Western Field Conference Report
Barbara Watts, Denver, CO
Camp Alta, Alta, California, August 22-26, 2012
“In Him we live, and move, and have our being.” Acts 17:28

The Western Field Conference was opened at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 22, 2012, by Elder Joel Barnedo, from Denver, Colorado, who read Acts 17:28 to introduce the theme of the conference and welcome all of the participants. He urged everyone to be conscious of the fact that God’s eye is always on us, so we can be joyful to do His work, to be happy, and to be very spiritual, for we expect to be translated to heaven at His coming.

Elder Barnedo reviewed the conference program, which was designed for heartfelt participation by the attendees. He also introduced three new books available through the publishing association: The Coming Kingdom, Hope of the Ages, and Urban Missionary.

Elder Larry Watts, from Cedartown, Georgia, then led the first music and praise meeting by playing “Calvary” on the violin. Sister Ernestine Schendel, from Sacramento, California, chose the hymn “Thanks to God for My Redeemer” and told the experience she made some years ago when she was kidnapped. Brother Christian Nelson, also from Sacramento, related an experience and selected the hymn “The Wonder of It All.”

Thursday, August 23
For morning worship, Brother Pedro Uriostegue, from Riverside, California, spoke about “Searching for God.” Every service during the conference gives us a new experience and has a special message for each individual, preparing us to meet God. “Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.”
Lamentations 3:40, 41. The result of this search is glorious, for He will “come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hosea 10:12. This is a deep, earnest, heartfelt action involving communication with the God of heaven, who promises to heal, forgive, and spare His people who humble themselves and pray.

Unfortunately, many individuals have no relationship with God; they serve the enemy while pretending to serve God. We need to ask Him to open our spiritual eyes so we can recognize Satan’s disguises. Our search for Him is not just for His blessings, but for Him; we need to cultivate a relationship with Him. The promise is that we will find Him. Just as a beehive is organized with guards to keep out pests and enemies, the church needs to have order and be united for its one purpose— to preach the gospel. And we should be ready to push away whatever is dangerous. Furthermore, God gives the bees intelligence to know from which flowers to gather pollen; these insects never gather from poisonous flowers. Likewise our searching should be carried out in the right place, in God’s holy word. In every church there needs to be a reformation so the Holy Spirit will have complete access to purify each soul.

For the Christian there is no tomorrow—just today, when we should ask ourselves, Am I among those who are saved? Only those with clean hands and pure hearts will stand in the day of God. The time will come when there will be no more time to search for Him. Let us take advantage of our present opportunities every day to have a new experience and be ready to greet Him with joy.

The children’s conference was conducted under the leadership of Sisters Ernestine Schendel and Anne Petrovich, from Sacramento, all day Thursday and for a half day on Friday. The theme of the children’s conference was “Fishers of Men.”

The conference theme was divided into three parts and studied in forums. A workbook had been prepared for each forum. The attendees were divided into three groups, with Elder Joel Barnedo interacting with the young people; Elder Larry Watts, with the men; and Sister Barbara Watts, with the women.

The summary statement for the forums is found in Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 162, 163: “The work of redemption involves consequences of which it is difficult for man to have any conception. ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.’ 1 Corinthians 2:9. [1] As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. [2] A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. God Himself is ‘the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.’ Romans 3:26. [3] And ‘whom He justified, them He also glorified.’ Romans 8:30. Great as is the shame and degradation through sin, even greater will be the honor and exaltation through redeeming love. To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image there is imparted an outlay of heaven’s treasure, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen.”

This statement portrays three phases of salvation—justification, sanctification, and glorification—just as does the theme verse of the conference. Thus, Forum 1 was titled “In Him” and focused on justification. The human being’s natural state is separation from God as the result of all mankind being in Adam when He gave his allegiance and respect to the fallen foe rather than to his Creator. To come out of darkness into heavenly light is a miracle accomplished by a partnership between Jesus Christ and the individual. The participants in Forum 1 shared what they had experienced from Isaiah 9:2: “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.”

Twelve Bible texts indicated what happens when one believes the promises of Heaven and accepts the gift of justification, such as John 5:24: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” Also discussed was how the concept of being “in Him” works in a practical manner. Every human being has three primary endowments that help him to choose to be in God and to stay in Him, including self-awareness (one’s own attitude), imagination and conscience (one should carefully consider what guides his conscience), and volition, or will power (self-discipline and heeding...
the Holy Spirit’s voice).

These concepts connect eternity to the here and now, for God’s work is to have each person be emptied of self and reach the high potential that He has for him or her. “A soul that depends on Christ with the simplicity that a child depends upon its mother is justified, for it becomes one with the Substitute, who was Justification and Redemption. Herein is love, that the heart and will are knit together in Christ Jesus.” – Daughters of God, p. 185.

At the end of each forum, the three groups came back together to summarize the ideas that had been shared in each group.

Forum 2, which was held after lunch, was titled “We live and move” and focused on sanctification. Again the attendees broke into three groups with the same leaders as in the morning. According to John 15:7, “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” Huge blessings come from depending fully on God. Because of His great sacrifice, everyone is in the same position as were Adam and Eve before they transgressed God’s command—in the sense that God grants each person the choice of to whom he or she will render allegiance and love. And sanctification is as much a gift as is justification, for God accomplishes it in everyone who is eager to be holy; eleven Bible references shed light on this concept.

Examining the meaning and ramifications of “living,” the Scriptures are clear that this occurs only in Christ, who is the resurrection and the life. “We have a character to maintain, but it is the character of Christ…. May the Lord help us to die to self, and be born again, that Christ may live in us, a living, active principle, a power that will keep us holy.” – My Life Today, p. 335.

And for sure, when one is in Christ and Christ is in him, he will “move.” “In the creation of man, the Lord designed that he should be active and useful.” – Counsels on Health, p. 95. Everyone will be benefited by considering how to improve especially his spiritual effectiveness and balance (for example, how he uses his time, exercises his primary talent, fulfills his family responsibilities, manages his health, earns his livelihood, provides a positive example for others, and represents Jesus Christ). In 1 Corinthians 12:7-12, everyone may discover his or her strongest ability given by God and consider how to increase its effectiveness. In having the mind of Christ, each one’s greatest purpose is to serve others so as to help them achieve their high, God-given potential. His intense desire will be to advance the interests of the heavenly, eternal kingdom.

Elder Oscar Valles, from Riverside, California, presented the evening service, titled “Worry.” He wanted to change the word so it would become positive, so he created the following acronym: Worship, Our, Redeemer, Remember, Yesteryear.

When one worries, he becomes stressed and can see nothing but what he is worrying about. Sadly, that makes it easy to lose sight of Heaven’s blessings. Hudson Taylor, the nineteenth century missionary to China, is supposed to have said: “Let us give our work and our plans into God’s hands; then there is nothing left to be troubled about.” In the world, money causes people a lot of worry. For example, too often after payday a person goes out to dinner and splurges; then at the end of the month he doesn’t have enough money. This is what life is like without Christ to guide and control it.

But there is no need to worry when we are in Christ’s love. He knows everything and will carry every burden for those who are in Him. Since God’s foundation is holy ground, there is nothing to be concerned about. Besides, worry is just too expensive, draining the energy that God gave us to face our daily tasks. In fact, it is said conservatively that just 10-20 percent of one’s worries actually happen; some put the figure at only 4 percent. In eternity we will be surprised to see what Jesus actually went through so we can have everlasting life. But, for us today, it should be clear that anxiety over our personal affairs does not empty tomorrow of sorrows and only makes today’s burdens unbearable. Furthermore, God gives no one the strength to carry the burdens of his own making.

Therefore, our responsibility is to study, pray, and do God’s will—to think, speak, and act as did Jesus. After all, salvation is a process of constant change, of having a personal relationship with Him. If we will commit the keeping of our soul to God, talk and think of Jesus, abide in Him, and rest in Him, He will make us conquerors. Let us keep our focus on Jesus’ coming and encourage ourselves and others to be active—to live—for Him.

Sister Amie Barnedo, from Denver, Colorado, led the music and praise service. “O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things.” Psalm 98:1. A testimony was given by Sister Liliana Estrada de Leon, from Riverside, California. Her family left the church for a while and had all the pleasures the world could offer, but they were not happy. After reading the chapter about repentance and conversion in Steps to Christ, this young sister didn’t like it and didn’t want to change. But a voice said, “Come as you are.” Then, two years ago, she submitted and made the decision for God. Now she is very happy, for Christ supplies every need. Sister Liliana then sang a song. Choirs and groups...
from the Huntington Park, Vista, Riverside, and Sacramento churches presented specials. Sister Amie called Elders Henry Dering, Oscar Valles, and Joel Barnedo forward to read the praises found in Psalms 23:1-6 and 91:1-16. To close, Elder Barnedo sang “He Lifted Me,” and Sister Amie sang “Like the Woman at the Well.”

Friday, August 24

Brother Oscar Valles conducted the morning worship. “Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His power.” Psalm 150:1. Angels are measuring every individual, and each of us will be held responsible for doing one jot less than we have the ability to do. Furthermore, we will be judged according to what we ought to have done. The world needs consecrated home missionaries, and the message is very strong when it says that no one will be registered as a Christian who has not been a missionary. This shows that such a person had no relationship with God.

We cannot be satisfied with performing the same service as did our fathers; in fact, we will walk in darkness if we are not constantly improving. But we don’t need to be afraid, because help from above is abundant to supply every need. In fact, it has been said that the heavenly universe is astonished at the apathy and listlessness demonstrated by professed Christians. What is every church doing to see that individuals in darkness receive the heavenly light?

Forum 3, which was held after breakfast, carried the title “And have our being,” focusing on glorification. The question is asked, If we truly cherish God’s gift of life to us (the miracle of being), how will we use it? A change from mankind’s natural condition of self-centeredness can happen only through a relationship with the One who is love. “To many everything connected with themselves is of great importance. Self is a center, around which everything seems to revolve. Were Christ on the earth now, He would say to such, ‘Launch out into the deep.’ Be not so self-caring. There are thousands whose lives are just as precious as yours. Then why do you wrap your coat about you, and hug the shore? Awake to duty and to usefulness! If you will launch out into the deep and let down your nets, the Master will gather in the fishes, and you will see of the mighty working of God.” – Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, p. 139.

In the setting of salvation, God glorifies man. But this will never occur if man does not first glorify God. Attributes which glorify God include love, respect, obedience, gratitude, honor, self-forgetfulness, trust, service, joy, faith, praise, and humility. Had Adam and Eve glorified God and returned to Him true love and respect, which He had given them, they would have been protected from the evil adversary and death. The same is true for each person today; everyone chooses whether to glorify God (seek first His kingdom, Matthew 6:33) and have his needs supplied, or to seek his own supposed self-interest and be left to his own devices. Indeed, seeking one’s own self-interest is destructive of his best interest. But glorifying God every moment of his existence leads to man’s being always providentially cared for and being glorified by the Ruler of the universe in the end and for eternity.

When a human being is recreated in the image of God, he is a revelation of Jesus Christ and invites everyone he meets to the marriage supper of the Lamb. What reveals that a person is a new creature in Christ? The answer is seen in the time, energy, and love that he devotes to those things that really matter for eternity. When one personally makes the commitment to represent Jesus, his foremost interest will be in advancing the eternal kingdom. Then God can safely bless him, for he will use the blessings for the right purposes. “For the Lord is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee.” Psalm 84:11, 12.

All three groups came together to share the most important thoughts from the forums. You may want to share the blessings of these forums in your church or circle of influence. For that purpose, three PDF files of the forum workbooks appear at the bottom of this report on the home page of the American Union website. Feel free to make as many copies of the workbooks as you wish, or order them from RLPA.
In the afternoon, as an extension of the forums which urged the participants to use their God-given talents to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with others, the books offered by Religious Liberty Publishing Association were laid out and made available for purchase at a special conference discount. The conference participants also had the opportunity to see and purchase the three new books that have been prepared for missionary outreach. Hope of the Ages presents Jesus Christ in the light of present-day needs and coming events. The Coming Kingdom focuses on the spiritual aspect of those prophecies that are particularly applicable to our day. Urban Missionary is a book by the late Sister Dorothy Demarest relating stories from a ten-year period of her missionary service in the 1970s.

For the beginning of the Sabbath, the conference participants came together to hear Elder Henry Dering, from Sacramento, California, present the topic “Yield Not to Temptation.” Although, as described by the apostle Paul, we are born with “another law in” our “members” (Romans 7:23)—including the lust of the flesh (appetite, passion, addiction), the lust of the eyes (attraction to earthly things), and the pride of life (1 John 2:16)—Jesus’ mission on earth changed all that. He removes the darkness and imparts glorious light. Following rules does not make a person better; Jesus Christ alone can do that. His holy word shows the way to righteousness, goodness, and holiness; and He Himself imparts holiness to all who yearn for and request it.

Jesus is the safety net. We need to look to Him constantly—to keep our focus on Him, following Him into the most holy place in heaven above. This requires spiritual eyesight; and that, too, is promised to all who long for it with all their hearts and plead for it. The early American evangelist Billy Sunday once said, “Temptation is the devil looking through the keyhole. Sin is opening the door and inviting him in.” Even though Satan has perfected the science of temptation, praise God that the evil one has no power unless one gives it to him. There is power in the blood of Jesus and in constant personal communication with Him. The secret is “in Him.”

Brother Mark Anthony Barnedo, from Denver, Colorado, led the music and praise service, which began with Brother Salu Tuilaepa, also from Denver, playing the ukulele and singing “I Am Weak, But Thou Art Strong.” The Huntington Park church choir sang “Lift Your Voices,” and then Brother Mark sang “I Will Praise You in the Storm.” Elder Larry Watts related part of the experience connected with his automobile accident at the age of 21, which totally changed the direction of his life; and Brother Mark shared how, through sickness and his acting in faith, God changed his perspective.

Sabbath, August 25
Brother Raul Macias, from Riverside, California, shared thoughts on “Salvation from Death” in the morning worship. He related experiences in which his life was spared, one of which was when a wall fell near him when he was a child; if he had been in a different place, he would have died. Raised as a Catholic, he decided to purchase a Bible and began to read it, wanting to know how to be saved. A brother in the Reform Movement helped Brother Macias to find answers to his questions concerning life and reasons for his existence.

Most people are not looking for the Lord and are afraid of death; they want the things of the world. But it is ironic that those who are afraid of death generally do not want to find out how to be saved from death. The story of Rahab in the city of Jericho shows how God will grant eternal life to all who connect with Him, regardless of their background. How thankful we should be that every living thing is in God’s merciful hands. We need to be aware of the time in which we live and want to be saved from death, for the Lord Himself, the Author of life, died to save every sinner.

The Sabbath school was led by Brother Christian Nelson. For the Sabbath service, Elder Tzvetan Petkov, president of the American Union, first called the children forward and told them a story, after which he presented the service, titled “Living in Him.” He extended greetings from the churches and groups in Cedartown, Georgia; Dallas, Texas; and Houston, Texas, where God has blessed with souls who have been baptized and others who are preparing to make a covenant with Him. Elder Petkov explained the phrase “in Him” as meaning existence, life, being. 1 Corinthians 15:22 states that all die in Adam and that in Christ all are made alive. Adam and Eve would have died immediately and eternally if Christ had not stepped in as the Saviour for them and all mankind. The whole human race was given life before anyone could do good or bad. Jesus saved you before you knew Him. In fact, the more than 7 billion people on this planet are alive because of Him. The six thousand years of earth’s history since the entrance of sin has been mankind’s second chance to make the choice of where to spend eternity.

According to The Desire of Ages, p. 616, “To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his food, but he is nourished by the
body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring.” It is important not to lose our awareness of the result of Jesus’ mission and sacrifice.

It is solely through Christ that we move; if Satan had his way, we would all be his slaves. “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:36.

Brother Petkov held up a small twig with leaves; it was very easy to bend it from side to side, for the twig was too small and weak to resist. But when it was placed between the palm of his hand and that of Brother Mark Anthony’s, no matter how hard one of them pushed, the other pushed back and the twig was unharmed. We are like the twig. When we call on Christ, if Satan pushes us on one side, Jesus pushes back. No matter how weak we are, this is how we are blessed to have a choice. In His day, even the demons testified of the Saviour’s power.

The devil tries to keep us busy; no doubt he placed every possible hindrance in front of each of us to hinder our attending this conference. But we have time if we want to; Jesus gives us time. God predestinated us to be conformed to His Son’s image; we are called, justified, and glorified, according to Romans 8:29, 30.

The example was given of a princess in Sweden who married her high school boyfriend. Unfortunately the man was not prepared to be royalty; he wasn’t used to having his every habit, action, and detail of life scrutinized and held to a standard with which he was unfamiliar. The day came when he wanted no part of such a life. Likewise, to be sons and daughters of the king of the universe requires preparation. If one is not sanctified and used to a holy life, what would he do in the heavenly places? But everything is provided for everyone to be prepared; all who accept Christ as their personal Saviour will have nothing to fear, for in Him they are obedient and He is in their hearts.

Every decision in life affects what will happen later. If we decide for God, we will be safe. Jesus is fighting for us, and His Spirit in us honors His holy commandments. If we fall, we can rise again, because of Jesus. Let us trust “in Him.”

After lunch, the Western Field officers who were elected by the delegates three days earlier were presented to the conference by Elder Tzvetan Petkov, as follows:

- **President**: Henry Dering
- **Vice President**: Joel Barnedo
- **Secretary/Treasurer**: Barbara Watts
- **Missionary Leader**: Oscar Valles
- **Youth Leader**: Mark Anthony Barnedo

The above five people constitute the Western Field Committee. Delegates who will represent the Western Field at the American Union delegates’ meetings in 2013 are: Henry Dering, Joel Barnedo, Oscar Valles, David Moreno, and Pedro Uriostegue. Ernestine Schendel is the alternate.

These brethren were prayed for and charged to carry souls and to lead, rightly representing the Saviour and His great love.

The following meeting was the youth and children’s program, led by Brother Christian Nelson, outgoing Western Field youth leader. First, the children presented specials related to the children’s conference theme, emphasizing that we are all called by Jesus to be fishers of men. Their songs included “I Will Make You Fishers of Men,” “Peter, John, and Andrew in a Sailboat,” “Jesus Walked on Water,” “Give Me Oil in My Lamp, Keep Me Burning,” and “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.” Several youth presented an “interview with Jesus’ disciples” about Him and experiences they had made with Him, based on stories in the New Testament.

Sister Liliana Estrada de Leon gave advice to her fellow young people about how to be careful in searching for a life companion. For example, check out how she peels potatoes so as to observe her character. Appropriate questions to ask are: Will she help me spiritually? How does he treat his mother? How does he treat his belongings? Does he love children and animals? Does she hold grudges? Does he love God? According to 2 Timothy 2:22, love is not superficial; it makes you smile! It is wonderful to have a home where God is the center. Brother Christian Nelson added, “The most important thing is love for Jesus. Let the children see and hear the beauty of holiness.”

The young Schendel family musicians from Sacramento, California, played a violin trio, “Ivory Palaces.” Then Brother Christian gave a list of the ages of some prominent Adventists in 1844, including James White (23), Ellen Harmon (17), John Loughborough (14), John Andrews (15), Uriah Smith (12), Merrit...
Cornell (17), O. Crosier (12), Stephen Haskell (19), and John Kellogg (16 when he became a teacher and 24 when he became a doctor). God is searching for spiritual young people and wants to place them at the forefront of His work. Therefore, let the young people be given appropriate spiritual responsibilities in the home and the church so they will develop strong, godly characters and show how much they love and honor the holy Creator.

The children from Sacramento, California, sang a few songs about developing Christian character: “Little by Little, Inch by Inch,” “Put Your Trust in David’s God, and Watch the Giants Fall,” and “The Poochie Lip Disease.” And then some of the older believers got involved, including Brother Guillermo Macias, from Riverside, California, who sang “Down from His Glory,” and a group of five brothers and sisters in their 70s, who sang “We Are Nearing Home.” Brother Salu Tuilaepa sang “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” and the meeting was closed with several violins playing “Creator Spirit.”

The Sabbath close and official conference close, conducted by Elder Henry Dering, gave more people the opportunity to praise God. “Friede mit euch,” a German song, was sung by a quartet. Sister Verica Dering, inspired by the conference theme, stated that there is only One who can give peace, comfort, and hope; with Him everything in our life and experience will fall into place.

Sister Lourdes Blue expressed her gratitude for the believers who have supported her; and Brother Nevin Uriostegue, who, along with Brother David Moreno, translated meeting after meeting with a wonderfully cheerful spirit, thanked his parents for raising him in this truth, with the beautiful gospel message. In addition, Brother Salu Tuilaepa (who is originally from American Samoa), told what a treasure it was to be present at a conference of the Reform Movement for the first time with his wife and how much he appreciated the kindness and friendliness that he had experienced. His heart is on fire to share Jesus with his family and those he meets. Sister Candelaria Lopez praised God for helping her with a number of health issues, including cancer.

Elder Dering spoke of several famous and infamous men who had an impact on the world, including Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Adolf Hitler, and Saddam Hussein; they lived and died. But none had the impact of Jesus Christ, who lived, died, and was resurrected 2,000 years ago. Because of Him we live!

He expressed his gratitude to all who attended the conference, which provided a unique opportunity for everyone to draw closer together. Special thanks were extended to the musicians and those who presented special music, as well as to the previous administration for the conference organization. The newly elected Western Field Committee wants to work in harmony with all of the churches. Let everyone find his or her special opportunity to reach out and bless others by sharing the light of Jesus Christ, who enables His faithful children to be a light to the world.

Elder Joel Barnedo also expressed his thanks to the pastors and their wives and to the Western Field Committee with which he served for the past two years. He sang a duet with his wife, “For Those Tears I Died,” and thanked everyone for their love.

Sister Ruth and Brother David Moreno, from the Huntington Park, California, church, were in charge of the last music and praise meeting. “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18. A ladies’ quintet sang “Majesty,” followed by a quartet singing “When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder,” and the Huntington Park choir presenting “I Want to Walk and Serve Christ.” Sister Joanne Ellis, from Denver, Colorado, expressed her great appreciation to the Lord and to Sister Delmy Pleitez for helping her overcome a long-standing back ailment.

Elder Tzvetan Petkov thanked the believers for their songs and experiences and gave his farewell with Romans 8:35: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”

The Riverside church choir sang “Friends,” and it was a special moment when Brother Pedro Uriostegue and his wife hugged their son Nevin, who had so faithfully translated many of the services, and expressed great joy for their son’s service for God; Brother Pedro likened the church to a worldwide family. Brother Guillermo Macias then sang “No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus,” Brother Mark Anthony Barnedo sang a
solo as he played the guitar, and Elder Larry Watts sang “The Light of God Is Falling.” At the end, the congregation sang “God Be with You Till We Meet Again,” a fitting close to a very full, blessed day.

Sunday, August 26
A good number of people attended the morning worship presented by Sister Delmy Pleitez, from San Jose, California, titled “Contemplating Christ and His Righteousness.” Referring to the Christian ladder in 2 Peter 1:5-8, she emphasized the thought that it is only when one is emptied of self-righteousness that the fruit of the Spirit can appear. There is never an end to learning, and we should be glad to see that we are continually advancing every day. In fact, when we are in Christ, we are already students in the great university of eternity right now.

However, there are some things that are not revealed to us on this earth. Because other things will distract us from what is critically important, God brings to us only those things that are necessary for salvation. “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.” Isaiah 45:22. Just as Peter could walk on the water as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, so we will be safe by constantly beholding Him and being changed into His image from glory to glory. According to Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 253, God leads His people step by step; life is a battle and a march, and there is no rest from the battle, which is primarily with self. No one is forced to look to Jesus, but one who does will experience His immeasurable love.

If we practice His presence every moment, thinking of Him before falling asleep at night, speaking to Him the first thing when we wake up in the morning, we are complete in Him. How do we manage our time? If we spend only a little time with Jesus, we will not grow! We can’t be on our knees all day, but every responsibility can be carried out with Him. Let us pray for each other and love one another, for we can do everything through Jesus Christ.

As we packed up and left beautiful Camp Alta, it was with gratitude to our heavenly Father for the precious time we could spend together for four days. There was a special sense of oneness that pervaded the forums and the meetings as each one listened with attentiveness to the experiences and thoughts related by others. Special thanks go to the presenters, the translators, the musicians, the Camp Alta kitchen staff, the conference organizers, and all of the participants who traveled from near and far to attend this spiritual feast. Let the blessings received be multiplied by being sealed in everyone’s heart and poured out to others, for “in Him” every aspect of our lives is secure.

Southeastern Field’s Music Camp Invitation
Lisbeth Hunger, Southeastern Field Education Leader, Cedartown, GA

Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Psalms 33:2

In culmination of the series of children’s camp meetings held in the Southeastern Field, we announce a special Music Camp to be held in December 2012 and combined with the Southeastern Field Conference. If you enjoy singing or playing an instrument—one you have studied for at least one year—then you are welcome to participate! During the camp, we plan to organize a choir and an orchestra with which to praise the Lord. The exact date, place, cost, and program will be announced soon. For more information, please call: 770-715-0419.

2012 Calendar

- December: Music Conference and Southeastern Field Conference