyptic movies claim to provide insights into future events. By far the most popular Christian explanation of Earth's last days is the *New York Times* bestselling *Left Behind* series. With sales topping 1 billion, *Left Behind* declares:

- 1) All true Christians will vanish in the Rapture,
- 2) Those left behind will endure seven cataclysmic years of tribulation,
- 3) A Mr. Diabolical—an evil Antichrist—will rise to make war against the Jews,
- 4) Jesus Christ will return visibly at the end of seven years to conquer Antichrist and deliver Israel.

Such teaching is believed by millions, being taught on radio, TV, in seminaries, and at prophecy conferences.

Turning away from fiction, films, and novels to the Bible, we discover that Jesus Christ injects into the midst of end-time issues this sober warning: "Take heed that no one deceives you" (Matthew 24:4). Could His words apply to *Left Behind* theology? When compared with solid biblical facts, *has truth been left behind as well?*

Forcefully, yet respectfully, this book proves that the teachings of the secret rapture, seven-year tribulation, future one-man Antichrist, focus on literal Israel—all are *End Time Delusions*.

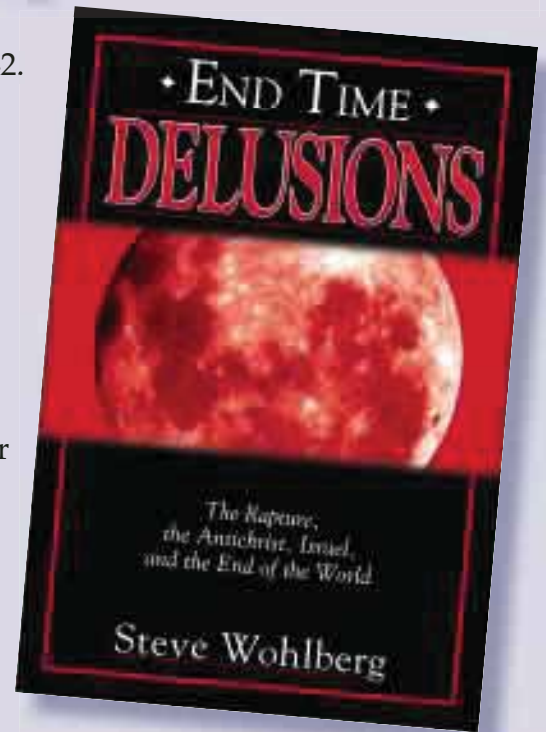
With careful biblical accuracy, irrefutable New Testament evidence, and a solid grasp of Church history, this well-researched volume traces the development of pre-tribulation rapture theology back to British theologian John Nelson Darby in the 1830's and proves believers will be "caught up" (1 Thessalonians 4:17) at the highly visible second coming. The book also contains indepth study guides on the tribulation, antichrist, and Israel in prophecy.

Now is the time to put away the novels and other sensational reading and study your Bible, prepare to "endure to the end" (Matthew 24:13), and look forward to the non-fictitious, visible return of Jesus Christ as the "blessed hope" of the Church (Titus 2:13).

End Time Delusions. Clear. Concise. Responsible. Accurate. Powerful—Irrefutable.

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