

Our Firm Foundation



Lessons From the Titanic

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

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Out of Time!

“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2.

In my extensive travel in the United States and Canada, in preaching God’s true gospel, the question is often asked me, How much time do we have left? Where do we now stand in the prophetic picture of Revelation chapter 13? My answer has always been, We are out of time. According the Lord’s messenger, Ellen White, we should have been in the kingdom before the turn of the twentieth century (see *Selected Messages*, book 1, 68; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 450), but we have delayed Christ’s return by our retreat to Egypt—our insubordination to God’s orders and our rejection of His gospel of victory over every sin and the development of Christ’s character (see *Evangelism*, 190, 196, 696).

The complete fulfillment of Revelation chapter 13 is now before the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The first beast is the papacy. The pope has been identified as the antichrist of Bible prophecy by our church pioneers as well as by Luther, Zwingli, Huss and Jerome, John Knox, the Wesleys and many more.

As we see the near complete healing of the deadly wound of Revelation 13:1–3, the second beast (which we have identified as the United States of America) now stands as the only super power in the world. The other nations hate us but are afraid of us. They need our

money and bow to our great power. The United States now has the ability to enforce the image to the first beast—the papacy.

The Catholic statement that “It would be a sin to vote Kerry”; the statement by one United States Senator a few years ago that President Bush was “the first Catholic president”; the president’s statement at his dedication speech for the Catholic center in Washington D.C.; Bush’s reelection; the Patriot Act—all these signs and much more indicate that the confederate powers of evil are now in place to make the Sunday laws. The enforcement by law and Satan’s impersonation of Christ will come suddenly, unexpectedly.

God’s holy Seventh-day Sabbath will become the focal point in all Christendom. Every Seventh-day Adventist leader, pastor, and laymen will be tested on true Sabbathkeeping according to Isaiah 58:13–14.

“Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. We need the same spirit that was manifested by God’s servants in the conflict with pagan-

ism.” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 976. See also *The Great Controversy*, 615.

Dear church members, leaders, and pastors, we are in deep apostasy, and we are warned that only a very small remnant will survive God’s final shaking, sifting, and purging.

“Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.” Isaiah 1:9.

“For many are called, but few are chosen.” Matthew 22:14.

“Now is the time for God’s people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 136. See also *ibid.*, vol. 2, 439–441; *ibid.*, vol. 5, 75–82.

God help us now to prepare our characters for heaven, for we are out of time!



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



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

Executive Editor: Ron Spear
Executive Director: Joe Olson
Managing Editor: Harvey Steck
Bookstore Manager: Terry Crisp
Layout: KHPtech.com

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Hope International
P.O. Box 220
Knoxville, IL 61448 USA

Phone: (309) 343-1844
Monday–Thursday: 8:00AM–5:00PM
Friday: 8:00AM–12:00PM
Fax: (309) 343-3721
Email: office@hopeint.org
Web: <http://www.hopeint.org>

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Lessons From the Titanic

Part 1

A n o n y m o u s

“**T**he thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 1:9. These words of Solomon bear a lesson that we need to have drilled into our hearts and heads. Our great new thoughts are never new. Many others have thought them before us. And the great new errors that have come upon us are old errors, dealt with time and time and time again.

We need to learn from history. We need to learn not to repeat the old mistakes over and over again because they are new to us. We need to find out what some of those things are so we do not have to go through them again. It is a sad truth, that those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat its mistakes. There is no way that we are going to avoid it, unless we learn the lessons of history and what God is attempting to tell us: “We have nothing to fear for the future, **except** as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” *Life Sketches*, 196. (All emphasis supplied.)

Vision of an Iceberg

Let us consider a vision given to Ellen White that may be very familiar to you. It is recorded in *Selected Messages*, book 1, 205–206:

“Shortly before I sent out the testimonies regarding the efforts of the enemy to undermine the foundation of our faith through the dissemination of seductive theories, I had read an incident about a ship in a fog meeting an iceberg. For several nights I slept but little. I seemed to be bowed down as a cart beneath sheaves. One night a scene was clearly presented before me. A vessel was upon the waters, in a heavy fog. Suddenly the lookout cried, ‘Iceberg just ahead!’ There, towering high above the ship, was a gigantic iceberg. An authoritative voice cried out, ‘Meet it!’ There was not a moment’s hesitation. It was a time for instant action. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. . . .

“Well I knew the meaning of this representation. I had my orders. I

had heard the words, like a voice from our Captain, ‘Meet it!’ . . .

“For the next few days I worked early and late, preparing for our people the instruction given me regarding the errors that were coming in among us.”

Notice the urgency of the situation here. Errors were coming into the church.

Why did errors coming into the church back then alarm Ellen White and our leaders so much? Do they alarm our leaders as much today? If you remind our church leaders about errors in the church today, they are likely to smile and tell you, “Don’t worry about it; Christ has pledged Himself to protect His church. He will see it through.” They may even boast of this wonderful age of diversity that we have, where all the varying opinions and confusion are actually an asset to the church. “They help us. They make us stronger.”

Why is there such disparity here between what Ellen White feared and what we do not fear today? Why should errors coming into the church bother Ellen White and others of that day? All they needed was a relationship with Jesus—isn’t that

what we are told? Why didn't our forefathers realize that they didn't have to worry about these errors in the church, that God was in charge of the ship, and He would see it through?

Soon after Sister White received this vision, two very massive structures were being built. One of those vessels was called the *Olympic* and the other the *Titanic*. We will read a few selections about the *Titanic* from a very noteworthy book by Wyn Craig Wade entitled *The Titanic: End of a Dream*.¹

"For months and months in that monstrous iron enclosure, there was nothing that had the faintest likeness to a ship; only something that might have been the iron scaffolding for the naves of half-a-dozen cathedrals laid end to end. . . . At last, the skeleton within the scaffolding began to take shape, at the sight of which men held their breaths. It was the shape of a ship, a ship so monstrous and unthinkable that it towered there over the buildings and dwarfed the very mountains by the water. . . . A rudder as big as a giant elm tree, bosses and bearings of propellers the size of windmills—everything was on a nightmare scale; and underneath the iron foundations of the cathedral floor men were laying, on concrete beds, pavements of oak and great cradles of timber and iron and sliding ways of pitch pine to support the bulk of the monster when she was moved, every square inch of the pavement surface bearing a weight of more than two tons. Twenty tons of tallow were spread upon the ways, and hydraulic rams and triggers built and fixed against the bulk of the ship so that, when the moment came, the waters she was to conquer should thrust her finally from earth.'

"In front of the immense steel scaffolding, a small black sign with simple white lettering announced: White Star Royal Male Steamer 'Titanic.'" Pages 9–10.

There are other fascinating things in this book, as we shall see. What might we find if we were to examine the aspects surrounding the adventure of this mighty ship alongside what has been and is going on within our beloved Seventh-day Adventist Church today? Would there be some kind of parallel message here for you and for me to understand?

Bigger Is Better

The first thing about the *Titanic* that we will look at is its size. Isn't it amazing that human beings think that it has to be bigger and grander if it is better! If something is good, something bigger is always better. Do we in our church have the same disease today?

This same concern was registered against the builders of that ocean going vessel, at the time it was being built. When most of the world was praising the grandeur of this new effort in shipbuilding, the book that I referred to points out that "there were a few detractors. The editors of the *Economist* growled at shipbuilders attempting to 'lick creation.' Their objections were entirely pragmatic: These 'monster ships' would 'involve too great a concentration of life and wealth in a single bottom;' moreover, the size of the ships surpassed existing underwriters' ability to insure them.

"Seaman and novelist Joseph Conrad would become the most eloquent opponent of the 'big-ship

*Why should errors coming into the church
bother Ellen White and others of that day?
All they needed is a relationship with Jesus—
isn't that what we are told?*

Disturbing things around that time were also happening in Battle Creek. For one thing, against Ellen White's repeated urging, the city had become a large and increasingly unmanageable Adventist colony. For years, Sister White had warned against the danger of concentrating too much effort, time, energy, and means in one place. Yet in 1900 Adventist institutions dominated the city. After the Battle Creek Sanitarium burned to the ground in 1902, Ellen White asked this question, "A solemn responsibility rests upon those who have had charge of the Battle Creek Sanitarium. Will they build up in Battle Creek a mammoth institution, or will they carry out the purpose of God by making plants in many places?" *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 6, 9.

movement.' Increase in the size of ships, said Conrad, was not progress: 'If it were, elephantiasis, which causes a man's legs to become as large as tree trunks, would be a sort of progress, whereas it is nothing but a disease, and a very ugly disease at that.'" *The Titanic*, 14–15.

Have we had a hard time learning the lesson of the fires of Battle Creek? We still love large institutions, don't we, as they go up into the sky! Why were the twin towers in New York built bigger, taller, and better than other skyscrapers around them? Do we have the same disease? After all, the bigger and the more grand an institution, the more it gives us a sense of importance. "Look at this, this is big; this is important. You cannot just toss it off lightly. We are worth something. Seventh-

day Adventism is not just a cult. It is not something to be sneezed at. Look at this institution. We can compete with other churches. We can stand on a level with other groups calling themselves Christians. We are mainstream. We are not off in a corner somewhere.”



Photo: Corel Professional Photos

Unsinkable

“Advertisements assured that ‘any two main compartments may

Fueling the Ship

“The famous 1912 coal strike was on. . . . And a number of North Atlantic vessels were short of fuel. The *Titanic* needed 650 tons of coal per day to feed her 159 hungry furnaces.” Ibid., 21.

Here we see that the *Titanic* needed some fuel to make her eventful journeys. Does our church also need fuel to make a very special journey?

What did the makers of the *Titanic* state was their primary reason for bringing this great ship into existence? It was to move people from one point to another, quickly and safely. What is the premiere purpose of God’s church? Is it not also to move people from one place (earth) to another place (heaven) safely? The *Titanic* required fuel to

Line in charge of the *Titanic* had to take fuel from the holds of other competing ships and transfer it to the *Titanic*.

Now the trip that our church is scheduled to take also requires some fuel, doesn’t it? The question which has caused us so much controversy at late is, Where are we going to get this fuel? And what kind of fuel is necessary for us to make the trip from earth to heaven?

We all agree, I think, that it is the Holy Spirit that empowers and provides the fuel for this journey. And yet, there is a drive right now within our church to bring in a “holy spirit” which has been generated in the churches of Babylon—the very establishment which the true Holy Spirit has condemned in the Word of God.

The other churches have taught us how to sing; how to pray; how to praise; how to have worship; and even how to celebrate. People are coming into the membership of our church with incorrect ideas about our ship. They are bringing their former ideas from their ships into our ship. They tell us that we must enter into a new worship style. And the importance behind this, we see, is to build a bridge between us and the other churches so we can communicate with them.

Dwight Nelson said very recently, “Why worship the Redeemer with the methods of the enslaver?” Yet we ask experts from other churches to train us in church growth, in evangelism, in church planting, in soul winning. We ask experts from other groups how we should counsel our members when they are in difficulties of one kind or another. We ask these experts to help us to understand how to preach effectively and how to worship. Is there a parallel? ❀

To be continued. . . .

*The question which has caused us
so much controversy at late is,
Where are we going to get this fuel?
And what kind of fuel is necessary for us to
make the trip from earth to heaven?*

be flooded without in any way involving the safety of the ship.’ . . . So ingenious was the entire system that *The Shipbuilder* pronounced the vessel ‘practically unsinkable,’ a phrase which, in less than two weeks, would become a haunting epitaph.” Ibid., 18.

Lo and behold, we of the Seventh-day Adventist Church have a tremendous problem also of considering the ship unsinkable no matter what. Our men smile and tell us not to worry about all the heresy coming in because Christ will guide this ship safely into port—guaranteed—even if we do not do a single thing. Christ has told us He will protect it.

make this journey, Does our church require fuel for this journey? The question therefore is, What did the *Titanic* do about its evident shortage of fuel?

“Consequently, the White Star Line canceled the trips of its *Oceanic*, and *Adriatic*, likewise scheduled for New York, and transferred the passengers as well as coal to the *Titanic*. White Star also bought coal from the holds of other ships—the small liner *New York*, for one. Other vessels such as the *Philadelphia*, canceled scheduled departures, transferring many of their passengers also to the *Titanic*.” Ibid.

So, you see here, in order to solve the problem of a lack of fuel, the administrators of the White Star

Notes:

¹ Rawson, Wade Publishers, Inc., New York, 1979.

Christ Our Example, Part 2

Ellen G. White

By His heavenly gifts the Lord has made ample provision for His people. An earthly parent cannot give his child a sanctified character. He cannot transfer his character to his child. God alone can transform us. Christ breathed on His disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John 20:22. This is the great gift of heaven. Christ imparted to them through the Spirit His own sanctification. He imbued them with His power, that they might win souls to the gospel. Henceforth Christ would live through their faculties, and speak through their words. They were privileged to know that hereafter He and they were to be one. They must cherish His principles and be controlled by His Spirit. They were no longer to follow their own way, to speak their own words. The words they spoke were to proceed from a sanctified heart, and fall from sanctified lips. No longer were they to live their own selfish life; Christ was to live in them and speak through them. He would give to them the glory that He had with the Father, that He and they might be one in God.

The Lord Jesus is our great High Priest, our Advocate in the courts of heaven. The solemn position in

which we stand to Him as worshipers, is not appreciated. For our present and eternal good we need to understand this relation. If we are His children we are bound together in the bonds of Christian brotherhood, loving one another as He has loved us, united in the sacred relation of those washed in the blood of the Lamb. Bound up with Christ in God, we are to love as brethren.

Thank God that we have a great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. Christ has not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. By virtue of His own blood He entered in once for all into the holy place above, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Now is the time for us to make sure work for eternity. Christ is pleading in our behalf. Shall we offer ourselves as a free, acceptable sacrifice? Shall we cover up our sins, or shall we confess them, that we may find mercy and grace to help in every time of need? While Christ is pleading in our behalf, shall we not put away and loathe the sins that caused the Son of God such great suffering and death?

While Jesus is showing compassion for us, shall we not have compassion for ourselves? Shall we not pour out our souls in repentance and contrition, and receive the promise of a new heart? God says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12.

If you are violating the law in the least, you stand under the wrath of an offended God. You may have the mercy of God. If you plead for it, you will obtain it. Cast yourself just as you are upon His mercy and compassion. Lay hold of Him by faith. Put away all selfishness, all covetousness. By faith in the blood of Jesus cleanse your soul from moral defilement. Full and free salvation is offered to every one who will fall on the Rock and be broken. There are many who are saying, Lord, Lord, but they trust to their own self-righteousness. Every day they are practicing sin. They are no honor to God; for wherever they go they are like evil leaven.

Why do you not cease from sin? You may overcome if you will cooperate with God. Christ's promise is sure. He pledges Himself to fill the office of personal Intercessor, saying, "I will pray the Father."

John 14:16. He who could not see human beings exposed to destruction without pouring out His soul unto death to save them from eternal ruin, will look with pity and compassion upon every soul who realizes that he cannot save himself. He will see no trembling suppliant without raising him up. He who through His own atonement provided for them an infinite fund of moral power, will not fail to employ this power in their behalf. He will impute to them His own righteousness.

Christ accepts the surrender of the soul. He has pledged Himself to be our Substitute and Surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience.

influence. Let us then increase in wisdom and knowledge by praying much, being instant in prayer at all times, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. The name of Jesus must be in our hearts and fall from our lips. The eye of faith must behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. See John 1:29.

According to justice and retribution God might have placed in the hands of His angelic ministers the vials of His wrath, to be poured out upon a rebellious world, to punish the inhabitants for their treatment of the Prince of heaven. But he did not do this. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John

God and the character of a perfect man. He shows us what God is, and what man may become—godlike in character.

Christ is our example. He placed Himself at the head of the human family to accomplish a work the importance of which men do not comprehend because they do not realize the privileges and possibilities before them as members of the human family of God. We may understand the subject of the work of Christ. His object was to reconcile the prerogatives of justice and mercy, and let each stand separate in its dignity, yet united. His mercy was not weakness, but a terrible power to punish sin because it is sin; yet a power to draw to it the love of humanity. Through Christ Justice is enabled to forgive without sacrificing one jot of its exalted holiness.

Justice and Mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed His divinity with humanity, and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted His cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both Justice and Mercy across the gulf. Justice moved from its exalted throne, and with all the armies of heaven approached the cross. There it saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustice and sin. With perfect satisfaction Justice bowed in reverence at the cross, saying, It is enough.

By the offering made in our behalf we are placed on vantage-ground. The sinner, drawn by the power of Christ from the confederacy of sin, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it. Then there is a new creature in Christ Jesus. The sinner is cleansed and purified. A new heart is given to him. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require.

The work of redemption involved consequences of which it

*Christ . . . has given to the world
a representation of the character of God
and the character of a perfect man.*

*He shows us what God is, and
what man may become—godlike in character.*

How is it that such an infinite treasure is not appreciated? In heaven the merits of Christ, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured up as incense, to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears His Son. Pray then; pray without ceasing; an answer is sure to come. But let me speak in warning. If any man regard iniquity in his heart, the Lord will not hear him. See Psalm 66:18.

It is our privilege to avail ourselves of Christ's mediatorial

4:10. Isaiah tells us who and what our Redeemer is: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. Christ had two natures, the nature of a man and the nature of God. In Him divinity and humanity were combined. Upon His mediatorial work hangs the hope of the perishing world. No one but Christ has ever succeeded in living a perfect life, in living a pure, spotless character. He exhibited a perfect humanity, combined with deity; and by preserving each nature distinct, He has given to the world a representation of the character of

is difficult for man to have any conception. There was to be imparted to the human being striving for conformity to the divine image an outlay of heaven's treasures, an excellency of power, which would place him higher than the angels who had not fallen. The battle has been fought, the victory won. The controversy between sin and righteousness exalted the Lord of heaven, and established before the saved human family, before the unfallen worlds, before all the host of evil workers, from the greatest to the least, God's holiness, mercy, goodness, and wisdom. Christ's sacrifice exalted the law, proving that it was from the beginning, and

would be through all eternity, from everlasting to everlasting.

Satan, the first apostate, looked upon the fruit of his apostasy in the vast army under his banner, and his mind was made to comprehend the meaning of warfare against God and His Son. He saw how many he had by his subtlety led away from God, from happiness and holiness.

The truth of his position and his efforts to overthrow God and assume his place, when he took with him vast numbers of angels who might have been a happy family in heaven, flashed over him. Never had the arch-deceiver such an appreciation of God and his throne, his holiness, his justice, his goodness, his

amazing love, as when Christ hung on the cross. Mercy and Truth had met together; Righteousness and Peace had embraced each other. ❀

Concluded.

*The General Conference Bulletin,
October 1, 1899.*



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

Remember

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,”

Is what the Good Book says.
“Six days shalt thou labor,” means
The rest are working days.

When God made man and woman
In their paradise home,
It was a memorial of creation,
Wherever they should roam.

He also told us to remember
The Good Lord's leading in the
past,
So through the thick and thin of life
Our faith in Him will last.

Do remember the words of Jesus,
In His Word we are also told,
For they're indeed more precious
Than silver or fine gold.

Remember now thy Creator
In the days when you are young,
So you will know the joy of living
A life that's always just begun.

With all this counsel about remembering,
It must be quite important
To help us keep the proper focus
In our thinking and deportment.

So praise the Lord in all you do,
Every day through all your years;
It's a healing balm for sadness
And will drive away all fears.

—Vernon Shafer,
July 2004

A Natural Impossibility, Part 1

Harvey Steck

Among the many prophecies of the Messiah, we have this one recorded in the Psalms: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*" Psalm 40:6–8; see also Hebrews 10:5–7. All emphasis supplied.

It was Jesus' highest delight to obey His heavenly Father. He said, "I do always those things that please him." John 8:29.

The apostles repeatedly exhorted us to follow Jesus' example in all things: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." 1 Peter 2:21. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:6.

Is it possible for the natural, unconverted man to heed this command—to follow Christ's example in delighting to do God's will and please Him?

"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can

be. So then *they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*" Romans 8:7–8.

No, it is **a natural impossibility** for the natural man to live a life of obedience. There is only one solution to this dilemma:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:1–2.

When we walk "after the Spirit," the Holy Spirit transforms our mind from being "carnally minded" to being "spiritually minded." It is in this experience that we are able to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5.

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Colossians 3:2.¹

Have you contemplated what it means to have the mind of Christ?

Our Example

Because our minds are so clouded by generations of sin, Christ took upon Himself our sinful flesh that He might give us a living example of what we can be as we "walk in the Spirit":

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,* and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:3–4.

"It was in the order of God that Christ should take upon Himself *the form and nature of fallen man,* that

He might be made perfect through suffering, and Himself endure the strength of Satan's fierce temptations, that He might understand how to succor those who should be tempted." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, 39.

"Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet *He took upon Him our sinful nature.*" *Review and Herald*, December 15, 1896.

These statements are representative of hundreds of others by Sister White that teach us that Christ accepted our fallen humanity.

The Two Natures

In order to better understand what Christ accepted at His incarnation, it is essential that we realize that we are created with *two natures*—the lower nature, and the higher nature.

The lower nature is also referred to as the body, the flesh, humanity, or the animal nature; while the higher nature is referred to by terms such as the heart, the mind, the higher powers, the character, and so on.

"The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it. The words 'flesh' or 'fleshly' or 'carnal lusts' embrace *the lower, corrupt nature*; the flesh of itself cannot act contrary to the will of God. . . . Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be *subjected to the higher powers of the soul*. The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne." *The Adventist Home*, 127–128.

"A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of *the subjection of the lower to the higher nature*—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man." *Education*, 57.

When we study the plan of redemption as it is presented in the

Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, there are some passages that we will not be able to correctly understand if we do not recognize the existence of these two "natures." At times, Inspiration uses only the term "nature," and it is important that we ascertain by the context whether it is referring to the lower nature or to the higher nature.

Restoring the Higher Nature

When Adam was created, his lower nature was naturally subservient to his higher powers. Both his body and his mind were naturally inclined to obey the laws of God. When he fell, his flesh was corrupted, and his mind became carnal and no longer able to rule over the flesh.

When Jesus came to this earth, He came to portray . . . a character that no longer has propensities to sin but, instead, has an enmity—hatred—toward sin.

The character of fallen man is corrupt, and he is naturally inclined to do evil.

In this context, consider Noah Webster's definition of "propensity": "Bent of mind, natural or acquired; inclination; in a moral sense; disposition to any thing good or evil, particularly to evil; as a propensity to sin; the corrupt propensity of the will." *Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary*.

Since the time of Adam's fall, our *characters* have been naturally "bent" or "inclined" to evil. We have inherited and cultivated propensities to sin. When Jesus came to this earth, He came to portray the character that we are to develop in our experience of the new birth and sanctification—a character that no longer has propensities to sin but, instead, has an enmity—hatred—toward sin.

"Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. *Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin.* He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. *Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience.* But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but *not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity.* He was assailed

with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1128.²

Resolving a "Contradiction"

For a time, I was perplexed by the above statement. It seemed to give credence to those who say you cannot use Ellen White to resolve the issues regarding the humanity of Christ; she says it both ways—that Christ took our fallen nature, and that He had a sinless nature. To them, the above contrast between Christ, who had no "propensities of sin" and the rest of Adam's posterity, who inherited "propensities of disobedience" clearly supports the idea that Christ came in sinless *flesh*—like Adam before the Fall.

However, *when* we see this statement as a contrast of two *higher na-*

tures—the holy character of Christ versus the unholy character of the carnal man—then it harmonizes beautifully with Ellen White’s statements that Christ accepted sinful flesh.

After examining Sister White’s statements that used such expressions as “fallen / sinful / sinless flesh / nature” or “sinful / evil / wrong / corrupt propensities / tendencies / inclinations” (and many other variations), I came to see a harmonious picture:

Christ was born and lived among us as our Example. He showed how we may overcome temptation and have holy characters by partaking of the divine na-

saved as long as I can quickly utter the words, “Dear Jesus, please forgive me for my sins!”

Now I have come to see more clearly that God is not simply looking for people who have a *clean record* to take to heaven. He is also looking for a *changed attitude* toward sin.

We parents know our children are in danger of smoking someday if the only thoughts that restrain them now are, “I sure wish I could try smoking a cigarette, but I don’t want to get caught.” If that is their attitude, they will likely try smoking for themselves as soon as they are no longer under the fear of Mom and Dad. So we also educate

within, displays the operation of a principle wholly from above. . . .

“Why are the soldiers of Christ so sleepy and indifferent? Because they have so little real connection with Christ; because they are so destitute of His Spirit. *Sin is not to them repulsive and abhorrent*, as it was to their Master. . . .

“All who are not decided followers of Christ are servants of Satan. In the *unregenerate* heart there is *love of sin* and a disposition to cherish and excuse it. In the *renewed* heart there is *hatred of sin* and determined resistance against it. . . .

“Familiarity with sin will inevitably cause it to appear less repulsive.” *The Great Controversy*, 506–509.

Now consider Ellen White’s letter to Elder Baker (quoted above from *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1128). As our heart is renewed, as we experience the sanctification process, we develop such a delight in doing God’s will and such an intense hatred for sin that just the thought of hurting our dear Saviour, of violating His trust, is utterly repulsive to us. We will be purged of any inherited or cultivated propensity to sin. We would truly rather die than do such a terrible thing.

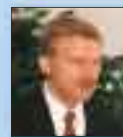
Does Sister White have more to say about these propensities to sin? Does she tell us more about how to develop a hatred toward sin? We will answer these questions next month. ❀

To be continued.

Notes:

¹ The *Strong’s Concordance* indicates that the same Greek word is translated as “mind” in *Philippians 2:5* and as “affection” in *Colossians 3:2*. You may wish to look it up for yourself and also note where else it is used in the New Testament.

² The full text of this letter to Elder Baker may be found in *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, 13–30.



Harvey Steck is the managing editor of *Our Firm Foundation* and has worked in various capacities for Hope International for the past 17 years.

I used to think, All I have to worry about is to be sure that I have confessed all my sins before I die.

ture. See 2 Peter 1:4. His acceptance of our fallen nature demonstrated that God’s judgment of us is based on our *character*, not on our *nature* (flesh).

His example was of utmost importance to the final generation who may live through the time of trouble, for they will not receive sinless flesh and immortality until Christ comes in the clouds. *While in sinful flesh*, they will live holy lives *after Christ’s mediation for sin has ceased*. Through the forgiving, transforming, and enabling power of Christ, they will have formed holy characters, and now, as they continue to partake of the divine nature, they are able to stand before God without a mediator.

A Change of Attitude

I used to think: *All I have to worry about is to be sure that I have confessed all my sins before I die. If I am on an airplane that is about to crash and I realize that I am about to die, I will be*

them about the ill effects of tobacco, hoping that they will become so disgusted by it that they will detest even the thought of smoking.

Tobacco could represent any sin in God’s eyes. He does require a clean record, but it is far more critical to the eternal security of heaven that we have an attitude of perfect hatred toward sin. In chapter 30 of *The Great Controversy*, we read about this enmity or hatred toward sin that God implants in our hearts:

“It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul which creates in man enmity against Satan. Without this converting grace and renewing power, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding. But the new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts enables man to resist the tyrant and usurper. Whoever is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, whoever resists and conquers those passions that have held sway

The Scandal of a Book: The Colossal Question



Why?

Part 8

Ralph Larson

Last month, we noted a number of instances in the new *Annotated Edition of Questions on Doctrine* in which the publishers indicated that they were fully aware of the enormous injury that had been done to the church by the dishonesty and distortions in the first edition.

With full knowledge of these things, they nevertheless made a conscious decision to republish the book, at great expense. Why?

It appears we have but two choices as to why the book has been reprinted: Either the present publishers were innocent persons, with no ulterior motives, who exercised incredibly poor judgment or—Or somebody, somewhere, who hated the Seventh-day Adventist Church and had access to lots of money, looked at the situation and said, “The first edition of *Questions on Doctrine* brought enormous injury to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A second edition might well injure the church beyond the possibility of recovery. Let’s do it!”

We have to view this problem in its context. Our church is not loved by the world, nor yet by the churches of the world. We are surrounded

by groups who would take pleasure in our church’s collapse and downfall. And there are certain groups which make use of *infiltration* to accomplish their purpose *within* other organizations. We have been appalled by the sheer dishonesty practiced by the writers of the first edition of *Questions on Doctrine*. But it gets worse.

The Lunatic Fringe

Donald Grey Barnhouse, editor of *Eternity* magazine and the leader in the conversations with the Adventist group, published a report of those meetings in his edition of September 1956.¹ He wrote that the Adventists had stated firmly that the *real* Seventh-day Adventists had always believed, like Barnhouse and Martin and their evangelical colleagues, that Christ came to earth in the unfallen nature of Adam. The only exceptions, they were told, were Adventism’s “lunatic fringe” and “wild-eyed irresponsibles.”

Here infamy reached a height seldom seen in this world. Permit me to introduce you to some of Adventism’s “lunatic fringe” and “wild-eyed irresponsibles.” We begin with General Conference

presidents White, Daniels, Spicer, Watson, McElhany and Branson. The list includes six of the seven *Review* editors who served during the years 1852–1952, and five of the six *Signs* editors.

The list includes a galaxy of General Conference vice presidents, division presidents, and departmental chairmen; union conference presidents and local conference presidents and teachers. You will find them all listed in my book *The Word Was Made Flesh*,² pages 34 and onward, along with their contributions. All of them had published, at least once, their belief that Christ had come to earth in the human nature of fallen man.

And Ellen White had published the same thing four hundred times, which would clearly establish her as by far the worst of Adventism’s “lunatic fringe” and “wild-eyed irresponsibles.”

The grand total of all such statements, by Ellen White and the church leaders shown above, is *twelve hundred*.

Certainly there had to be something terribly; terribly, wrong with the minds of men who would tell the world that these persons were

Adventism's "lunatic fringe" and describe them as "wild-eyed irresponsibles."

So How Could It Happen?

Let us go to the inspired writings for the answer to our question. The apostle Paul wrote of certain people in 2 Thessalonians 2:10–11 who "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

Notice that here is described a mental problem that begins with not loving the truth and ends in an inability to recognize what is truth. Ellen White commented on this condition:

"By rejection of evidence, they lost their spiritual eyesight, and *could not discern between good and evil, between truth and error, light*

and darkness." *Review and Herald*, April 18, 1893. All emphasis supplied.

"The mind that cherishes sentiments that tend to destroy the foundation of the faith that has made us what we are becomes confused, and *cannot discern between truth and error.*" *Bible Training School*, March 1, 1915.

"He who deliberately stifles his convictions of duty because it interferes with his inclinations will finally *lose the power to distinguish between truth and error.*" *The Great Controversy*, 378.

Is she not here describing a manner of madness, a form of insanity? She does not allege that such persons will be *totally* out of touch with reality, but only in regard to truth and error. They simply cannot tell the difference. And that is a desperate condition.

Persons who are afflicted with this particular manner of madness will unblushingly declare that Ellen White taught that Christ came to the earth in the human nature of the unfallen Adam, in spite of the fact that she had written and published four hundred statements to the contrary.

Persons who are afflicted with this particular manner of madness will soberly affirm that Adventism's first line of leadership, from General Conference presidents down through the ranks, are part of Adventism's "lunatic fringe" of "wild-eyed irresponsibles."

How could Adventism's first line of leadership, including six General Conference presidents, be described as our lunatic fringe? What kind of a mentality would expect to get away with such a conspicuous atrocity in the mishan-

Outside of Your Tent

The food is now ready
Outside of your tent
Are you hungry, my dear one?
The manna is sent.

The angels have brought
Their own fare to the ground
If you will but search
It soon will be found.

The manna is waiting
Outside of your tent
Are you hungry, my dear one?
The food has been sent.

Wait not 'til the sun
Will rise bright and warm
And bring to your life
A business-like storm.

And you go on famished
'til your strength is spent
Up now! my dear one
Quick, out of your tent!

For the morning's first rays
Will rob you of your bread.
Are you hungry, my dear one?
The table is spread.

The food is now ready
Outside of your tent.
Are you hungry, my dear one?
The manna is sent.

—Eugene Prewitt
February 2003

"The provision for the day must be gathered in the morning; for all that remained upon the ground was melted by the sun." — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 295.

dling of evidence? Either of two kinds of mentalities. As mentioned above, there is a group of people in our world who have for centuries been practicing deception on a grand scale. Volumes have been written about the deceptions that they have engineered with great expertise. They are called *Jesuits*. One of their most successful methods is *infiltration*. They work with great patience to get their people into the inner organizations of all churches, including ours. I was taught that in a church history class years ago. For them the inflicting of enormous damage on our church through the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* would probably be regarded as a simple routine procedure.

That is one possibility. The only other possibility that I can see would be the one described by Ellen White when she wrote a warning that there is a mental disorder that begins with having no love for the truth and ends in an inability to discern truth and error.

Neither is a happy conclusion. And either of them that we accept leaves us to struggle with the agonizing question, *What about the people who have now republished Questions on Doctrine?*

We cannot escape from reality that they were fully aware of the enormous injury that had been done to our church by the first edition of *Questions on Doctrine*, and they were fully aware of the dishonest manipulation of evidence in that volume. They acknowledged both. But then they go right on and repeat the offense by publishing a new edition of the same scandalous book.

Must we prepare our minds to recognize that this new Annotated Edition was published for the deliberate intention of bringing the Seventh-day Adventist Church to utter ruin? And that the acknowledgements of the dishonesty practiced in the first edition are only for the purpose of throwing us off our guard?

The only reasonable answer to these questions is *Yes*. We cannot afford to do otherwise.

We are moving into the final, closing events of the greatest conflict of the ages. How can we hope to escape the enormous deceptions?

Let us remember that these events may astonish us, but they

last days." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 83–84.

May I suggest that we all memorize this promise, live by it, and repeat it often. We are going to need it.

May God bless you. ✠

Series concluded.

There is a mental disorder that begins with having no love for the truth and ends in an inability to discern truth and error.

do not astonish God. He knew all about them in advance, and supplied us with all of the information that we need. Here is a promise that is exquisite in its simplicity and fully adequate in its clarity:

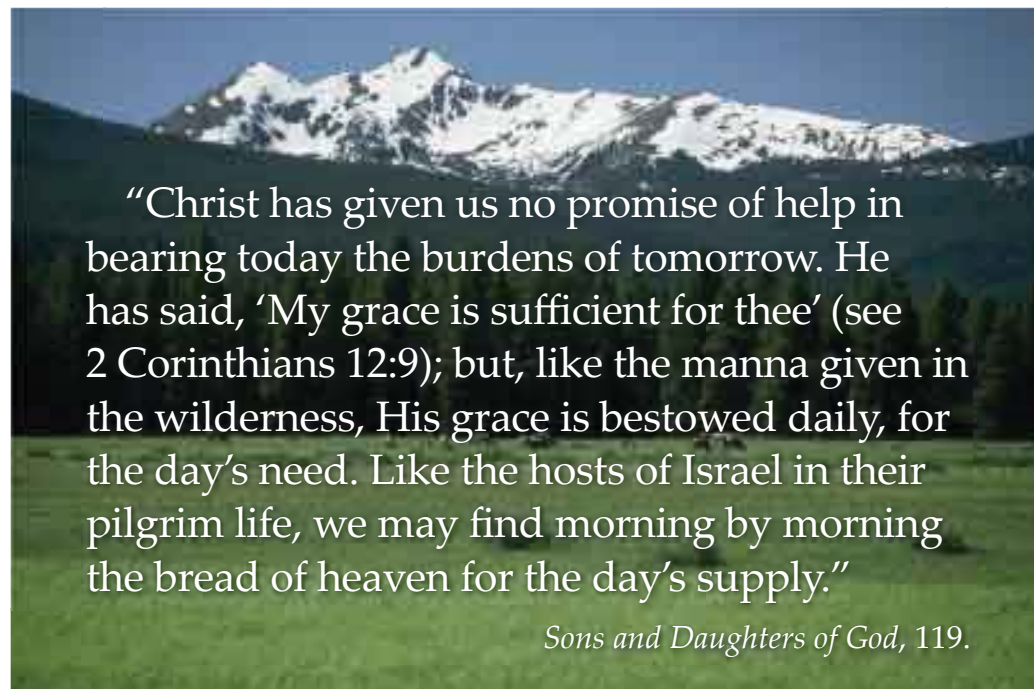
"Men may get up scheme after scheme, and the enemy will seek to seduce souls from the truth, *but all who believe that the Lord has spoken through Sister White, and has given her a message, will be safe from the many delusions that will come in these*



Ralph Larson, retired pastor and theologian, last served as dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Far East.

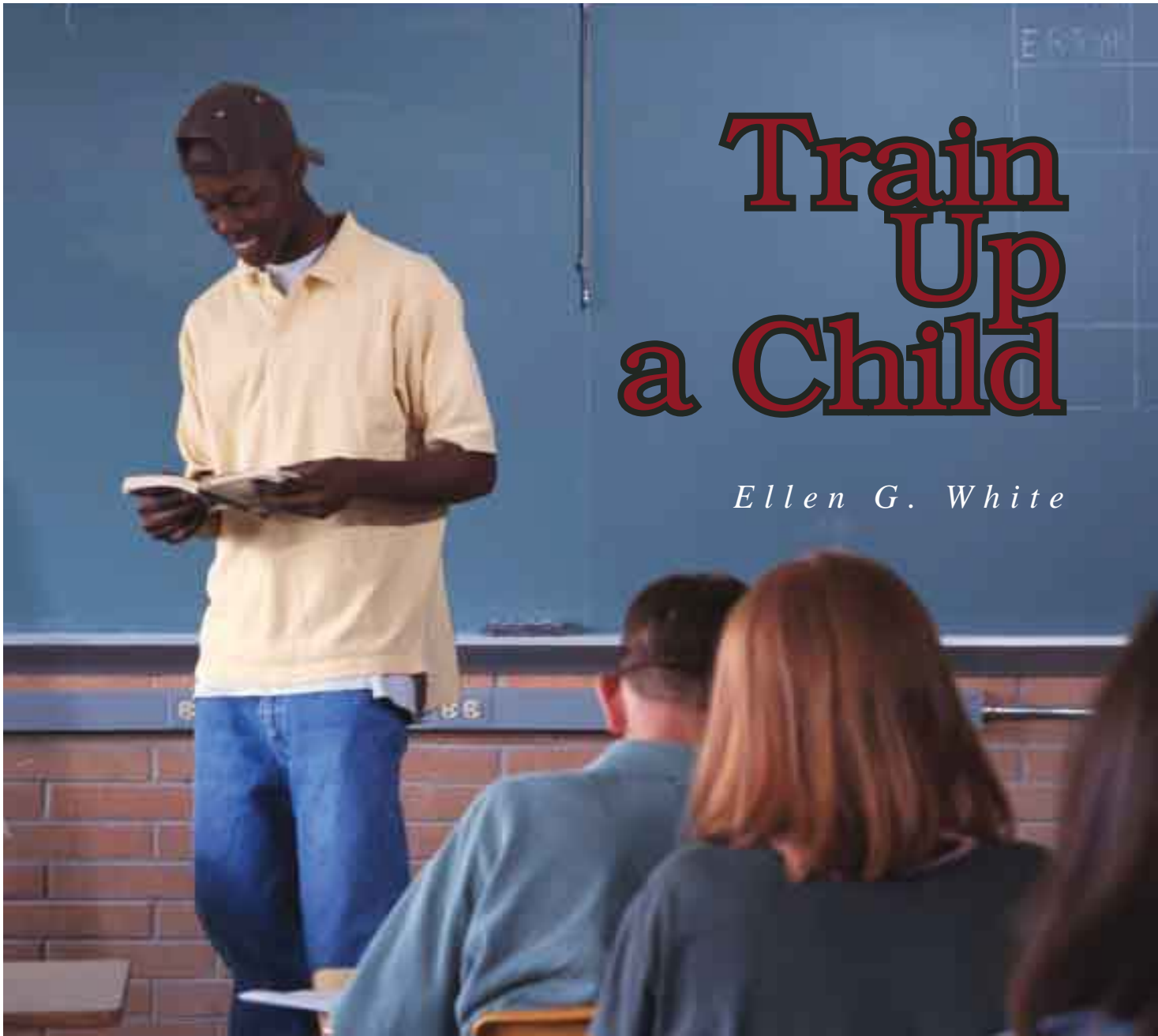
Notes:

- ¹ "Are Seventh-day Adventists Christians? A New Look at Seventh-day Adventism," *Eternity*, Evangelical Foundation, Philadelphia, PA, 6–7.
- ² Cherrystone Press, Cherry Valley, CA, 1986.



"Christ has given us no promise of help in bearing today the burdens of tomorrow. He has said, 'My grace is sufficient for thee' (see 2 Corinthians 12:9); but, like the manna given in the wilderness, His grace is bestowed daily, for the day's need. Like the hosts of Israel in their pilgrim life, we may find morning by morning the bread of heaven for the day's supply."

Sons and Daughters of God, 119.



Train Up a Child

Ellen G. White

“**W**ork 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.” Philippians 2:12–13.

The salvation of the soul requires the blending of divine and human strength. God does not propose to do the work that man can do to meet the standard of righteousness. Man has a part to act. Humanity must unite and cooperate with divinity. Grace and sufficiency have been abundantly provided for every soul. But in order to receive this, man must unite with his divine Helper. Unless of his own accord man consents to

renounce his sinful practices, Christ cannot take away his sin. Man must heartily cooperate with God, willingly obeying His laws, showing that he appreciates the great gift of grace. Feeling his dependence upon God, having faith in Christ as his personal Saviour, expecting efficiency and success only as he keeps the Lord ever before him—it is thus that man complies with the injunction, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

But human effort is not sufficient. It avails nothing without divine power. Of himself man has not strength to wrestle with the powers of darkness. Therefore Christ clothed His divinity with human-

ity, and came to this earth that He might cooperate with man. To those who will receive Him and trust in His power to save, He imparts the virtue of His righteousness. He gives them power to become the sons of God. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth. . . . And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” John 1:14, 16.

The human agent must remember that he has in himself no merits to present to God. Christ is the fountain of life, the source of immortality. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The great, grand work of perfecting character cannot be accomplished without

Photo: © PhotoDisc

the help that He is always ready to supply.

He who desires to grow in physical, mental, and spiritual power must feel every moment his dependence upon the One who provides efficiency for service. In the work of developing and strengthening the faculties of body and mind, man must constantly receive power from on high. The Lord is watching with earnest interest to see how man will conduct himself in the life which has been given him. Be not careless and indifferent in regard to the work to be done by God and man. On your part you are to believe, receive the grace of God, and honor Christ in the life. On His part, He dwells in your heart, supplying you with divine strength, working in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Parents to Cooperate With God

Parents are to cooperate with God by bringing their children up in His love and fear. They cannot displease Him more than by neglecting to train their children aright. God has given them these children as a sacred trust, to educate for Him. In a sense they stand in the place of God to their children. They are to work out the salvation of those who are too young to understand the difference between good and evil. They are in no case to think that good will naturally predominate in the hearts of their children. They are to guard carefully the words and actions of their little ones, lest the enemy shall gain an influence over them. This he is intensely desirous of doing, that he may counterwork the purpose of God. Kindly, earnestly, tenderly, parents are to work for their children, cultivating every good trait and repressing every evil trait which develops in the character.

Parents should be constant learners in the school of Christ. They need freshness and power,

that with the simplicity of Christ they may teach the younger members of God's family the knowledge of His will. Line upon line, precept upon precept, they are to reiterate His lessons. They are to be diligent students of the Bible, that they may be apt in the tillage of the garden of the heart. With persevering effort they are to cultivate the hearts of the children placed in their care; and God will help them in every faithful, patient effort.

In the earliest years of the child's life the soil of the heart is to be carefully prepared for the showers of God's grace. Then the seeds of

day parents are to watch vigilantly and correct wisely, insisting upon prompt obedience.

Teaching Propriety

Parents, give your time to your children. Teach them to form careful habits. Some parents allow their children to be destructive, to use as playthings things which they have no right to touch. Children should be taught that they must not handle the property of other people. For the comfort and happiness of the family, they must learn to observe the rules of propriety. Children are no happier when they

With persevering effort they are to cultivate the hearts of the children placed in their care; and God will help them in every faithful, patient effort.

truth are to be carefully sown and diligently tended. And God, who rewards every effort made in His name, will put life into the seed sown. There will appear first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

Too often, because of the wicked neglect of parents, Satan sows his seeds in the hearts of children, and a harvest of shame and sorrow is borne. The world today is destitute of true goodness because parents have failed to gather their children to themselves in the home. They have not kept them from association with the careless and reckless. Therefore the children have gone forth into the world to sow the seeds of death.

In the cultivation of the garden of the heart, the efforts of parents must be unceasing, or unsightly weeds will spring up and choke the good seed. The weeds which spring up, the natural imperfections which appear, must be removed. Day by

are allowed to handle everything they see. If they are not educated to be care-taking, they will grow up with unlovely, destructive traits of character.

Parents do their children great wrong when they allow them to scream and cry. They should not be allowed to be careless and boisterous. If these objectionable traits of character are not checked in their early years, the children will take them with them, strengthened and developed, into religious and business life. Children will be just as happy if they are taught to be quiet in the house.

Fathers and mothers be sensible. Teach your children that they must be subordinate to law. Do not allow them to think that because they are children, it is their privilege to make all the noise they wish in the house. Wise rules and regulations must be made and enforced that the beauty of the home life may not be spoiled.

Reaping What Is Sown

If, when parents had first begun to live upon the earth, there had been a firm adherence to the laws of God, the world would now be filled with well-ordered families. From age to age right habits and customs would have been handed down from parents to children, and God would have been loved and honored.

The wickedness which exists in the world today may be traced to the neglect of parents rightly to discipline themselves and their children. Thousands and thousands of Satan's victims are what they are because of the injudicious way in which they were managed during

these defects be seen once more in their children.

Following the Divine Plan

The mother is especially the educator of her children. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world."¹ God sees all the possibilities in that mite of humanity. He sees that with proper training the child will become a power for good in the world. He watches with anxious interest to see whether the parents will carry out His plan, or whether by mistaken kindness they will destroy His purpose, indulging the child to its present and eternal ruin. To transform this helpless and apparently

harmony with the divine plan. The rules and regulations of the home life must be in strict accordance with a "Thus saith the Lord." The rules God has given for the government of His church are the rules parents are to follow in the church in the home. It is God's design that there shall be perfect order in the families on earth, preparatory to their union with the family in heaven. Upon the discipline and training received in the home depends the usefulness of men and women in the church and in the world.

The Lord calls upon parents to study and obey His Word. He asks them so to guide and educate their children, that these will rise up and call them blessed. I recommend to parents a study of God's will and way. I urge them to put on the whole armor of God and gird themselves for the battle. They will be aided and encouraged in every movement they make in the right direction.

Without human effort divine effort is in vain. God will work with power when in trustful dependence upon Him parents will awake to the sacred responsibility resting upon them, and seek to train their children aright. He will cooperate with those parents who carefully and prayerfully educate their children, working out their own and their children's salvation. He will work in them, to will and to do of His own good pleasure. ✨

Signs of the Times, September 25, 1901.



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

Note:

¹ Title of an oft-quoted poem by William Ross Wallace.

To transform this helpless and apparently insignificant being into a blessing to the world and an honor to God, is a great and grand work.

childhood. The stern rebuke of God is upon this mismanagement. The records of heaven show the awful history of the men and women who as children were left to follow their own way.

Upon parents rests the responsibility of developing in their children those capabilities which will enable them to do good service for God. To do this work acceptably, parents must exercise self-control. They must choose the good and refuse the evil. There are many parents who themselves need to be converted. Their untrained characters unfit them for the great work of training their children. When a child reveals the wrong traits which it has inherited from its parents, shall they storm over this reproduction of their own defects?—No, no! Let parents keep a careful watch over themselves, guarding against all coarseness and roughness, lest

insignificant being into a blessing to the world and an honor to God, is a great and grand work. Parents should allow nothing to come between them and the obligation they owe to their children.

The training of children constitutes an important part of God's plan for demonstrating the power of Christianity. A solemn responsibility rests upon parents so to train their children that when they go forth into the world, they will do good and not evil to those with whom they associate. Our children are to be educated line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. From babyhood the character of the child is to be molded and fashioned in accordance with the divine plan. Virtues are to be instilled into its opening mind.

In the management of their children, parents are to be in perfect

The Motivating Factor, Part 1

Randy Floyd

Looking back over my years as a Christian, I am aware that the majority of those years were an experience that many Christians can call their own as well. It was an endless cycle of sinning and repenting, falling down and getting up; just to fall down again. This was my experience for so long that I had grown accustomed to it, maybe even comfortable. I know from my conversations with Christians of various denominations that this experience is considered to be normal. Many believe that true victory over sin is just not possible.

I found that my experience and that which the Word and the Spirit of Prophecy detail were at odds. This led me to deep heart-searching and self-examination. I discovered that when a sincere Christian has a life of sinning and repenting, sinning and repenting—with no lasting victory, the reason is likely to be one or both of these two things: 1) wrong perceptions (understanding of truth); or 2) wrong motivations.

For me it wasn't so much my perception. As an Adventist, I was very familiar with the truth concerning the necessity for holiness (Hebrews 12:14). I understood that the reason Christ had not returned yet is because He is waiting for a people who will truly reflect His image (see Ephesians 4:8–15). The writings of Ellen White and the pioneers of our faith were equally clear on this point—that we can over-

come every sinful tendency through Christ.

Unfortunately, most of the rest of the Christian world do not have this knowledge. They do not have the benefit of the Spirit of Prophecy, and their teachers and pastors are preaching a message of “salvation *in sin*.” The Word says, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.” Mark 9:23. If a Christian doesn't believe it's either possible or necessary to overcome sin, they will be unable to do so.

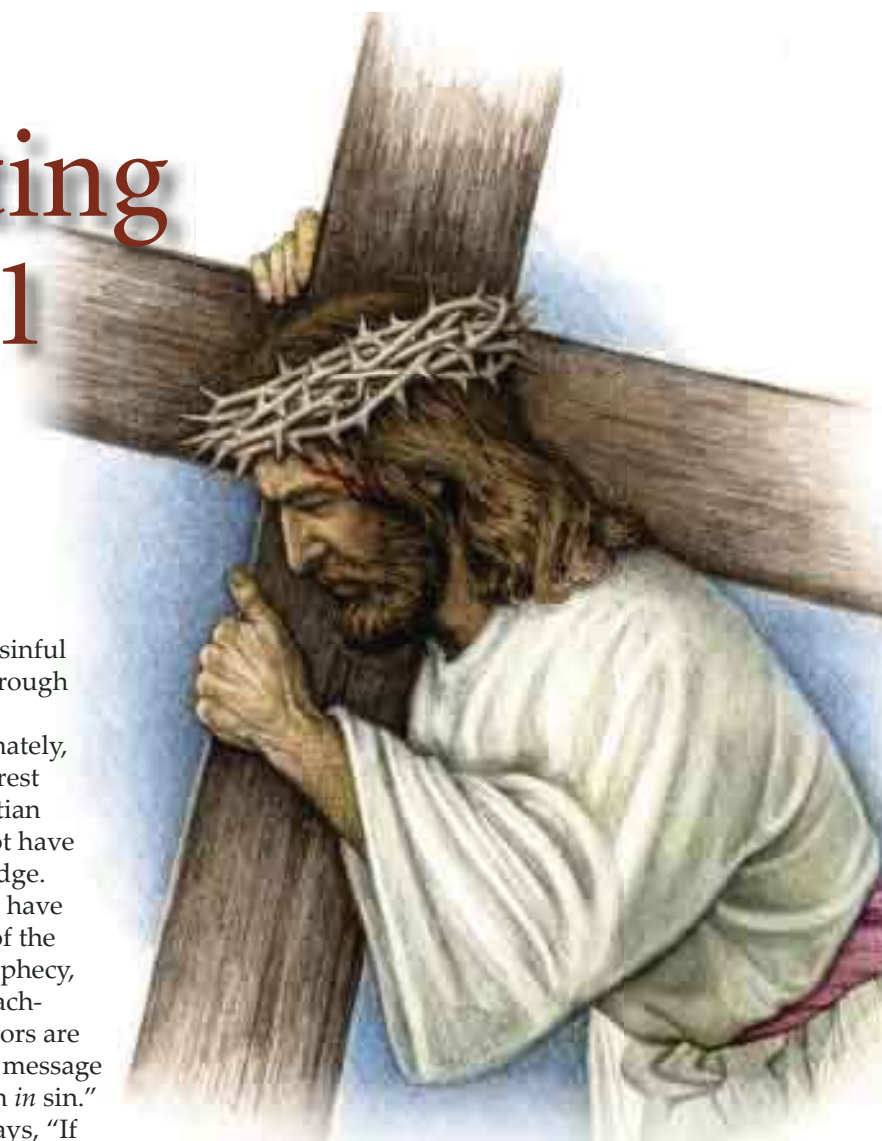
Why Do You Serve God?

My problem was not one of perception; it was one of motivation. I had to examine exactly why it was that I was serving God, and this led me to understand why I was failing. Christ asks us to give all—body and soul. He asks us to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him (see Matthew 16:24). For a man to choose to surrender his will to God, and to accept principles that are completely at odds with his sinful desires, requires a very powerful motivation.

I recently took a poll of Christian believers from many different denominations, asking them why they

choose to serve God. I received a lot of different answers. Some served God because the guilt they felt was overwhelming them. Some said that they knew hell was real and they didn't want to end up there. Others said they knew heaven was real and they didn't want to miss out. All these motivations have one thing in common—they are self-centered. The primary concern in these instances is not God and His kingdom, but the desire to get something out of the deal.

If we are serving God out of fear of punishment or hope of reward, we will fail repeatedly. Now, there is nothing wrong with wanting to keep out of hell. No one in their right mind wants to go to hell. Neither is there anything wrong with wanting to go to heaven. It's a wondrous place with pleasure for ever more. The problem arises



when self is the first and foremost concern.

Motivations of fear of punishment or hope of reward are certainly enough to bring a man or woman to their knees. They are powerful enough to produce a desire to be a Christian, but they are not powerful enough to move us to serve Him successfully.

In the book of Deuteronomy, chapters 28–30, God promises blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. The blessings recorded here are glorious; the threatened curses are frightening. But the history of Israel, which is written for our admonition (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11), teaches us that no promised blessing, no matter how glorious, and no threatened punishment, no matter how frightening, is powerful enough motivation for us to serve God willingly and successfully.

The Compelling Motive

Only one motivation is powerful enough to enable us to be overcomers and experience victory instead of constant defeat: “For the love

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

for Christ, and only love for Christ, is proper motivation for serving God. What we need is to fall in love with Christ—to fall in love with Him so deeply that sin becomes hateful to us and is rejected as an option.

Let me ask parents a question: Why do we have children? Do we have children so that we can have our own personal slaves whom we can goad into doing our will by threatening them or promis-

ing them out of us. That’s not what a family is all about. And that’s not what God wants. Christianity isn’t just some legalistic religion, it is a relationship of love and obedience to our heavenly Father. We have children so that we can love and be loved. That’s what God wants, too.

Of course, God doesn’t expect us to love Him for no good reason. God expects us to love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19, 10). In order for the world to come to love God, they must have a knowledge of His great love for all of us—a love so real, so powerful, that we cannot resist. It will constrain us, compel us, despite the opposition of the Devil, the world, and our flesh, to cease living unto ourselves and live unto God and Christ!

Paul’s earnest prayer was “That he [God] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” Ephesians 3:16–19.

Paul’s prayer was that we might be rooted and grounded in love—not in fear or hope of gain—and that we might be able to comprehend something of the magnitude of God’s love in Christ. But that knowledge must go beyond head knowledge. It “passeth understanding” and reaches into the heart. (See Philippians 4:7.)

What then, is the grandest display of love ever demonstrated? What must we and the world behold in order to have this knowledge, which passes understanding, so that we might be filled with all the fullness of God? ✠

To be continued. . . .

Randy Floyd writes from California.

Only one motivation is powerful enough to enable us to be overcomers and experience victory instead of constant defeat.

of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” 2 Corinthians 5:14–15.

Notice, Paul says, “the love of Christ constraineth us. . . .” To “constrain” means to compel, to urge with irresistible power, or to cause to advance despite opposition. Love

ing them rewards? Is that what we have children for? Absolutely not! Well, that’s exactly how a lot of people see Christianity. They see it as serving a God who just wants us to do what we’re told because He told us to do it. If we do what we’re told—we go to heaven. If we don’t do what we’re told—hell.

We don’t want our children to do what we ask of them simply because they fear what we’ll do if they don’t or just so they can get what



A Hard Winter

Virgil Robinson



Disappointment and dismay spread through the Adventist ranks when Christ did not come on October 22, 1844, as had been expected. To James White and the Millerite leaders it was evident that a mistake had been made. Later, they were to discover that the error had not been in the date fixed, but rather in the nature of the event that took place on that memorable day.

After the Disappointment, James remained on the farm, waiting, wondering, studying. He busied himself helping his father and his brothers, reaping what harvest there was and preparing for the “hard winter” Elder Himes had warned them was surely coming—a winter they had never expected to experience.

As winter closed in and the evenings grew longer James had more time to spend in reviewing his experience as a participant in the Advent movement. There was one major question for him to ponder. Had the movement come from

God? As he thought back over the events of previous years he called to mind the Spirit-filled meetings held and the love and fellowship that had drawn the Adventists together. He had seen the Spirit of God working on the hearts of men. Could all that have been devil inspired or man inspired? “Impossible!” declared James White.

He was willing to wait, to study, to pray, but not to cast away his confidence. Had not the book of Hebrews spoken of something resembling their experience? “Ye have need of patience. . . . For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:36–37.

Waiting never came easy to the impulsive young preacher. It was not his nature. As early as March, 1843, he had written a note that had appeared in the *Signs of the Times*: “Most of the preachers were silent on the subject of Christ’s immediate coming. Some of them tell the people they are willing to wait for a time to decide the question.

*Brethren, I cannot wait. God forbid that I should fold my arms in lazy-lock while sinners are sinking to eternal night.”*¹

Now, on the farm, he was searching for fresh light that would help explain why Christ had not come as expected.

Among the ranks of Adventist believers, every wind of doctrine now began to blow. In some places fanaticism flourished, and no part of New England produced a greater supply of counterfeit religion than did the State of Maine. James did what he could, wherever he could, to put out the fires of fanaticism. The people needed help and a unified leadership.

Sometime during that winter James heard that Ellen Harmon, living in Portland, Maine, had seen in vision the travels of God’s people to the Holy City. Miss Harmon, only 17 at the time, was a Christian girl, and the fruit of her testimony was good.

James remembered this young woman whose testimony he had

heard in Portland a year before.² He had been surprised to note how small and delicate she appeared. Ellen had suffered much physically, but her Christian experience burned bright.

One day early in 1845 James White learned that a sleigh he had lent a friend, Brother Jordan, of Poland, Maine, was being returned. The sleigh would be taken to Orrington, where James was to get it. On the day appointed, James walked the twenty miles from Palmyra to Orrington. At Orrington, James learned that Jordan had brought his sister and Ellen Harmon with him. That eve-

he travel with Ellen and Jordan's sister, organize Ellen's meetings, and see that no harm came to the two girls? He offered his horse, sleigh, and services to Ellen, which she was happy to accept. So the three set out on a tour of Adventist companies in eastern Maine. Notices were sent ahead, and meetings were held on appointed dates. Sometimes Ellen's testimony was accepted. At other places fanatics rejected her words of reproof, and carried on as before.

Thus the winter months passed. With the arrival of spring, melting snows made it impossible for them to continue to travel by sleigh.

the twenty-mile trip to Belfast. It was a beautiful spring day, and the current helped carry them along. At Belfast they parted, with Ellen and her companions on board the steamer, and James White and his friends on the wharf. No doubt James wondered when he would see Ellen again.

The twenty-mile journey back up the river was not so easy, for the men had to row against the swift current. Late in the day the tired trio completed the trip and pulled their boat up to the landing at Orrington. A group of rough-looking men were standing nearby, studying the boat and its passengers.

"Where is Miss Harmon?" one of them shouted.

"She's gone to Portland."

"All right, let them have it, men."

The rowdies made a rush at James and his friends. One man had a horsewhip, which he laid again and again across James's back. When the mob had beaten the men, they dragged them to the jail and threw them into it for the night. In the morning the three were let out and permitted to return home, though suffering from wounds and bruises.⁴ ❀

To be continued. . . .

This article was adapted from Virgil Robinson, James White, 33–36. The author was the great-grandson of James and Ellen White on his mother's side and the great-grandson of William Farnsworth (one of the first Seventh-day Adventists) on his father's side.

Notes:

¹ Ellen G. White Estate Document File, 718.

² Margaret Rossiter Thiele, *By Saddle and Sleigh*, Review and Herald Pub. Assn., Washington, D.C., 1965, 102.

³ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁴ *Ellen G. White, Her Friends and Fellow-Workers*, p. 13, "Interview" with James White; cf. James White letter to Brother Jacobs, Sept. 6, 1845.

That evening Ellen spoke to a group meeting in a home. What James saw and heard convinced him that she was God's chosen messenger; it was a conviction that was to strengthen during the years to come.

ning Ellen spoke to a group meeting in a home. What James saw and heard convinced him that she was God's chosen messenger; it was a conviction that was to strengthen during the years to come. He talked with her of her experience. She had heard of the thousand converts he had won in a few short weeks. Apparently, as she looked at this stalwart, six-foot-tall man, and listened to him talk, she was attracted by his warm personality and evident sincerity.

Perhaps James remembered some of the mobs he had encountered the previous year, and wondered how this frail, innocent, timid girl would be treated as she continued traveling and speaking. She needed a stronger protector than a woman could provide. Since it was winter and not much could be done on the farm, why shouldn't

One day Ellen received a letter from her mother that dismayed her. "Come home, Ellen, my daughter," Mrs. Harmon had written. "False reports are being circulated about you. You should not be traveling all over the countryside like this. It is not fitting and proper for one of your age."³

Charges made against her and James were, of course, completely false. Never had the two gone anywhere without some other adult accompanying them. But Ellen highly respected her mother and felt it was best to comply with her wishes.

James decided to escort Ellen and the Jordans, who had been traveling with them, down the Penobscot River to Belfast, where they could board the steamer for Portland.

James found two friends to help him, and they borrowed a boat for



The Alpha and the Omega of Deadly Error, Part 3

Veiled Faces and Blinded Perceptions

F. M. Wilcox

We are warned that the experience of the past will be repeated; that old errors will be presented in new forms, and that Satan will deceive, if possible, the very elect. We can escape only by being constantly on our guard.

"The experience of the past will be repeated. In the future, Satan's superstitions will assume new forms. Errors will be presented in a pleasing and flattering manner. False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to God's people. Thus Satan will try to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Most seducing influences will be exerted; minds will be hypnotized. . . .

"It is those who have had the most light that Satan most assiduously seeks to ensnare. He knows that if he can deceive them, they will, under his control, clothe sin with garments of righteousness, and lead many astray.

"I say to all: Be on your guard; for as an angel of light Satan is

walking in every assembly of Christian workers, and in every church, trying to win the members to his side. I am bidden to give to the people of God the warning, 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked.' Galatians 6:7." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 293–294.

A System of Intellectual Philosophy

In a pamphlet entitled, "Letters to Physicians and Ministers," the servant of the Lord sounded a very definite warning against a system of intellectual philosophy with which Satan would seek to supplant faith in the message for this day and generation. Her words are well worth study in this connection, as we are considering these dangers that we face today.

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our

faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result? The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.

“Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with this truth?”

“I hesitated and delayed about the sending out of that which the Spirit of the Lord impelled me to write. I did not want to be compelled to present the misleading influence of these sophistries. But

our schools in years gone by, have openly discussed in their classes if it would not be more consistent with the spirit of the times for Seventh-day Adventists to go out and preach the gospel in its general phases, and cease the advocacy of the second coming of Christ and of the Sabbath truth.

There are but few exceptions to the generally pernicious influence of university training in our own work. A few men in our church, who have taken university train-

“The Jewish people were destroyed because they rejected the message of salvation sent down from heaven. Shall those in this generation to whom God has given great light and wonderful opportunities follow in the trend of those who rejected light to their ruin?”

“Many today have veils upon their faces. These veils are sympathy with the customs and practices of the world, which hide from them the glory of the Lord. God desires us to keep our eyes fixed upon Him, that we may lose sight of the things of this world.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 146.

It is against this unholy influence coming into our schools as the result of such teaching in the schools of the world, that the Spirit of Prophecy sounded a definite warning.

in the providence of God, the errors that have been coming in *must be met.*” *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, 54–55.

The Fruit of This Teaching

From what more likely or natural source could such teaching come than from the schools of worldly philosophy? Indeed, more than one young man from the Seventh-day Adventist Church who has attended these schools has returned to his home with changed ideals and conceptions. Some have felt that the beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists were too narrow and restricted, and too unpopular to afford them ample room for their talents, that they must seek positions in the world in order to find that exercise for their ability to which they justly aspired. Others have believed and openly expressed that the truths of the threefold message need a restatement in order to bring them into greater harmony with the advanced conceptions of the world. And some from these universities, who have been employed as teachers in

ing, receiving advanced degrees in worldly schools, have remained true and loyal to this movement. They were able to stand the pressure of adverse influences which they met. They were given wisdom from God to sift the wheat from the chaff, to discard the dross and to retain the gold. But where one has been enabled to do this, a score have succumbed to the subversive teaching which they received. This makes the risk of sending our youth to the schools of the world far too great. We pay too great a price for the benefits received.

Veiled Faces and Blinded Perceptions

It is against this unholy influence coming into our schools as the result of such teaching in the schools of the world, that the Spirit of Prophecy sounded a definite warning. The ones imbibing these false theories are represented as having veils over their faces, and thus being unable to discern clearly the leadings of God.

A Threatening Iceberg— “Meet It!”

The stern and unpleasant duty of meeting this system of intellectual philosophy was emphasized by the following graphic illustration, perhaps one of the most dramatic statements to be found in the writings of the servant of the Lord:

“Shortly before I sent out the testimonies regarding the efforts of the enemy to undermine the foundation of our faith through the dissemination of seductive theories, I had read an incident about a ship in a fog meeting an iceberg. For several nights I slept but little. I seemed to be bowed down as a cart beneath sheaves. One night a scene was clearly presented before me. A vessel was upon the waters, in a heavy fog. Suddenly the lookout cried, ‘Iceberg just ahead!’ There, towering high above the ship, was a gigantic iceberg. An authoritative voice cried out, ‘Meet it!’ There was not a moment’s hesitation. It was a time for instant action. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. The passengers were violently shaken by the force of the collision, but no lives were lost. The vessel was

injured, but not beyond repair. She rebounded from the contact, trembling from stem to stern, like a living creature. Then she moved forward on her way.

“Well I knew the meaning of this representation. I had my orders. I had heard the words, like a voice from our Captain, ‘Meet it!’ I knew what my duty was, and that there was not a moment to lose. The time for decided action had come. I must without delay obey the command, ‘Meet it!’

“That night I was up at one o’clock, writing as fast as my hand could pass over the paper. For the next few days I worked early and late, preparing for our people the instruction given me regarding the errors that were coming in among us.

“I have been hoping that there would be a thorough reformation, and that the principles for which we fought in the early days, and which were brought out in the power of the Holy Spirit, would be maintained.” *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, 55–56.

This experience of the servant of the Lord dealt with the alpha of error which was seeking to shape and mold the teaching and work of Seventh-day Adventists. She tells us that the omega was to be manifested later. Of this we shall speak more fully in our next number. ❀

To be continued. . . .

Source: “Why Our Educational Symposium? The Alpha and the Omega of Deadly Error: A Review of Significant Warnings and Special Instruction from the Spirit of Prophecy, in Two Parts—Part 1,” *Review and Herald*, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., October 16, 1930, vol. 107, no. 53, 5–6.

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



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Historical Footnotes

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” —E. G. White, *Life sketches*, 196.

Many today have neglected to study the history and people that made up the early days of the Advent movement. To help encourage interest in Adventist history, we have put together questions about people and events of our past. Our goal is to spark faith, and *further study* into “the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”

- Who invented a device to pull up tent stakes from the ground?
 - S.N. Haskell
 - James White
 - J.N. Andrews
 - Ron Spear
- When was the first church organized in London, England?
 - 1872
 - 1888
 - 1896
 - 1903
- Steven Haskell was 17 years old when he married Mary. How old was Mary?
 - 14
 - 26
 - 40
 - 44
- Who wrote the book *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*?
 - James White
 - Ellen White
 - John Kellogg
 - Uriah Smith
- Who was the “Father of the Tract and Missionary Societies”?
 - Joseph Bates
 - Percy Magan
 - A.G. Daniels
 - S.N. Haskell
- In 1858, Uriah Smith was the editor and secretary-treasurer of the *Review* magazine. What was his monthly salary?
 - \$2.00
 - \$5.00
 - \$25.00
 - \$100.00
- Who took Uriah Smith’s job as head editor of the *Review* in 1897?
 - F.M. Wilcox
 - Willie White
 - A.T. Jones
 - Moses Aldridge
- Who, as a boy, read the following sign on Uriah Smith’s door?

Editor’s Room
Busy? Yes, always.
If you have any business,
Attend to your business,
And let us attend to our business.

 - E.A. Sutherland
 - William A. Spicer
 - Arthur White
 - D.M. Canright
- The Seventh-day Adventist publishing work began with the issuance of a paper called *The Present Truth*. What was the second paper called?
 - The Advent Review*
 - The Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*
 - The Signs of the Times*
 - Review and Herald*
- In what year was the first photo published in the *Review*?
 - 1861
 - 1888
 - 1894
 - 1915

Answers: 1:a; 2:b; 3:c; 4:d; 5:d; 6:b; 7:c; 8:b; 9:a; 10:c



The Nurse is Out

News Item: "America's 2.3 million registered nurses are not enough to meet demand. Administrators and local officials are still scrambling to fill a shortage as 76 million baby boomers approach retirement age. The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced last month that nursing topped all occupations in projected growth through 2012. More than 620,000 new nurses will join the workforce, but that's still not enough to fill more than 1.1 million projected job openings. Even though the number of nursing students is rising, the national average vacancy rate for RN jobs today is 13 percent." —"The Nurse is Out," *World*, March 13, 2004, 36.

End-time perspective: What an opportunity God is giving us! "The principles of health reform are found in the Word of God. The gospel of health is to be firmly linked with the ministry of the Word. It is the Lord's design that the restoring influence of health reform shall be a part of the *last great efforts* to proclaim the gospel message." *Medical Ministry*, 259. All emphasis supplied.

Is Marriage Disappearing?

News Item: "No matter what happens in the homosexual-marriage/civil-union controversies, marriage as an institution isn't going away, is it? Yes, it is. Marriage

has already all but disappeared in Scandinavia. Other Europeans are heading down that Nordic track. And, if gay marriage is legalized, so will we.

"That is the conclusion of Stanley Kurtz, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, whose article 'The End of Marriage in Scandinavia' was published in *The Weekly Standard*.

"Sweden was the first country in Europe to legalize homosexual unions in 1989, and Denmark and Norway followed soon thereafter. Today, a majority of children in those countries are born out of wedlock." —Gene Edward Veith, *World*, March 6, 2004, 22.

End-time perspective: "Not one particle of Sodomitish impurity will escape the wrath of God at the execution of the judgment. Those who do not repent of and forsake all uncleanness will fall with the



wicked." *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Marriage, and Divorce*, 119.

"Many parents who choose a city home for their children, thinking to give them greater advantages, meet with disappointment, and too late repent their terrible mistake. The cities of today are fast becoming like Sodom and Gomorrah." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 54.

The Da Vinci Code

News Item: "*The Da Vinci Code* is full of fabrications, ranging from silly interpretations of Leonardo Da Vinci's paintings to unsupported charges that Constantine brutally repressed competing gospels." —"Da Vinci Dissenters," *Christianity Today*, June 2004, 57.

End-time perspective: This book has been a best seller at the nation's bookstands, yet it is a novel. It is no different than the *Left Behind* series. And what is even more serious is that it casts doubt upon the gospels themselves!



"In every age men have arisen who have thought it noble to doubt the Word of God. Those who think it a virtue to quibble can have plenty of room to disbelieve the inspiration and truth of God's Word now. God does not compel any to believe. They can choose to rely upon the evidences He has been pleased to give, or doubt, and cavil, and perish; but those who are troubled with doubts and difficulties which they cannot solve, should not throw other weak minds into the same perplexity." *Review and Herald*, February 12, 1880.



"Even the World Knows"

News Item: "'A pastor gets up there and he's quoting Pink and Madonna more than the Bible. I mean, it's crazy.' Actor Macaulay Culkin, *Now 23*, on researching *Christian teens at a religious rally for the film Saved*." —"Quotation Marks," *Christianity Today*, July, 2004, 17.

End-time perspective: “For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.” Luke 16:8.

“Can we not discern the signs of the times? Can we not see how earnestly Satan is at work binding the tares in bundles, uniting the elements of his kingdom, that he may gain control of the world? This work of binding up the tares is going forward far more rapidly than we imagine. Satan is opposing every obstacle to the advancement of the truth. He is seeking to create diversity of opinion and to encourage worldliness and avarice. He works with the subtlety of the serpent and, when he sees it will do, with the ferocity of the lion. The ruin of souls is his only delight, their destruction his only employment; and shall we act as though we were paralyzed? Will those who profess to believe the truth listen to the temptations of the wily foe and allow themselves to become selfish and narrow, and their worldly interests to interfere with efforts for the salvation of souls?” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 383–384.

The Work Will Be Done!

News Item: “China is well on target to make the 21st century a ‘China century.’ Forty percent of the world’s construction cranes are now operating there, and 35 percent of the world’s ocean freighters are delivering goods and raw materials to feed China’s superheated economy.

“Meanwhile, under the radar screen of the world’s press, the Chinese church has been swelling fast. . . .

“Even the Chinese government admits that Protestant Christians have increased from 1 million in 1950 to sixteen million today. But these figures do not account for the many millions who meet secretly in home congregations. . . .

“Before going to China I met with one of the missionaries who had been expelled in 1950. ‘We

felt so sorry for the church we left behind,’ he said. ‘They had no one



to teach them, no printing presses, no seminaries, no one to run their clinics and orphanages. No resources, really, except the Holy Spirit.’ It appears the Holy Spirit is doing just fine.” —Philip Yancey, “Discreet and Dynamic,” *Christianity Today*, July, 2004, 72.

End-time perspective: “And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” Luke 19:40.

“As a people, we are not doing one fiftieth of what we might do as active missionaries. If we were only vitalized by the Holy Spirit, there should be a hundred missionaries where there is now one. In every city there should be a corps of organized, well disciplined workers; not merely one or two, but scores should be set to work.” *The General Conference Daily Bulletin*, January 30, 1893.

Contributor: Joe Olson

For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? Why was it that Satan’s existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God’s justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings?

— *Education*, 308.

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Paperback, 410 pages, 2001, Regular price: \$5.00

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Great Controversy (New, Illustrated), The

First published in 1888, *The Great Controversy* has, quite simply, stood the test of time. A Christian classic! This edition includes 192 pages of color photographs by James Arrabito.

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Paperback, 61 pages, 1994, Regular price: \$0.75

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This was originally published by the Medical Missionary Board, Battle Creek Michigan, under the title *Instruction Relating to the Principles of Healthful Living*. Wherever this compilation has been received it has been recognized as a veritable storehouse of seed thoughts relating to the great themes of health.

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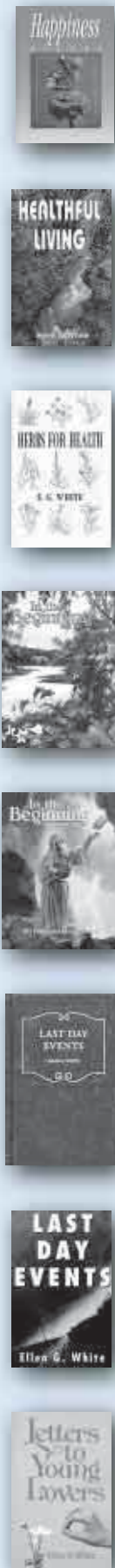
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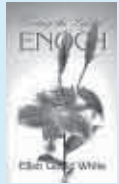
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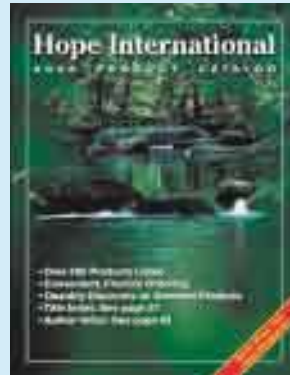
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Medical Missionary Manual, The

The Medical Missionary Manual, is a compilation of Ellen G. White's writings for those called into the medical missionary work. It is a school textbook and working guide to the type of medical missionary work described in the Spirit of Prophecy.

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Letters to the Editor



I thought the article by Kevin Paulson entitled “Dead Languages or Eternal Truths” (see *Our Firm Foundation*, July & August 2004) was excellent. We need to know these things, and unless someone points them out to us, we remain ignorant. That’s why we find *Our Firm Foundation* such an exceptional inspiration to us. Ellen White had so much to say about everything that not enough articles can be written as far as I’m concerned.

Again, thank you for the wonderful material in *Our Firm Foundation*. I do much reading in it on Sabbath.

RR, Virginia

Praise the Lord for *Our Firm Foundation*! It is too good to give away! I just reviewed volume 13, number 1—“The Sanctuary: Is it a Hoax?” Truly very good! Then page 8, “The Inner Man,” once again it touched *our* hearts. It does me good to review.

Keep up the good work. We pray for you; please pray for us.

DC, Florida

Please renew our subscription. In my view, this publication is by far the best publication put out by any Seventh-day Adventist ministry.

JH, Wisconsin

Please pray for all my children and grand children; they need special prayer as well

as myself. I enjoy the *Firm Foundation* very much. Thank you for it.

MC, Georgia

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

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

TS, Idaho

I just want to say “Thank you” for your ministry and the work you are doing, preaching the three angels’ messages.

Please use this donation in the best way you can.

MA, Washington

I am not renewing my subscription to *Our Firm Foundation*, although it is the best—and I received a lot of them.

Thank you, *thank you* for those eight video tapes from your spring convocation.

I shall continue to support you at the present rate, despite mounting healthcare costs. God bless you.

RD, Minnesota

Thank you for your ministry and outreach. I pray that God will continue to bless you in all that you do.

DG, California

My renewal notice for the magazine arrived. How much I appreciate the inspiration and direction in the magazine!

At present, I am unable to pay for the journal. If you can

renew gratis, it will be so appreciated. If not, then you have my great thanks for your service in the past.

Everything you do is appreciated, and I wish you the Lord’s blessings in all your work.

JN, California

Please send me a price on the book *Final Conflict Between Truth and Error* and also the brochure on The Law of God. I want to get perhaps a case of 65 books to have on hand so I can give them out whenever I have an opportunity. I am a widow, so I don’t have much money, but there’s no excuse; I could get a few anyway. Please send me a free sample of both, if possible.

God bless your ministry. I enjoy your paper *Our Firm Foundation*. I will send a few dollars here and there for the magazine. Thank you for everything.

RC, Michigan

I just watched your video of Hope and the miracles that God provided for you. Our Bible study group were blessed. If we could all just let Jesus lead, it would be wonderful what we would see that He wants to do for us so we can help spread the gospel!

I pray that when times are tough (as they are now for some) these miracles will be remembered and will encourage all of you in this most vital work that all of you are doing. May the Lord give all of you the strength to carry on. Many are blessed by your efforts. May He give you rest and peace when needed most.

DM, British Columbia, Canada

The New Year



I counsel you, my brethren and sisters, to commence the new year with a clean record. For the truth's sake and for Christ's sake, make every effort in your power to right your wrongs. Search your hearts critically, analyze your feelings, and remove every cause of dissension. If you have defrauded your brother, angels have written it against you. If you have failed

to make his case your own, and to manifest toward him tenderness and compassion, you have neglected your duty, and thus it stands registered against you. Whatever have been the mistakes and errors of the past year, let them be canceled now; let them not be brought into the new year, to mar the purity of its unwritten pages. Come to the Lord with hearts overflowing with thankfulness for past and present mercies, and manifest your appreciation of God's bounties by bringing to Him your thank-offerings, your freewill-offerings, and your trespass offerings. . . .

I advise my brethren and sisters to supply themselves the coming year with a home missionary box, wherein to deposit small bits of money for offerings to God, besides the regular tithe. Whenever there is an extra outlay for the gratification of the appetite, let an equal

amount also be dropped into this savings-bank. The sisters should have a separate box; and for every needless expenditure for ribbons, ruffles, or ornaments of any kind, they should drop the same amount into this receptacle. Let parents prepare a box for each of their children, and after explaining the principle, leave them with their conscience and their God.

Old and young frequently expend means for candies and other hurtful indulgences, and for dainties of which they have no real need. Let them put the same amount into these savings banks the coming year, and they will be surprised at the result. They will find quite a sum, which represents that which they have thoughtlessly squandered to please the taste and gratify pride, when had they practiced self-denial, they would have had for benevolent purposes an amount just double that which they have saved.

As Christians, let us show our faith by our works; and at the commencement of the year, let us enter upon a course of action which will meet the approval of God. Do not neglect to provide yourselves and your children with the little banks. The very fact that for every penny needlessly expended another must be deposited here, will prevent many an unnecessary outlay.

I now ask my brethren and sisters for a New Year's present, not for myself, but for the cause of God. This request will reach many after the new year has come in, but I trust they will not excuse themselves, thinking that it is too late to present their offerings.

— Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, January 4, 1881

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