Our Firm Foundation

The 7th Day Sabbath Immaculate Law of God The Everlasting Gospel
Non-Immortality of the Soul Three Angels' Messages The Sanctuary

Vol. 2, No. 2 February 1987

Ellen White—Member of the Board

The Power of Music

Cry Aloud!

Losing Our First Love

Persecution and the Christian

The Mystery of Iniquity, see page 8
I remember no more." Hebrews 10:16, 17

With a new heart you are justified and God does not remember your sin anymore. Justification comes instantly when you are so sorry for sinning you want to stop. (See 2 Corinthians 7:10) We cannot be justified while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties. See Selected Messages, Book 1, 366; Testimonies, vol. 2, 355

But you ask, "How can I surrender my life and will to God? I have tried and I still do not have victory or real happiness." Inspiration gives us the answer:

"Many are inquiring, 'How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?' You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him. Steps to Christ, 47

Loving obedience brings happiness spontaneously. Tragically, very few Christians have found this beautiful experience of happiness because they never have had victory over their selfish hearts and motives. They have never felt the real joy of helping and blessing others as the first priority in their lives. As a result, their countenances never have the sunshine of heaven. They walk around with somber faces and are disturbed by the happy spirit of real born-again Christians. The born-again Christian knows that his sins are forgiven, and he speaks hope, courage, and faithfulness. When everything has gone wrong and the horizons of life are forbidding, their confidence is in God. They accept tragedy and sorrow with confidence that God is over all and that He will not allow them to be tempted above what they are able and will make a way of escape so that they will be able to bear the trial. They know the promises of God are sure.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1

We are living in serious, awesome times and we must be sober, denying ungodliness, and completely separated from worldly lusts. We must extend happiness to an unhappy world as we look for the soon and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let us remember, a real Seventh-day Adventist is a happy Christian.

RON SPEAR—EDITOR
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to give the straight testimony and to present Christ and Him crucified. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the truths that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world.—THE EDITORS

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We are accepting article-length (1800-2800 words) manuscripts (preferably typewritten) for possible publication in Our Firm Foundation. We are not in a position to give consideration to longer submissions. When sending material for our consideration, please retain your original manuscript and send us a photocopy. Should you desire advance notice of a decision to publish your article, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address all editorial correspondence to Managing Editor, Our Firm Foundation, P.O. Box 940, Eatonville, WA 98328.
What Must I Do?

Ellen G. White

BEHOLD THE Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." [John 1:29] I repeat words of John, "Behold the Lamb of God!" We are to contemplate the character of Christ. We are to meditate upon the cross of Calvary; for it is the unanswerable argument of Christianity. God's message to the impenitent, His warning to the backslider, is, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Those who bring the message to the soul may turn aside from the truth, but he who would be saved must keep his eye on Jesus. By beholding Christ he will learn to hate sin, that has brought to his Redeemer suffering and death. By beholding, his faith is made strong, and he comes to know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." [John 17:3] The sinner sees Jesus as He is, full of compassion and tender love, and by beholding this manifestation of God's great love toward fallen man in Christ's sufferings on Calvary, he is transformed in character.

While our salvation is wholly dependent upon Jesus, yet we have a work to do in order that we shall be saved. The apostle says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." [Philippians 2:12, 13]

The truth is that the human will must be in subjection to the divine will.

The work that we are to do is not independent of what God is to do, but a work of co-operation with God. The power and the grace of God are to be wrought into the heart by the divine Worker; but some go astray here, claiming that man has a work to do that is wholly independent of any work of God. Another class take the other extreme, and say that man is free from all obligation, because God does the whole work—both the willing and doing. But the true ground to take is that the human will must be in subjection to the divine will. The will of man is not to be forced into co-operation with divine agencies, but must be voluntarily submitted. Man has no power of himself to work out his own salvation. Salvation must be the result of co-operation with divine power; and God will not do that for man which he can do for himself. Man is wholly dependent on the grace of Christ. He has no power to move one step in the direction of Christ unless the Spirit of God draws him. But the Holy Spirit is continually drawing the soul, and will continue to draw until by persistent refusal the sinner grieves away the tender Messenger of God.

In the heavenly councils it has been decided by what means and methods the grace of Christ shall prove effectual in saving the soul. And it is clear that unless
the sinner consents to be drawn, unless he will co-operate with divine agencies, the end will not be attained. The work to be done is a united work. The divine and the human are to work together, and the sinner is to depend upon grace, while rendering willing obedience to the dictates of the Spirit of God. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

God has endowed men with reason and with intellectual faculties, but if these are untrained, left uncultivated, men will become like the savage heathen. The mind must be cultivated, and it is necessary that teachers present line upon line and precept upon precept, guiding and training the free-will moral agent so that he shall understand what it is to co-operate with God. God works in the human agent by the light of truth, and the mind, enlightened by truth, is capable of seeing truth in distinction from error. Open to the light of truth, free from prejudice, unbound by the opinions and traditions of men, the enlightened mind clearly sees the evidences of the truth, and believes it as from God. The man enlightened by truth will not call falsehood truth, and light darkness. The Spirit reveals to the mind the things of God, and to him who co-operates with God is the realization that a Divine Presence is hovering near. When the heart is open to Jesus and the mind responds to the truth, Jesus abides in the soul. The Spirit's energy works in the heart, and leads the inclinations toward Jesus. By living faith, the Christian places entire dependence on divine power, expecting that God will "will" and "do" that which is according to His good pleasure. As fast as the soul resolves and acts in accordance with the light that is revealed, the Spirit takes the things of God and gives more light to the soul.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name." [John 1:12] "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth)." [John 1:14] The Spirit of God is not commissioned to do our part of the work, either in willing or doing. It is the work of the human agent to co-operate with divine agencies. As soon as we incline our will to harmonize with God's will, the grace of Christ is supplied to co-operate with our resolve. But it is not to be a substitute to do our work—to work in spite of our resolutions and actions. Therefore, our success in the Christian life will not be because of an abundance of light and evidence, but will depend upon our acceptance of the light given, upon the rousing of the energies, and operating with the heavenly ministers appointed of God to work for the salvation of the soul.

If the sinner or the backslider settles himself in sin, the light of heaven may flash about him to no purpose, as it did about Saul when the bewitching power of the world's deception was upon him. Unless the human agent inclines his will to do the will of God, as finally Saul did, the light will shine in vain, and a thousandfold more light and evidence would do no good. God knows when the sinner has sufficient evidence, and says to such, "They said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul answered, "Who art thou, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And the Lord said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." [Acts 22:7-10] The Lord always gives the human agent his work to do. Paul was to work in compliance with the divine command. But if he had said, "Lord, I am not in the least inclined to follow your directions in working out my salvation," then, should the Lord have showered upon him a light tenfold as bright, it would have been useless. It is man's part to co-operate with the Divine. Here is where the conflict is to be sternest, hardest, and most fierce—in yielding the will and way to God's will and way, relying upon the gracious influences which God has exerted upon the human soul throughout all the life. The man must do the work of inclining. "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do." The character of the actions will testify what has been the nature of the resolve. The doing was not in accordance with feeling and natural inclination, but in harmony with the will of the Father in heaven. Follow and obey the leadings of the Holy Spirit; obey not the voice of the deceiver, which is in harmony with the unsanctified will, but obey the impulse God has given. This is what the heavenly intelligences are constantly working to have us do— the will of our Father which is in heaven.

The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever

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The man must do the work of inclining his will

God knows when the sinner has sufficient evidence

have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. . . If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." [Luke 16:29, 31] Paul had a terrible awakening when the light from heaven flashed upon him, and a voice
fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle, but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness.

God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. He sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us, through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him; your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.

Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.

Everything is at stake. Will the human agent co-operate with divine agencies to will and to do? If a man places his will on the side of God's will, fully surrendering self to do His will, the rubbish will be cleared from the door of the heart, the defiance of the soul will be broken down, and Jesus will enter to abide as a welcome Guest.


You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast

Hope International Campmeeting: Since summer is always full of activity, it's best to plan ahead. Now's the time to jot down on your calendar the dates for the Hope International Campmeeting. We've done our best to work around other meetings in the Northwest (and still fit it into our own hectic monthly schedule) and have settled on July 30 through August 2, with a special session on home schooling to be presented by Gwen Hawkins on Monday the third.

Last year we had approximately 400 in attendance, and felt that the blessing was well worth the effort. We expect a larger group this year, and it will help us to plan if you will let us know in advance if you wish to camp on our grounds. NOTE: we are not equipped to provide RV hookups or dump stations.

Video Series Now Available: Pastor Spear's normal weekend series of revival meetings, the Preparing for Eternity Series, is now available on two four-hour video tapes. Subjects presented include Job—The Perfect Man, The Seven Essentials for Holy Living, Message to Laodicea, Closing Events and the Final Crisis, and Are We Really Seventh-day Adventists?

Video will never replace a real, live preacher, but it can go where the preacher cannot. This new set is ideal for small groups, prayer meetings, and the like, and is much less expensive than paying transportation costs. Pastor Spear's meetings have been a blessing to thousands, and we believe video will now extend that influence tremendously.

Suggested donation for the set of two tapes (eight hours of programming) is $45.00.
Whatever Elder Canright said and wrote in those days [1880s] meant as much to our people as the words of our most prominent leaders do today. But in view of what he has said and written since that time, and because of my intimate association with him, I feel it to be my duty to make a brief statement, with all the love in my heart it is possible for a human being to have for an admired, fallen friend.

Elder Canright talked freely with me about everything in which he was interested, about his personal difficulties, about his past trials and sorrows, and of his future hopes and plans. He seemed to find consolation in going over these things with me. He evidently felt that while I sympathetically listened, I would not repeat. Not until the present have I made any public statement of the facts I am now to state, and these are given not to condemn him, but if possible, to save others even as strong as he from the pitfall into which he fell.

His estrangement began and developed through harboring that greatest seductive thing that finds its way into some human hearts, which I name an abnormal desire to be great, not great in the true meaning of the word, but great only in the estimation of people—to be popular.

The elder was remarkably bright, and grew rapidly from his humble beginning, through the blessing of God and the power of the message he proclaimed with Heaven-bestowed ability. He was so greatly admired and openly praised by our workers and the laity, that he finally reached the conclusion he had inherent ability—that the message he was proclaiming was a hindrance to him rather than the exclusive source of his power. He gradually grew sensitive and resentful, and when reproof came through the testimonies, he rejected it, and finally gave up everything and began warring against the Spirit of Prophecy and the message which had made him all he was.

During the summer and fall of 1880, immediately after graduation, I, with other students from Battle Creek College, attended Professor Hamill's School of Oratory in Chicago. Elder Canright, inoculated at heart with a belief that through a thorough study in, and mastery of, expression he could accomplish his consuming desire to be a popular public speaker, joined us; and because of my former pleasant association with him, I became his critic as he lectured, upon invitation, through the influence of the School of Oratory, in many of the largest popular churches in Chicago during the summer vacation of the pastors of these churches. In these lectures he applied the oratorical principles taught in the school, and needed a critic versed in these principles, to follow him in his lectures and later point out his misapplications, and of course to compliment him on all that were rightly applied. He had more invitations than he could possibly accept, so he selected those from the largest and most popular churches.

One Sunday night, in the largest church of the West Side, he spoke on "The Saints' Inheritance" to more than 3,000 people, and I took a seat in the gallery directly in front of him, to see every gesture and to hear every tone, form of voice, emphasis, stress, and pitch, and all the rest. But that was as far as I got in my part of the service, for he so quickly and eloquently launched into this, his favorite theme, that I, with the entire congregation, became entirely absorbed in the biblical facts he was so convincingly presenting, I never thought of anything else until he had finished.

After the benediction I could not get to him for more than half an hour, because of the many people crowding around him, complimenting and thanking him for his masterly discourse. On all sides I could hear people saying it was the most wonderful sermon they had ever heard. I knew it was not the oratorical manner of the delivery, but the Bible truth clearly and feelingly presented, that had appealed to the people—it was the power in that timely message. It made a deep, lasting impression upon my mind. I saw that the power was all in the truth, and not in the speaker.

After a long time we were alone, and we went into a beautiful city park just across the street, which was almost deserted because of the late hour of the night, and sat down to talk the occasion over and for me to deliver my criticisms. But I had none for the Elder. I frankly confessed that I became so completely carried away with that soul-inspiring biblical subject I did not think once of the oratorical rules he was applying in its presentation. Then we sat in silence for some time. Suddenly the Elder sprang to his feet and said, "D. W., I believe I could become a great man were it not for our unpopular message."

I make no immediate reply, for I was shocked to hear a great preacher make such a statement, to think of the message, for which I had given up the world, in the estimation of its leading minister, being inferior to, and in the way of, the progress of men was almost paralyzing. Then I got up and stepped in front of the Elder and said with much feeling, "D. M., the message made you all you are, and the day you leave it, you will retrace your steps back to where it found you."

D.W. Reavis, I Remember, 117-119
The Mystery of Iniquity

The Popularity of the present pope is phenomenal. Everywhere he goes he is met by presidents, monarchs, prime ministers, and other heads of states who honor him with 21-gun salutes or ticker-tape parades while tens of thousands worship and deify him as a god in human flesh.

Another great phenomenon is the Protestants' acceptance of this man of sin as a great world evangelist. Billy Graham, in a recent interview with a major news magazine, designated the pope as a great evangelist. What does the Scripture say concerning the power this man represents?

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10

Ellen White, God's prophet for the end time, saw a confederacy of Satan's power by the remarriage of Protestantism with the Papacy.

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the Papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this three-fold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." Testimonies, vol. 5, 451

Very soon the deadly wound described in Revelation 13:1-3 will be completely healed and the whole world will wonder after the beast power; then the great combined forces of so-called Christendom will arise and persecute God's holy, peculiar, remnant people.

The popes of the past have openly declared that what Rome has done for other countries, she will do for the United States. The present pope with all his charisma has not changed that philosophy.

When we review the tragic history of the Dark Ages and the Reformation, we see the rack, the fagot, the stake, and the agonizing death of millions of martyrs. There were dungeons filled with God's saints who agonized in prayer for their persecutors. This persecution is what Rome is again planning for our country and the world. Let us look at...
what inspiration tells us is to come:

“Church and state are now making preparations for the future conflict. Protestants are now working in disguise to bring Sunday to the front, as did the Romanists. Throughout the land they are piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions are to be repeated. And the way is preparing for the manifestation, on a grand scale, of those lying wonders by which, if it were possible, Satan would deceive even the elect.” Ibid., 449, 450

Do we as God’s remnant Seventh-day Adventists in these last moments of time really understand what lies ahead in the very near future? Let us remember prophecy never fails.

Now, our beloved Constitution is in jeopardy. A constitutional convention will soon be called for the purpose of limiting the liberties we have enjoyed as a Christian nation, whose founders fled from Europe because of the wrath of the dragon power of Revelation 12. Let us keep these inspired statements in mind:

“It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy.” Signs of the Times, February 19, 1894

“The goodness, mercy, and love of God were proclaimed by Christ to Moses. This was God’s character. When men who profess to serve God ignore His parental character and depart from honor and righteousness in dealing with their fellowmen, Satan exults, for he has inspired them with his attributes. They are following in the track of Romanism.” Testimonies to Ministers, 362

God has never led a man or group of men, whether it be a committee or church board, to make decisions contrary to His divine counsel as revealed in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Rome has ever been anxious to do for the United States that which she has done for other countries. The glorious era of the Declaration of Independence and of the United States Constitution, hailed with joy by every lover of liberty, was an era of “clouds and thick darkness” for her. Rome has had sinister designs against this government and nation ever since that period. But she found herself powerless to carry out her wicked machinations as long as the government abided by the Constitution. Rome knew this, but what could she do?

Professed Protestant Americans are persuading Congress to reverse this order of things, to abandon the principles of the Constitution, and legislate in behalf of so-called Christian religion. A Sunday law, upon a purely religious basis will soon be passed, and thus the barriers of protestation will be removed, the flood gates will be opened, and Rome will have her age-old dogmas. She will seize and appropriate to her own uses all the historical lines of proof brought forward by these professedly Protestant Americans in support of the theory that this is a Christian nation, and that they are the proper authorities of what constitutes “acceptable Christianity.”

“Let not the commandment-keeping people of God be silent at this time, as though we gracefully accepted the situation. There is the prospect before us of waging a continuous war, at the risk of imprisonment, of losing property and even life itself, to defend the law of God, which is being made void by the laws of men.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 975

We, as Seventh-day Adventists, have told these professed American Protestants all these years that Rome would restrict religious liberty. They would not believe us. Now this prediction will soon come to pass. The nation will be doomed to destruction, sold by the priests and rulers to the “man of sin.” By Rome the great American Republic will be ruined.

“A time is coming when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God’s people be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin.” Ibid., 977

“When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” The Great Controversy, 445

But thank God Rome will meet her end in the operation, and her long and disgraceful career will be terminated by Him who is called “Faithful and True,” who “in righteousness doth judge and make war,” and whom “the armies which are in heaven” do follow, and by whom “the beast was taken” and cast alive into a “lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Then will be fulfilled the word of the angel who was sent by Jesus Christ to John when he
was upon the isle of Patmos: “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.” (Revelation 18:20) And all the redeemed saints will rejoice, and well they may.

To the prophet Daniel, while in holy vision, the angel said:

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many; he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.” Daniel 8:23-25

By reading the eighth chapter of Daniel from the first verse down to the twenty-third, it will be clearly seen that these verses must apply to Rome, and to no other power but Rome. It is Rome that is to be “broken without hand.” It may be urged that this passage applies only to the destruction of the Roman Empire and not to the Roman Catholic Church. Not so; Rome as an empire was destroyed long ago by the barbarian tribes of ancient Germany. Rome as an empire was not “broken without hand.” Nevertheless, the principles of pagan Rome exist in papal Rome just as truly as they did in the empire. The fundamental principle of Rome from first to last, from start to finish, is self-exaltation.

It is therefore clear from the above Scripture that the Roman Catholic Church will perish “without hand,” that is, without the hand of man. It is the hand of God that will destroy her. This fact is stated in the following words from Holy Writ:

“After this I saw in the night visions, and beheld a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great wicked thing to an extent that will in any way compare with the degree to which the Roman Catholic Church has done it. Of the Papacy, Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, said: “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” (2 Thessalonians 2:4) Let us remember that the temple of God is that place where sins are forgiven. But the Papacy claims the power to forgive sins. It therefore follows that the Papacy does put herself in the place of God, in the temple of God.

This tragic scene now lies before the remnant church:

“This is an age of signal rejection of the grace God has purposed to bestow upon His people, that in the perils of the last days they may not be overcome by the prevailing iniquity and unite with the hostility of the world against God’s remnant people.

**Under the cloak of Christianity and sanctification, far-spreading and manifest ungodliness will prevail to a terrible degree**

words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” Daniel 7:7-11

Now all this was said concerning a power of whom it was also said: “He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High.” Every one of these statements is true of the Roman Catholic Church; and moreover, they all are pre-eminently true of her. Other powers have spoken great words against the Most High; but no power has done that

Under the cloak of Christianity and sanctification, far-spreading and manifest ungodliness will prevail to a terrible degree and will continue until Christ comes to be glorified in all them that believe.

“In the very courts of the temple, scenes will be enacted that few realize. God’s people will be proved and tested, that He may discern ‘between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.’

“Vengeance will be executed against those who sit in the gate, deciding what the people should
have and what they should not have. These take away the key of knowledge. They refuse to enter in themselves, and those who would enter in they hinder. These bear not the seal of the living God. All who now occupy responsible positions should be solemnly and terribly afraid lest in this time they shall be found as unfaithful stewards.” Manuscript 15, 1886; Pauison Collection, 55

Are We Ready?

Do we love righteousness more than sin? Is the character of Jesus being reflected in our daily lives? Are we overcoming sin by the blood of the Lamb? Are we ready for the inevitable—the time of trouble, the sealing, the latter rain, the loud cry, Satan’s personation of Christ, the close of probation, the seven last plagues, and the coming of Christ?

Honestly we must confess that we are no more ready for the second coming than the Jewish who have been loyal to the commands of God have been imprisoned and died rather than yield their God-given rights to worship God according to the Bible truths. What has been taking place in the communist world for years will soon come to this great nation of liberty and freedom.

The church is strong in numbers (five million), in learning, and intelligence, and strong in wealth and social influence. And yet the church is weak, unable to grapple successfully with the error, the immorality, and the sins of our country, the world, and our church.

And why this weakness? What is the cause of this inability of the church to make itself felt as a powerful and dominant force in opposition to all these evils? Is it not the prevalence of a worldly spirit in the church? Because the church is so much conformed to the world, to its sentiments and customs, it cannot earnestly and consistently insist on reforms dangerous snares which Satan has prepared for the church will come through its own members who do not love God supremely or their neighbor as themselves. Satan is continually striving to wedge himself in between brethren. He seeks to gain control of those who claim to believe the truth, but who are unconverted; and when he can influence these, through their own carnal nature, to unite with him in trying to thwart the purposes of God, then he is exultant.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 477

“The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld must be given under the fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith. And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending. These apostates will then manifest the most bitter enmity, doing all in their power to oppress and malign their former brethren and to excite indignation against them. This day is just before us.” Ibid., 463

“Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted. We who occupy this solemn, responsible position, what are we doing, what are we thinking about, that we cling to our selfish love of ease, while souls are perishing around us? Have our hearts become utterly callous?” Ibid., 464

In conclusion, let us keep in mind these inspired thoughts:

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” Romans 13:11, 12

The most dangerous snares which Satan has prepared for the church will come through its own members
Losing Our First Love

Ellen G. White

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hast the Name of an apostle, and art not made known to be an apostle of Christ. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Thine is a decay, a declension in holy zeal—not forsaken is the object of it, but lost is the fervor. The first affection of the convert to Christ is deep, full, and ardent. It is not necessary that this love should become less as knowledge increases, as the more and increased light shines upon him. That love should become more fervent as he becomes better acquainted with his Lord. God sees that there is not heart service, a love for Jesus, an earnest zeal in His work.

We must carefully review the ground over which we have traveled

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." How much need there is for the people of God at this time to consider the words of the Majesty of heaven, and carefully review the ground over which they have traveled, and see and understand where the very first step was taken in the wrong path! Absence of zeal and devotion, of earnest, willing service in the cause of God, shows how indolent many professed followers of Christ are, how destitute of earnest, heartfelt effort. They might have been going on from strength to strength, from light to still greater light. They might have become strong in faith had they walked on from step to step, thinking more of Christ than of themselves.

The Lord has a right to expect more of His believing children than they give Him. Every individual Christian is indeed the light of the world. Christians connect with Christ. They reflect the character of Christ. They have been entrusted with great treasures of light; the oracles of God have been given to them,
and in these they have been thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Every provision has been made, and why have the individual members of the church wearied of their Lord? Why does he who professes to love God refuse to obtain from the Source of light and power the oil of grace that he may be a bright and shining light? The church has had great opportunities, great privileges, and why is the light growing dim? Why does it not shine to the world? His church whose individual members are advancing, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, is the elected means of the Redeemer's system for enlightening and saving the world. Christ lived and suffered and died to establish a church capable of doing this noble work. He bought her, He cleansed her with His own blood, and clothed her with the garments of His salvation. He laid the cornerstone upon the blood-stained rock of Calvary. He made His church the depository of His precious law, and transferred into her hands in a high and holy sense the work of carrying out His holy designs; that the church should take the work when He left it, and carry it forward to its consummation.

The Lord of righteousness is walking amid the golden candlesticks. And He watches every dim burning lamp of His individual believers, and says, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. . . . He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Could mortals find language more impressive, more to the point, than these words of Christ—words of Him who says, "I know thy works"?

Could mortals find language more impressive, more to the point, than these words of Christ—words of Him who says, "I know thy works"?

If we, like Chorazin and Bethsaida, are exalted to heaven in point of privilege, and, notwithstanding the abundant mercy and loving, tender compassion of God, indifferently regard His great privileges and are not responding to the light and opportunities bestowed, He will come in judgments for impinence of His churches, and remove the light, and let darkness take its place. Those who are connected with Christ, bearing the yoke of Christ, and lifting His burdens, will be constantly self-denying partakers with Christ of His sufferings. They will be one with Christ, in deep sympathy with Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, that He might bring us to His side in heaven. This is the religion that is earnest, deep, firm, and far-reaching, and ensures rest, and peace, and fullness of joy.

The only way to grow in grace is to be interestedly doing the very work Christ has enjoined.
upon us to do—interestedly engaged to the very extent of our ability to be helping and blessing those who need the help we can give them. This is the only way we can grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Christians who are constantly growing in earnestness, in zeal, in fervor, in love—such Christians never backslide. They are becoming more closely identified with the Saviour in all His plans. They are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Their wisdom is increasing, their ability how to work. They seem to comprehend the largest plans. They are ready to engage in the most stirring enterprises, and they have no room for slothfulness; they cannot find a place for stagnation.

Those who are ever pressing a little closer to the world, and becoming more like them in feelings, in plans, in ideas, have left a space between them and the Saviour, and Satan has pressed his way into this space, and low, worldly-tainted, selfish plans become interwoven with their experience. God’s voice is addressing this class, which are not few; “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” It is of consequence that you hear attentively and obey. Come into close relationship with Christ. Keep your souls in constant contact with the world, and its customs will become your customs, its practices will become your practices, if you place yourselves where you will see and hear and feel and act as they do.

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean.” [2 Corinthians 6:17] Turn quickly to Jesus Christ. Yield your pride, your self-love, your selfish aspirations, your love of the world, which are death to spirituality. Repent quickly. Delay not in deciding, lest you be too late. Elevate your soul’s aspirations to higher spheres of action in Christian activities. Those who do this are the only class in our churches that will grow. They will speedily attain the highest moral efficiency and the clearest spiritual perceptions. They will have unusual vigor and steadiness of faith. They will know how to pray and be persevering and earnest in prayer. And all those who are deeply and interestingly engaged in the salvation of others are the more surely working out their own souls’ salvation with fear and trembling. The piety that does not reveal itself in working interestingly for others, will become a form, strengthened, bigoted, self-conceited. Coming in contact with souls for whom Christ has died, seeking to bring them to repentance, and evidencing every act of disobedience to the Word of the Lord is exposing you to irreparable loss. Every moment of ease, of self-indulgence, secured by you in neglecting the divine admonitions and call to duty in earnest work for the Master, is placing you under the power and control of the prince of darkness. Your candlestick may at any moment be moved out of its place.

Four mighty angels are still holding the four winds of the earth. Terrible destruction is forbidden to come in full. The accidents by land and by sea; the loss of life, steadily increasing, by storm, by tempest, by railroad disaster, by conflagration; the terrible floods, the earthquakes, and the winds will be the stirring up of the nations to one deadly combat, while the angels hold the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.

The angels hold the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.
man He calls to be exercised in His work. Duty admits no rival, enters into no compromise with any opposing powers. The most precious friends and relatives must not step in between your duty and your God. The voice of duty is the voice of God in our souls. Obedience to its claims brings us into living personal agreement with the highest law in the universe—brings man into alliance with God.

Let the churches be aroused. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." This message concerns all our churches. You can never employ your faculty of hearing better than in hearkening to hear what the voice of God speaks to you in His Word. There is a rich and abundant promise to those who overcome. It is not enough to enter upon this warfare; we must pursue it to the end. We must know nothing of yielding. We must fight the good fight of faith to the very end. To the overcomer is promised the triumphal victory. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Whatever was lost in the fall of Adam is more than restored in redemption. He that sitteth on the throne saith, "Behold, I make all things new." Let us look closely and critically to ourselves. Are not the vows we entered into at our baptism violated? Are we dead to the world and alive unto Christ? Are we seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God? Is the cable cut which anchored us to the eternal Rock?

Are we drifting with the current to perdition? Shall we make no effort to press and urge our passage upstream? Let us not hesitate longer, but vigorously apply the oars; and let us do our first works ere we make hopeless shipwreck.

It is our work to know our special failings and sins, which cause darkness and spiritual feebleness, and quenched our first love. Is it worldliness? Is it selfishness? Is it the love of self-esteem? Is it striving to be first? Is it the sin of sensuality that is intensely active? Is it the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness? Is it will be those who are evil, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, who are sensual, who are controlled by the master-worker in all evil, who will have to be separated from the church.

"I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." [Revelation 2:2] This labor of purifying the church is a painful work, but one that must not be neglected, if the church would have the commendation of God. But repent, because thou hast left thy first love. Here is plainly presented before us our work as members of the church of Christ. If we are faithless, we shall lose the crown of life and another will take it; for in the dropping out of the faithless the places are supplied by the faithful. If we refuse to let our light shine for the Master, if we do not do the works of God, others will do that very work which we might have done and could have done, but refused to do. When we cease to fulfill our mission, when the candlestick refuses to reflect light, and the great truths committed to us individually are not given to the world, then the candlestick will be removed.

the misuse and abuse of great light and opportunities and privileges, making boasted claims to wisdom and religious knowledge, while the life and character are inconsistent and immoral? Whatever it is that has been petted and cultivated until it has become strong and overmastering, make determined efforts to overcome, else you will be lost. It is these cherished sins, abhorrent to God, that make enfeebled moral courage, and leave you to choose to walk apart from God, while you retain a miserable, heartless, outward form. Once the soul was all aglow with love for Jesus; but all this is changed. The great Head who moves in the midst of His candlesticks will never be without a church. There will be faithless ones who will go out from us because they were not of us. There will be apostasies. But "nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." [2 Timothy 2:19] There

When the candlestick refuses to reflect light, and the great truths committed to us individually are not given to the world, then the candlestick will be removed.
Recap of Part One: Amid the tumultuous events which rocked the Adventist Church in the first years of this century, E.A. Sutherland and P.T. Magan gained an experience on both sides of the matter of misapprehension. First, allowing themselves to be influenced too largely by their old friend John Kellogg, they showed all too well their distrust of the General Conference leadership. They soon found, however, that they were working at cross purposes with God in this matter. In 1904 the tables were reversed, and when they took up a new work in the South they felt the sting of their brethren's lack of confidence in them.

Ellen White refused to "side" with either party. Supporting truth wherever she found it, and rebuking the hardness of heart of all concerned, she sought the furtherance of God's work. Seeing the Lord's leading in the two men's decision to move south, she accompanied them on the riverboat Morning Star as they sought property for their project. In addition, she gave the new school a benefit not granted to any other organization; for the first and only time, Ellen White agreed to serve as a member of a Board of Directors. It is well that she did, for the Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute was soon to face hard times.

The struggles of sincere, yet sometimes erring, men are not new. Still, this story deserves our interest. Not for the keeping of record as to who was at fault, or the casting of recrimination upon men long dead, but for the learning of lessons given of God to our spiritual ancestors.

When the "Madison school" (as the institution was most commonly known in its early days) came into existence, it met with a mixed response. The relatively few workers of the Southern field were thankful for any help they could get, and a school—especially one intended primarily to train workers for the South—was a real godsend. Still, there were questions, louder and more pronounced the farther north one went, as to the intentions of this group of "renegades." After all, they had done some rather startling things during their time at Berrien Springs.

The abolishing of degrees, for instance. And operating a college on a farm. And having students spend half their time working at a trade. But the biggest question mark was their unfortunately heated resignation and the avowal that they could no longer work with the brethren at the General Conference.

The temptation was strong to cut all ties and let the little group of pioneer educators drift away. To be relieved of their presence seemed the easiest way out of an uncomfortable situation. In fact, it appeared to be the only way out, for the conference now had no control of the situation whatever. It was a perplexity, to be sure.

The whole story is not known now. Writing to the "Workers at the Madison School," Sister White...
counseled, "Silence is eloquence. To open up all matters concerning the beginning of your work at Madison would not be wisdom. I have just received a letter regarding your work, but I can not now deal with it as I wish. I wish to say to you, Be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. ... It will not be safe to try to make all understand everything. Those things that are of a private character, you should not make public. Let them be kept within the knowledge of your special few."  

We can but imagine how many men in positions of responsibility spent sleepless hours wrestling with the question of how the church should relate to this departure from all "normal" procedure. The same gospel of Luke which says "He that is not against us is for us," (9:50) also says "He that is not with me is against me." (11:23) Which verse would apply? Where did this new school really stand?  

A good course to follow would have been to check with the organization's board. Especially might they have asked Ellen White. Perhaps the inquiry was made. Perhaps the strangeness of the situation prevented the answer from really "sinking in."  

Whatever the case, during the years of 1906, 1907, and 1908 we find a stream of letters encouraging the workers at Madison, and exhorting the leaders of various conferences to press in to help in the work at Nashville. Often gifts of money were suggested. But there were even more basic needs. Writing to Elder A.G. Daniells, Sister White said:  

"Words of instruction were given to me to speak to you and Elder Evans, and Elder Washburn. I said, You have a work to do to encourage the school work in Madison, Tennessee. There are but few teachers among us who have had experience in carrying forward the work in hard places. The workers who have been striving to carry out the mind and will of God in Madison have not received the encouragement they should have had. Unless Brother Sutherland is relieved of some of the pressure that is upon him he will fall under the burden.  

"You may ask what is needed. I answer it is encouragement. ... "It is your privilege, Brother Daniells, and the privilege of those who have wide influence in the work, to let these brethren understand that they have your confidence and encouragement in the work they are bravely doing. Brother Sutherland is in a precarious state of health. We can not afford to lose him. ... Means should be appropriated to the needs of the work in Madison, that the labor of the teachers may not be so hard in the future."  

The gulf between the two parties was not easily spanned. In November of 1907, C.C. Crisler wrote A.G. Daniells offering his understanding of the difficulty. From later events, it appears that he misapprehended certain points of the situation. Still, his letter offers a valuable insight into the thinking of the day.  

Expressing his former concern that some of Sutherland and Magan’s ideas "regarding independent work were not fully in accord with the generally accepted views we have held on organization," he explained how he had resolved the dilemma in his own mind:  

"As soon as I learned from Professor Sutherland that the original design of himself and his associates to found a new school that would be entirely independent and self-supporting, was not carried out because of instruction through Sister White to maintain a living connection with their brethren, and to look to their brethren for partial support, a ray of light entered my mind. I thought I could now see a great difference between the school they have established at Madison, and the sort of school they once thought of establishing. At Berrien Springs they were proposing to carry forward, in the Southern field, independent institutional work in the manner in which independent private work is carried forward by an individual not in the employ of any conference. They were counseled not to do this, but to help individuals, and families or groups of individuals (not institutions, please note), to demonstrate the feasibility of carrying on self-supporting work as self-supporting Seventh-day Adventist missionaries. Those whom Professor Sutherland and his associates were to train, were to establish small centers of influence, not training schools, on a self-supporting basis."  

(All emphasis his.)  

Exactly what "great difference" in the nature of the school Brother Crisler thought he saw as the result of its not being located in a more isolated location—as  

It is your privilege, Brother Daniells, to let these brethren understand that they have your confidence and encouragement in the work they are doing  

---
to men. The message would be carried to every country, and souls now in darkness would be brought to the light."

"Every possible means" was probably used, at least by the workers at Madison, and by 1909 thirteen rural schools were educating more than 500 children. In the years to come, more than forty such enterprises were established, some of which—contradicting Brother Crisler's expectations—clearly deserve the title "training school."

Brother Crisler's misunderstanding of Madison's work is not mentioned to detract from his intelligence or dedication to the Lord's work, but to point out how difficult it was for good men, even those working closely with Ellen White (Crisler worked at that time as one of her literary assistants), to understand how this new entity could fit into the denominational scheme of things.

Still, when he wrote Elder Daniels, he brought to light one valid problem area: "There is one position taken by the members of the Madison faculty, that is often misunderstood—and possibly not always without cause, because of the use of certain terms in attempting to express the idea. This position is with regard to conditions that may prevail in the future, at the time when thousands, with faces lighted up with holy joy, will go forth into all parts of the earth to proclaim the message. "The brethren at Madison hold that as the time of the end approaches, more and still more self-supporting work will be done by consecrated men and women. . . Thousands will go forth into all parts of the world because they are impelled by the Spirit of God to go. They will go, not as disorganized integers, but as members of one united body; yet they will at times be isolated from their fellows, and will be compelled to look to God alone as their Counselor. While laboring in harmony with their brethren elsewhere, they will not look to any organized body for support, but will trust in God to supply their necessities. . . ."

"Of course, we cannot now foresee just how this will be done in detail, in every instance, in a time when it will have become almost impossible to keep in communication with all the various parts of our organization. As we enter these times, the Lord who has taught and led us thus far will surely show us the right way. . . ." It is my conviction that the less we say now about how we may find things in the future, with regard to forms of organization, the better it will be."7

Brother Crisler's best efforts in the latter part of 1907 were unable to resolve—or even fully identify—the issues which caused the brethren to remain somewhat aloof from the group at Madison. But a clearer understanding was not long in coming. On September 23, 1908, a much more accurate analysis of the difficulty came from Ellen White:

"The Lord has instructed me that, from the first, the work in Huntsville and Madison should have received adequate help. But instead of this help being rendered promptly, there has been long delay. And in the matter of the Madison school, there has been a standing off from them because they were not under the ownership and control of some conference.

In the matter of the Madison school, there has been a standing off from them because they were not under the ownership and control of some conference.

We have here some good advice which might profitably be considered even by some today. When we go beyond the clear, definite teachings of Scripture, and begin to fill in details of which we have no sure knowledge, "guessing" on this point and that, we inevitably produce faulty speculations which, in Ellen White's words, would "better be strangled in the cradle."

Considering Adventism's rightful emphasis on the end of all things, and especially taking into account the turmoil of a few years before concerning Sunday laws in various states, it is not difficult to see how the attention of the Madison faculty would be focused on the closing up of this world's history. But to attempt to explain just how the Lord's work will be carried out under the conditions of "a time of trouble such as never was," is to invite misunderstanding. Such an effort may be prompted by motives as "harmless as a dove," but it falls far short of being as "wise as a serpent."
their situation, and when many of the leading men in our con-
ferences ignored them, because they did not place their school
under conference dictation, I was
shown that they would not be
helped by making themselves
amenable to the conference. They
had better remain as led by God,
amenable to Him to work out His
plans.”

It was difficult for men to
understand how they might co-
operate with and even support an
effort over which they held
no control. Perhaps it involved a
certain amount of fear—fear of
the unknown, the unpredictable.
Perhaps it involved pride. We
may never know, nor is it neces-
sary that we should. After all, the
Lord is the judge of such matters.
But still we may learn from
the experience. It would be well
to ponder what our own reactions
might have been had we been in-
volved with these events of 80
years ago. Would we have co-
operated with those who lent
their influence to the closing of a
school about which the Lord’s
messenger could write:
“The work that the laborers
have accomplished at Madison
has done more to give a correct
knowledge of what an all-round
education means than any other
school that has been established
by Seventh-day Adventists in
America. The Lord has given
these teachers in the South an
education that is of highest
value, and it is a training that
God will be pleased to have all
our youth receive.”

What would we have done?
Where would our influence have
been felt? These questions are
hypothetical, of course. But they
deserve our thought. We should
ponder the past often, for, specu-
late as we may, we know not
what the future holds.

1. See Emmett K. Vande Vere, The
Wisdom Seekers, 80-118
2. Unpublished Manuscript Testimo-
nies, [Spaulding and Magan Collection],
393
3. See ibid., 375, 376, 385-389, 391-
393, 395, 396, 398-403, 410-412, and on
4. Ibid., 395, 396
5. C.C. Crisler, The Value of Organiz-
tion [tract], 1914, n.p., 38, 59
6. Unpublished Manuscript Testimo-
nies, 423
7. Crisler, op. cit., 42, 43
8. Seventh-day Adventist Bible Com-
mentary, vol. 6, 1064
9. Letter 314, 1907, to Elders
Daniels and Evans, Manuscript
Release, 582, 4, 5
10. Letter 168, 1908; Manuscript
Release 883, 14

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honors in psychology at the University of Sydney,
but from there their careers and service have
diverged. Russell then completed medicine, choosing
to specialize in internal medicine, and achieved
membership in the Royal College of Physicians,
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y, and then a second Masters in education.

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The Power of Music

Part Two

H. Lloyd Leno

As noted in our previous article, music enters the mind on the subconscious level because it is received first by the thalamus, which records it as either a pleasant or an unpleasant sensation. The cortex is not involved, the powers of reason and judgment are not employed. Now notice these statements by Ellen White: "Satan has no objection to music if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth." *(Testimonies*, vol. 1, 506) "Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind." *Ibid.*, 497

The implication of these for the Christian should be frightening, especially when considered along with these statements: "The natural mind leans toward pleasure and self-gratification" (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 325); "Satan is using every means to make crime and debasing vice popular... The mind is educated to familiarity with sin" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 459); "When it suits his purpose, he [Satan] can impart to men sentiments that are enchanting." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 27

Now, if music can affect us subconsciously, we need to know just what effect it has. Scientific investigations prove music can bring about mood changes by affecting the body chemistry and electrolyte balance. But can the thoughts be affected by music without words? Mrs. White wrote: "No one who has an indwelling Saviour will dishonor Him before others by producing strains from a musical instrument which call the mind from God and heaven to light and trifling things." *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 510

Note that in this instance it was instrumental music that she... sheet music," and in the next sentence she again spoke of the use of "instruments of music." (*Ibid.*, 497) Other expressions such as "pleasing infatuation" (*Ibid.*, 506), "deprave the imagination" (*Ibid.*, vol. 4, 653), and "abundance of enthusiasm, and a kind of inspiration" (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 339), show a causal relationship between the musical atmosphere and the mood of the people involved.

By contrast, she described the activities of those enrolled in the schools of the prophets: "No frivolous waltz was heard." (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 97) Whatever the music was, we know it was a kind opposed to frivolity.

Our brief survey of scientific studies showed that response to music can be physical, that muscular energy can be affected, movement can be inhibited or stimulated, and that repetitive rhythmic music has a hypnotic effect. Mrs. White warned that "Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind." Other statements which relate music to physical activity are these: Music has power "to promote harmony of action" (*Education*, 168), "a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall."
(Testimonies, vol. 1, 506) Speaking of the effect of a certain kind of music she wrote: "It prepares the participants for unholy thought and action." Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, 339

Music and Environment

If scientific investigations regarding music are valid and the inspired counsel is correctly interpreted, we should be able to find some evidence in life situations that music does, in fact, have an influence and that this has been true throughout history. Furthermore, we want to discover what type of music was, and is, detrimental to character.

A great deal can be learned from observing music in its original setting, and its basic function. Some would object to a consideration of association as evidence of musical meaning and influence; but there is a reason for the close affinity of certain kinds of music with certain activity. It cannot be mere coincidence. It has to do with the intrinsic qualities of the musical material. As Finklestein says: "The human imagery of music, the key to its content, is confirmed by people through their very use of it."1

Recently Blue Cross Insurance Company issued a study of the youth scene in America entitled Adolescence for Adults. Believing that "public health education starts with understanding," Blue Cross commissioned a group of sociologists, psychologists, and writers from various educational institutions to make an in-depth study of the youth culture, its philosophy, mores, and morals.

The analysis of the musical scene entitled "Songs of the Hang-Loose Ethic" begins with this provocative statement: "Popular music has troubled Americans ever since the turn of the century when ragtime and jazz began to evolve and be played in the off-limits of southern and eastern cities. From its inception, it was colored with some of the ill repute of the peoples from which it sprang . . . and ever since . . . many people have wor-
ried over the vulgarizing and immoralizing influences of the wild new music."2

History bears out the accuracy of this statement with one exception, the dating of ragtime. According to the black-music historian Eileen Southern, piano ragtime developed during the years 1865 to 1875. Minstrel shows (vaudeville theater) also emerged at this time.3

Through the syncopated banjo figures used in these performances, the music of the minstrel shows contributed directly to the development of ragtime. (The term rag was used synonymously with the word syncopation.)4

According to Southern, "The fusion of the blues and ragtime with the brass band and syncopated dance music resulted in the music called jazz."5 Descriptive names for functional music are common, and the etymology of the name jazz is doubtless significant. Many ingredients of jazz, as well as jazz itself, were so closely associated with the immoral entertainment world of which it was a part and so appropriate for the brothels, it was only natural that a term with this connotation should be chosen.

Webster's New World Dictionary states: "Jazz, Creole patois (dialect) jass, a sexual term applied to the Congo dances (New Orleans); present use from Chicago, c. 1914 but from earlier similar use in the vice district of New Orleans." The historian Borroff quotes a famous black entertainer who confirms that jass was a "four-letter word" common in the New Orleans brothels.6 Later, it became a common slang expression for sexual intercourse in many parts of the United States.7 Some have attempted to equate the entire popular jazz musical scene with folk music. Some folk-type elements such as the field hollers, work songs, and spirituals were among the elements that contributed to jazz, but the result was not more folk music. Jazz has no parallel anywhere in the world. It is a distinctive musical manifestation whose style and development bear no resemblance to any body of folk literature anywhere. The success of the many State Department tours of jazz groups to all parts of the world is convincing evidence of the universal appeal of jazz.

Continuing as an integral part of the lower class entertainment world, jazz soon became accepted in all economic levels of society. Through the years it evolved and changed with the social climate and created a lucrative industry. Even though new styles emerged, the old ones continued to be used. Today jazz exists in many forms; in addition to its fusion with rock, older forms have been revived.

It seems more than a mere coincidence that during these years (1865-1869) Ellen G. White should receive visions with instruction and warnings for Seventh-day Adventists about the music used in the theater and the dance hall. Not only did she mention music used for these types of amusements (see Testimonies, vol. 1, 506; vol. 4, 652; Patriarchs and Prophets, 707, 708), but also warned that at social gatherings of professed Christians (pleasure parties) certain music had a powerful influence on attitudes and behavior.

The etymology of the name "jazz" is doubtless significant

There was mirth, abundance of enthusiasm, and a kind of inspiration
She described one scene thus: "One was seated at the instrument of music [piano?], and such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep. There was mirth, ... abundance of enthusiasm, and a kind of inspiration; but the joy was such as Satan only is able to create. This is an enthusiasm and infatuation of which all who love God will be ashamed. It prepares the participants for unholy thought and action." Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 339

Additional insight into the background of the counsels of Mrs. White can be obtained by noting the specific activities in the entertainment world during this period. We know that much of the instruction contained in Testimonies, vol. 1, and Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students was directed to the young people of the church, the sanitarium, and the college in Battle Creek. Some useful information was obtained through examination of local newspapers of that era.

Public Entertainment 1880-1896

As we would expect, the two daily newspapers in Battle Creek, the Daily Journal and the Nightly Moon, carried advertisements, as well as comments, on a variety of entertainment items. They ranged from recitals, band and choir concerts, to theater productions of various kinds. A place known as Hamblen's Opera House scheduled everything from lectures to grand opera. Evidently the most popular types of entertainment were productions (called shows) that included a combination of music, drama (serious or humorous), dancing and novelties. Many of these were "big name" companies from New York and Philadelphia.

The advertisements were notably explicit—some samples: The Twelve Temptations: The most remarkable, Mighty Massive Marvelous and Magnificent Show Ever Conceived or Designed to Travel; The Bowery Girl: A Happy Blending of Sensation, Comedy and Pathos Interspersed with Bright and Catchy Songs, Dances, and Up-to-Date Specialties; The Devil's Auction (Accompanying this latter ad is a picture of three scantily clad dancing girls).

Another significant type of song-dance-act show was the Southern or Minstrel Show. From the frequency and number of different companies appearing there, it is apparent this type must have had wide appeal. Some examples of this type were Calendar's Genuine Colored Minstrels: Mississippi Levee Dancers, Genuine Jubilee Shouters, No Time-worn Songs, No Old Torturing Jokes, No Worn-Out Sketches, Everything New. The South Before the War, 60 Sable Soulful Singers, Sunburned Southern Silhouettes, Cammeeting Shouters and Shooters, Gunny-Sacked Cotton Picking Choristers, Male and Female Afric-Hued Artists, Rollicking, Ravishing, Rep Roaring, Round of Rare and Rousing Revelry.

It is important to note here that minstrel shows made two important contributions to the development of popular music. First, the syncopated banjo figures carried directly into ragtime, which we have seen was an important element of jazz. The ragtime pianists were for years the entertainment in brothels and saloons in New Orleans, as well as farther north. Second, minstrel shows made extensive use of the song-dance combination. It is common knowledge that with their accompanying gestures their songs were often suggestive and lewd.

With this historical background of entertainment practices in Battle Creek, consider the relevance of these statements taken from Counsels to Teachers, 325-341: "The desire for excitement and pleasing entertainment is a temptation and a snare to God's people. ... He [Satan] keeps up a continual excitement. There are shows, ... and an endless variety of entertainment that are calculated to lead to a love of the world. ... The natural mind leans toward pleasure and self-gratification. It is Satan's policy to fill the mind with a desire for worldly amusement. ... (325) Among the most dangerous resorts for

The influence of superficial Christians attracts others

pleasure is the theater. ... It is the very hotbed of immorality. ... (334) Between the associations of the followers of Christ for Christian recreation and worldly gatherings for pleasure and amusement will exist a marked contrast. ... (336) There has been a class of social gatherings ... that have been a disgrace to our institutions and to the church. They encourage ... hilarity, and trifling. Professed Christians who are superficial in character ... are used by the tempter as his decoys. ... Their influence attracts others. ... They do not discern that these entertainments are really Satan's banquet." 339-341

Thus, we have seen that once again specific divine counsel was given to the church at a time when it was most needed, and it was not only prophetic in terms of exposing the immediate problem but also in anticipating the discoveries of science.

How these counsels relate to modern life and the extent to which they agree with contemporary sociologists and psychologists, as well as entertainers, is the subject of the next article.
**Religious Liberty Update**

**Bedfellows:** Jerry Falwell, commenting on fundamental Christians voting for conservative candidates overwhelmingly, said, "They do indeed. While the religious right could not be called ‘Republican,’ the Republican Party platform and the agenda of the religious right have been almost identical throughout the Ronald Reagan era.” Conservative Digest, June, 1986

**Conscience Waning:** Name-calling is still very much in vogue. But where the concept of wrong is really important—as a guide to one’s own behavior or that of one’s own side in some dispute—it is missing; and this is as true of those on the religious right who are going around pronouncing great masses of us sinners as it is of their principal antagonists, those on the secular left who can forgive or ‘understand’ just about anything. As individuals and as a society we do things every day that we know to be wrong. “As I listen to the moral arguments I become ever more persuaded that our real problem is this: the ‘still, small voice’ of conscience has become far too small—and utterly still,” writes Meg Greenfield. Newsweek, July 28, 1986

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**COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

“In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.” The Great Controversy, 443

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Government authorities have padlocked some church headquarters, churches and schools.

Under the guise of the “common good” and restoration of “traditional values,” the First Amendment guarantees are eroding rapidly.

Religious political confederacies are seeking to make the nation officially Christian and to use public schools for proselyting children.

The Supreme Court is poised to establish religion under the premise of “accommodating religion,” a threat unmatched at any time in our history.

Diminishing protection comes as government erodes the wall separating church and state, demanding that churches conform to public policy or lose their tax exemption, so vital to free exercise of religion. Religious organizations have responded by seeking to enforce their own dogma on society through governmental decree.

**COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

CRF is a noninstitutional, independent organization with freedom and flexibility to defend religious liberty. Its directors are experienced, responsible, and active leaders in God’s remnant church. John V. Stevens, Sr., Religious Liberty Director for the Pacific Union, serves as president.

What does it do? It enforces and aids in legal defense of religious rights and privilege through court cases and friend of the court briefs, by communicating with government leaders, and through news media releases.

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February 1987 Our Firm Foundation 23
PERSECUTION
and the
CHRISTIAN

THE FACT of persecution and trial in the life of the Christian poses one of the human mind's puzzling problems: Why is it necessary that suffering and pain be always a part of the experience of the child of God? And why is it that such a powerful God, a tender Father, full of love, should allow His creatures to go through the agony of physical and moral suffering when He is completely able to deliver them?

When Peter started to refuse to let the Master wash his feet, Jesus told him, "What I do thou knowest not now." (John 13:7) We are not in a position to understand in the present world all of God's reasons for permitting something. His wisdom is infinite, whereas our mind, our understanding, and our experience are finite. Just as we cannot expect to contain the whole sea in a glass, so we cannot grasp God's ways by our limited minds. Thus we need to exercise faith and accept what God allows to happen in our life as best for us.

But on the other hand, God does not want our faith to be a blind one. Within the reach of our understanding we have enough facts to give our faith a firm foundation and to make ours a "reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) We have enough promises, experiences, and explanations to let us fully trust in the wisdom and the love of our heavenly Father.

The Blessed Purpose

The following list suggests some of the benefits of trials and persecutions in the life of a Christian:

1. Trials strengthen our faith in God, since faith, like muscles, increases through exercise. Think of what happened in the lives of Job, Joseph, and Paul, and in the blessed results of their vicissitudes.

2. They produce a state of mind in which we are more prone to pray. Thus they open for us the door of communication with Heaven and make it more possible for God to convey to our hearts the message we need.

3. They cause us to examine our lives, to ponder our spiritual needs and character defects, and to ask God if some personal sin or mistake caused the tribulation.

Fernando Chajj
Does anything in me prevent God from blessing or intervening for my success? What does the Holy Spirit want to teach me through the experience?

4. They prepare our character for heaven. "No cross, no crown," wrote Ellen White, "How can one be strong in the Lord without trials? To have strength we must exercise. ... It is through much tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom of God." Testimonies, vol. 3, 67.

a. Difficulties cleanse us from selfishness. "Often we enter the furnace of trial with our souls darkened with selfishness, but if patient under the crucial test, we shall come forth reflecting the divine character," Christ's Object Lessons, 175.

b. They remove character defects. "You need not be surprised if with hammer and chisel God cuts away the sharp corners of your character until you are prepared to fill the place He has for you. No human being can accomplish this work. Only by God can it be done. And be assured that He will not strike one useless blow." Testimonies, vol. 7, 264.

c. Hardships defeat self-trust and show the self-sufficient their helplessness: "Everyone has undiscovered traits of character that must come to light through trial. God allows those who are self-sufficient to be sorely tempted, that they may understand their helplessness." Testimonies, vol. 7, 210, 211.

d. Trials enable us to receive from Him renewed strength and increased humility. "When trials and tribulations come to you know that they are sent in order that you may receive from the Lord of glory renewed strength and increased humility, so that He may safely bless and support and uphold you." My Life Today, 185.

We miss very much because we do not grasp the blessings that may be ours in our afflictions. All our sufferings and sorrows, all our temptations and trials, all our sadness and griefs, all our persecutions and privations, and in short all things, work together for our good. All experiences and circumstances are God's workmen, whereby good is brought to us. Let us look at the light behind the cloud." Ibid.

f. Problems should teach us to be tolerant of others that suffer. "But this experience [great agitation and trial] was just what they needed to teach them forbearance toward others in a similar state of trial." Testimonies, vol. 2, 20.

5. They enable us to understand and help others who face tribulation. "Blessed be God who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort where with we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4

Persecutions in the Past

One of the most encouraging blessings Christ pronounced in His Sermon on the Mount was, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4 He does not specify the reason for the mourning. Whatever the kind of trial, He calls those that mourn blessed and promises them comfort. It affects those who reap, what they have sown, even those who weep because of their own sins. If they are sad, if they suffer, God stretches His hand out to uphold them.

But if Christ's blessing applies to one kind of tribulation more than any other, it is persecution. He refers to it in Matthew 10:16-18: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. They will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake." God's promises that assure His children of His care and love, especially during persecution, do not imply that He will always protect them from suffering or deliver them from death. Millions of martyrs lost their lives during the fierce persecutions of the Roman Empire and during the terrible ordeals of the Middle Ages and afterward. But the more Satan instigated humanity to impose suffering and death on the Christians, the more their wonderful and courageous testimony won new hearts, convinced new minds, and caused the kingdom of God to prosper. As a result, Satan changed his tactics and began to corrupt the church by other means. He gave her popularity, full freedom, the official favor of the government, and finally united her with the state.

Whenever oppression occurred it kept the church growing.
But whenever oppression occurred it kept the church growing spiritually and numerically. And in spite of relatively peaceful times, "till the close of time there will be a conflict between the church of God and those who are under the control of evil angels." Acts of the Apostles, 219

The strength of the church and her effectiveness in witnessing for Christ reached a peak during apostolic times and immediately afterward, when the church faced difficult times. She preached the gospel in the then-known world and even made an inroad in the imperial palace.

They will have to abandon the cities and crowded areas

Persecution in the Last Days

But persecution is not only a matter of history. Right now countries exist where the children of God have to work under difficult conditions. Restrictions and oppression will soon become global, according to Bible prophecy.

The beast of Revelation 13:11-14 with two horns like a lamb, the great country that up to now has fulfilled a blessed historic mission by being a stronghold of freedom and religious liberty, in the near future will speak as a dragon. Transforming itself into a persecuting power, it will unite itself with the first beast of Revelation 13, Rome, to impose obligatory Sunday religious observance in violation of the fourth commandment and to require allegiance to religious dogmas that are in conflict with the Word of God.

To those who decide to be loyal to God instead of to man it will deny even the most elemen-
tal constitutional rights. They will not have the right to work under normal conditions or to buy and sell. Eventually they will have to abandon the populated cities and crowded areas, where life will be impossible for them and where they would be the target of boycott.

Nevertheless, despite hard circumstances they will have to finish the church’s task. The church must acquaint the great cities and the whole world with the truth about God so that everyone can intelligently make a decision. Most probably some may lose their life, many will suffer affliction, and we will see the history of martyrdom renewed once again, although not to the extent it was in the Middle Ages.

After the close of probation the trials and trials will be even greater. The human governments will issue a death decree against Sabbath keepers. (Revelation 13:15) But we have the assurance that no martyrs will die during the time of trouble: "If the righteous were now [during the time of trouble] left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness." (The Great Controversy, 634) "So I saw that the people of God, who had faithfully warned the world of His coming wrath, would be delivered. God would not suffer the wicked to destroy those who were expecting translation and who would not bow to the decree of the beast to receive his mark." Early Writings, 284

Now is the time for us to develop in our characters the elements of strength, courage, faith in God, and absolute dependence on Him so that such events do not take us unaware. It is time to cultivate a relationship so close with the Lord that we will naturally remain loyal to Him in perplexing circumstances.

God does not remain passive or uninterested during the church’s fierce battle against the powers of darkness. First of all, let’s remember that Christ already has won the battle for us, and from then on Satan has been a defeated enemy, bound to destruction. Christ’s victory during His life and on the cross not only assures ours but also makes God vitally concerned about our fight. More than that, He is aggressively involved in it and provides us with everything we need to triumph.

During our terrible struggle He offers us the heavenly panoply. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:10, 11) Speaking of spiritual armor, Paul assures us of its absolute effectiveness, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” (2 Corinthians 10:4) No matter how solid are his strongholds, no matter what devices the enemy uses, the weapons God puts at our disposal are mightier and more effective.

We do not fight alone. Jesus pronounces a blessing on His persecuted children, especially the ones afflicted for His sake. (Matthew 5:10-12) And if God considers us blessed, we have no reason for any fear or defeat. To the contrary, we should “rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is... [our] reward in heaven.”

When we remember that God watches over us, we can know that no temptation, no affliction,

With every temptation He mercifully gives us a way out

will prove greater than we, with His help, can endure. With every temptation He mercifully gives us a way out. It should prompt us to go forth with courage and faith.

In the Christian vocabulary victory is the great word. It is not merely a philosophical concept, a
wishful thinking, or a vague possibility. Rather, it is an absolute reality. As John watched the prophetic screen with eager interest to see what would happen after the conflict between good and evil ended he saw something that filled his heart with joy and praises.

"I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels

stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God." Revelation 7:9-11

They are the victorious. When one of the elders asked, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" the revelator answered, "Sir, thou knowest. And he [the same elder] said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (7:13, 14) In other words, they are the redeemed who in life went through persecution, affliction, and tribulation. Every one of them is a living testimony that in Christ our victory is assured.

Food for Thought

In 1964, a most remarkable "prophecy" was made. This "prophecy" stated:

"Those who teach that Christ took a superior human nature draw the logical conclusion that it is impossible for the rest of mankind to perfectly obey the law of Jehovah in this life. Those who accept this "new view" of the incarnation, logically take the side of Satan in the great controversy over the law, claiming that God has not made provision for us to obey it perfectly. If God's people accept this delusion, then there will be no third angel's message, no sealing of the saints, no finishing of the mystery of God, no cleansing of the sanctuary, no community of the saints prepared to live without a Mediator, no first fruits of the harvest, and no people ready for translation—at least as far as they are concerned. Ellen G. White saw that God had three steps to the platform of truth. (Early Writings, 258) Satan has three steps down from the platform. The first is the teaching that Christ took the human nature of man as it was before the fall. This leads to the second step—to the teaching that man cannot find grace to obey perfectly the law of God in this life. This will inevitably lead to the third step—giving up the Sabbath. This last step must logically follow the original premise, for if it be conceded that we cannot obey all the law all the time, then there is no point in the Sabbath being a test question." The Incarnation of Christ, Adam's Human Nature Versus Fallen Nature, 7, 8

This reasoning was an excellent exercise in doctrinal logic. Once a person believes that Christ had a nature superior to his own and thus had a marked advantage over mankind in the battle with Satan, then logic demands the acceptance of the belief that obedience to the Decalogue is impossible in this life. Once that doctrinal aberration becomes part of one's belief, then by yet another step of logical deduction it becomes superfluous to keep the Sabbath Day holy, for this concept would necessitate the logical conclusion that it cannot be achieved. Second, obedience to the fourth commandment is a sign of holy living, an attainment which this view teaches cannot be obtained, even by a Spirit-filled individual.

The pattern of doctrinal belief adopted by Robert Brinsmead most certainly has fulfilled this "prophecy" to the letter. Having once been a strong exponent of the fact that Jesus took our nature, he later—in the early 1970s—entirely reversed this belief. In this doctrinal turnaround, he was followed in a rather sheeplike fashion by a large number of his followers. Brinsmead now declared that Christ indeed had a nature superior to our own, namely, that of Adam in his pre-fall condition. From this point, Brinsmead commenced boldly to preach that obedience to the Decalogue was impossible, and then in 1980 he took the third logical step which had been foretold in the "prophecy" by abandoning the Sabbath. This fact was made public in his book Sabbatarianism Re-Examined.

The amazing fact is that the "prophecy" quoted above came from the pen of Robert Brinsmead himself.

Taken from Adventism Challenged, 399, 400, by Russell R. and Colin D. Standish. For availability, see advertisement on page 19.
I am not an Adventist, but I have recently been exposed to the truth concerning the Sabbath and how important the fourth commandment is. I recently made a commitment to God to read His Word daily and asked that He would show me His will for my life. Well, lo and behold, doors began opening everywhere and the truth began flooding in. I am absorbing as much information as I can. I am writing because among the many sources of truth God sent was a neighbor who subscribes to your publication. I can't tell you how exciting it is to discover something wonderful and then find out you have a friend who knows this wonderful thing also. Anyway she said she had heard that you also have a publication for non-Adventists. If this is so, I would like to receive this in addition to your regular publication.

Ann H. Webb
Haleyville, Alabama

A sample copy of Truth For Today, our publication for non-Adventists, has been mailed to all subscribers of Our Firm Foundation including Ann Webb.

~EDITORS

Please renew our subscription for another year to Our Firm Foundation. It has been a valuable resource tool for us in witnessing/sharing with our church brethren. We appreciate the straightforwardness of the articles.

Al and Bonnie Perry
Canon Falls, Minnesota

I read the March 1986 issue of Our Firm Foundation (the only one I have) and I was tremendously touched by God's Holy Spirit to make an even deeper commitment of my life to God—to do all I can to win others to Christ—and to prepare even more for our Lord's imminent return. The issue was simply wonderful. I am an Adventist of 25 years—since I was 25—and I can certainly see the end is near.

God bless the outreach you have started. May it continue to wake us all up out of our spiritual lethargy—and renew our relationships with God.

J. Yvonne Pittmon
Orangeburg, South Carolina

You will never know this side of heaven just how much I enjoyed that first issue. I felt like it was sent from heaven. I just thank you so much. I read it over and over. I never felt before in my life like I did when I read that first one and I am 83 years old—been a Seventh-day Adventist 40 years.

Jessie Spoone
Clinton, South Carolina

My heart and soul just thrill me to see a magazine with the truths and standards of God being uplifted here. Every time I pick one up the Holy Spirit goes to work. We are in the last days and it is time we need the straight testimony and to set a firm foundation for God's people. I hope everyone will be uplifted by the word of God in this magazine, as I have been, and will be true followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and endure to the end. This is a magazine this church desperately needed to get out of a sleeping Laodicean stage and wake up to the truths of God. Thank you so much for taking a stand for Jesus with this straight testimony and may God continue to bless this magazine.

Jim Hornung
Dickinson, North Dakota

I can't tell you how much your publication means to me. I have known the truth since February '86, and the Lord is changing my life rapidly. I pray for more light and I believe it's being revealed to me. I am not too sure what the full meaning of righteousness by faith is yet, but I do understand obedience through the blood of the Lamb better. I have been writing down spirit of prophecy and Bible quotes and I am finding out from certain pastors that waking up the church is not going to be as easy as I first thought. But there is a group of us that are going to spread the message with God's help. The testimonies are straightforward and have to be told. I praise the Lord daily for what He's done for me and what He's told me.

David Beaudoin
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
The Heart Throb of Christ is the Heartbeat of Isaiah 58

Cry Aloud!

Beveridge R. Spear

Although Isaiah chapter 58 sounds nine dire threatenings of wrath against the sins of God's people, yet seventeen beautiful promises of love and reward echo and re-echo like the soft tones of silver bells.

"Cry aloud, spare not" is quoted no less than fifty-one times in the Spirit of Prophecy writings. It is a signal warning against sin in the remnant church, but it is not a harsh, unfeeling reproof from God. It is rather, an outburst of divine love and concern for His people.

My brethren, God is calling for a definite, specific work to be done for all of us in all our churches, and there is no ground for misunderstanding. Notice the explicit instruction: "My brethren, you need to study more carefully the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. This chapter marks out the only course that we can follow with safety. . . .

"The prophet receives this word from the Lord--a message startling in its clearness and force: 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' Though they are called the people of God, the house of Jacob, though they profess to be linked with God in obedience and fellowship, they are far from Him. Wonderful privileges and promises have been given to them, but they have betrayed their trust. With no words of flattery must the message be given them. 'Show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.' Show them where they are making a mistake. Set their danger before them. Tell them of the sins they are committing, while at the same time they pride themselves on their righteousness. . . . Worldly policy has come into their business and religious life. Their hearts are not purified through the truth. God looks on their outward ceremonies of humility as a solemn mockery. He regards all religious sham as an insult to Himself." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, 1149

Don't muffle God's crisis message in Isaiah 58 with smooth words minimizing its importance: "Our work now is to rouse the people. . . . The Lord has a message for His people. This message will be borne, whether men will accept or reject it. . . . The message must not be muffled with smooth words or fair specchies, crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, to those who are turning away from God. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' [Isaiah 58:1, 2]" Ibid.

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet" is God's command to His ministers, "and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." (Isaiah 58:1) This thunderbolt declares that the remnant church is unready for either the latter rain or the loud cry, because of selfishness and sin. Not until apostasy is dead within can anyone overcome apostasy without.

The Problem of Self-deception

"Cry aloud, spare not . . . shew my people . . . their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God." 58:1, 2

The remnant are a good, hard-working people. They attend
Do you make imposing pretenses of piety and call it a fast?

our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?” (58:3) Why is it, Lord, You do not always answer our prayers? We go to Sabbath School, church, and prayer meeting, and pay tithe. We try so hard to be faithful. We pray for our sick and for our wayward children, yet You seldom answer. Don’t You see or hear, Lord? Don’t You care? Notice God’s answer:

"Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. [You mix carelessness with your devotions and are oppressive with those over whom you have authority.] Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness.” (58:3, 4) God suggests that all double talk be overcome. He says, “If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity” you shall find peace and victory and harmony. 58:9

The Lord now asks His remnant people some pertinent questions: “Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?” (58:5) In other words: Do you make imposing pretenses of piety and call it a fast? But this is not “an acceptable day to the Lord.”

In contrast with Laodicean formalism God demands: “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” 58:6

In this experience every element of mental, spiritual, and physical oppression; every advantage taken of the poor and helpless; every disappointing neglect of the sick and aged are to be overcome. All pressure but that of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit is to be removed from the oppressed, so that all may be “free” in Christ, no man thinking himself master of another.

Freeing "the oppressed" also includes instruction in salvation from sin, temperance, and health reform; medical attention for the unfortunate; food, clothing, shelter, and every other relief measure. In all things let us follow Him “who went about doing good.” (Acts 10:38) Every attachment with the world that in any way weakens the soul's devotion to Christ is to be broken, for to be yoked with the world as the Hebrew root signifies means "to be fallen in decay.

The Lord speaks to His church: “Deal thy bread to the hungry, and . . . when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him.” (Isaiah 58:7) Here are specific directions if conscientiously followed would utterly destroy selfishness. For when a person deals his food and clothing to the poor, looks after the comforts of the unfortunate and the sick, he is truly walking in the footsteps of Christ. But no one can willingly and consistently do this selfless work year after year and still remain a smug, self-centered Laodicean. “If we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must do as He did. We must give men the same kind of help that He gave.” Welfare Ministry, 60

This Christ-service, when performed from the heart, will be a means of breaking the yoke of formalism and sin. We should not hide from the needy in our own church. God's household should be first. “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10) For we are "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Ephesians 2:19

God's Test of Character

"Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker," Proverbs 17:5

We dare not blame all the poor for being poor, nor accuse them of being lazy. For we read: "It is in the providence of God that widows and orphans, the blind, the deaf, the lame, and persons afflicted in a variety of ways have been placed in close Christian relationship to His church; it is to prove His people and develop their true character. Angels of God are watching to see how we treat these persons . . . This is God's test of our character. Welfare Ministry, 35, 36

This instruction obeyed would destroy the love of money in Laodicea

We must remember that all we do, be it Christlike or self-serv- ing, will be brought into judgment. With this in view, what does God say about our extravagant living and its bearing on those less fortunate than us?

"What if they should see inscribed upon the expensive decorations in their houses, the pictures, and furniture, 'Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house!' In the dining room, where the table is laden with abundant food, the finger of God has traced, 'Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?'"
"The needy, the oppressed, are left in want, while the Lord's money is selfishly squandered in extravagance and luxury." Ibid., 270, 271

"Deal thy bread to the hungry." This is God's command to His remnant people—care for the poor and cover the naked. Doing so costs money and there is no monetary return. It is an investment with no possible way of causing us to become materially rich except by the direct blessing of God's love. This instruction obeyed would destroy the love of money in Laodicea.

The rewards to the obedient are infinite. To those who obey the instruction to minister to the poor, is given the promise: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning." (Isaiah 58:8) The latter rain will fall on the consecrated worker. The heart will be all aglow with Christ's love and pity and mercy for the unfortunate.

Then "Thine health shall spring forth speedily." This coveted blessing will be given according to God's rich providence to all those who willingly lay self upon the medical-missionary altar.

Isaiah continues in chapter 58: "Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward [rear guard]." (Isaiah 58:8) Christ's practical righteousness by faith revealed in His humble people will be seen and recognized by the world. "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am." (58:9) We may then expect our unanswered prayers to be answered, our wayward children to be reclaimed, and the sick healed. "The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." 58:11

Here with beautiful, appealing illustrations the prophet describes the fresh daily latter-rain experience of the revived and reformed Laodicean soul, who through the obedience of faith and practical righteousness does for enemy, friend, or brother exactly what Jesus would do were He here. See Testimonies, vol. 4, 551; vol. 6, 82.

"If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday." Isaiah 58:10

Christ Challenges Us

"If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." (Matthew 19:21) "The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance." Welfare Ministry, 82

The medical welfare ministry of Isaiah 58 was designed by our Lord Jesus to destroy selfishness, legalism, and pharisaism. It is intended to redeem the Laodicean soul from his materialistic self-centeredness and make him a representative of Jesus Christ. Otherwise, the love of self and earthly possessions will keep him from doing God's service. Medical missionary service is the life of Christ in action.

Ellen G. White writes: "Unless there is practical self-sacrifice for the good of others, . . . then whatever our profession we are not Christians." Ibid., 42

True medical missionary work as outlined by Isaiah is to be the test of the church. The following words appear in a letter from Ellen White to Elder S. N. Haskell: "The truth for this time, the third angel's message, is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, meaning with increasing power, as we approach the great final test. This test must come to the churches in connection with the true medical missionary work, a work that has the Great Physician to dictate and preside in all it comprehends." Letter 121, 1900

In Russia, during the Bolshevik revolution, tens of thousands of the opposition were liquidated. Many were made to dig deep trenches and kneel facing them with their hands tied behind them. A single pistol shot in the back of the head plunged the victim face forward into the trench.

At one execution a woman came running along the line of the kneeling victims. Throwing herself upon the back of a man, clasping her arms about his neck, she cried, "This is a good man. He has done nothing worthy of death. If you shoot him you must shoot me also."

The executioners tried to drag her away, but she clung the more tenaciously, crying more loudly, "This is a good man. If you shoot him you must shoot me also."

May we not cushion the blow that is soon to fall on the remnant church?

Unable to subdue her frantic efforts they said, "If he is so good, take him and get out of here." The woman risked her life to save his.

During a famine this man had saved her family; he had shared his bread with the hungry and clothed the naked. His selfless Christlike benevolence saved him when he faced death.

He was a Seventh-day Adventist. If today we do likewise, may it not cushion the blow that is soon to fall on the remnant church when the world shall seek to destroy it?

B. R. Spear's 37-year career in evangelism showed a deep interest not only to bring people into the church, but also to see them on through to the Kingdom of God. This article is from his book, Cry Aloud, published by the Review and Herald in 1973. He is, incidentally, related to the editor of Our Firm Foundation, but only by way of a distant ancestor in England.
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