Our Firm Foundation

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

Vol. 4, No. 1

January 1989

The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

The Lord's Work

Obedience Is Sanctification

The Lord's Helping Hand

The Devil's Sleeper

To Fields of Service, see page 24
SURELY WE HAVE come to the end of all things. The evidence is all around us. The peace and safety cry is here, and is voiced by our world’s leaders. Then sudden destruction will come. See 1 Thessalonians 5:3

“The time of trouble, such as never was,” is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess, and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. ‘Though Noah, Daniel, and Job’ were in the land, ‘as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.’ Ezekiel 14:20

“Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ.” The Great Controversy, 622-623

Our minds cannot begin to comprehend what lies just before God’s people in the little time of trouble just before probation closes. “Oh, that God’s people had a sense of the impending destruction of thousands of cities, now almost given to idolatry.” Evangelism, 29

We read again of the perilous conditions soon to be faced by our people:

“The world is a theater; the actors, its inhabitants, are preparing to act their part in the last great drama. With the great masses of mankind there is no unity, except as men confederate to accomplish their selfish purposes. God is looking on. His purposes in regard to His rebellious subjects will be fulfilled. The world has not been given into the hands of men, though God is permitting the elements of confusion and disorder to bear sway for a season. A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama—Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceitfulness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect.

“Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. The end is very near. We who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 27-28

So very few Seventh-day Adventists are ready for these final events! Let us never forget that “to stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test.” Ibid., vol. 5, 136

Now, before probation closes suddenly for God’s people, let us review the parable of Jesus in Luke 18:9-14.

“And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: two men went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather that the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

The Pharisee belonged to the true church. He was very religious and by man’s standards a very good person. He was faithful in church attendance and believed in God. He was faithful in tithes and offerings. He treated his neighbors right, paid his debts and was true to his wife.

The publican, on the other hand was seemingly a spiritual dropout. He was also a Jew, but an outcast, and was considered to have sold out to the Roman conquerors. He collected taxes from the Jews for the Romans. Many of the publicans collected more taxes than were levied by the government and pocketed the difference. Most of them became rich by means of this extortion. The publican had no good works to recommend him to God. In his prayer he said nothing to commend himself. He cried out, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” And Jesus justified him and God treated him as if he had never sinned in all his life because he was so sorry for his sin that he wanted to covenant with God, by the power of the Holy Spirit to stop sinning. See Selected Messages, book 1, 366, 397; Steps to Christ, 62; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 10:12-13; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10

The Pharisee lost eternity because, although his works appeared to be right, his heart was not right.

Ellen White saw companies of Seventh-day Adventists leaving the church in the final crisis. Most of these will be like the Pharisee, good people who have done many good things, supported the church, been faithful in tithes and offerings, people proud of their church experience, but devoid of the sweet spirit and humility of Jesus.

To such as these Jesus says: “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:21-23

May God help us in this new year to reach God’s high standard of righteousness by the Holy Spirit’s power. Let this be the Pentecostal year for which the church has prayed and preached for over one hundred years.

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

**Editor**—Ron Spear  
**Managing Editor**—Dave Fiedler  
**Associate Editor**—Vern Jennings  
**Book Editor**—Allen Craw  
**Copy Editor**—Lila Rae Frederick  
**Asst. Eds./Typography**—Arnet Mathers, Harvey Steck  
**Editorial Secretary**—Clarissa Fiedler  
**Contributing Editors**—John Grosboll, Marshall Grosboll, Ralph Larson, Vernon Sparks, M.D.  
**Art Director**—Bob Bresnahan  
**Art**—Georgia Marighugh  
**Subscriber Services**—Sharilyn Kendall  
**Circulation**—Joseph Leatherman

**TO SUBSCRIBE:**

Suggested donations for the annual subscription are listed below. We have kept these as low as possible, but if your finances cannot meet the requested donation, just send whatever you can. We want this material available to all, regardless of their personal finances. If you wish to give a donation to assist in providing subscriptions for those whose funds may be limited, send your gift marked “Subcription Assistance” to the address below. Your donation is tax deductible.

United States  
Canada and Mexico  
Overseas (surface mail)  
Inquire for overseas air rates.

Hope International publications may be obtained from the following sources:

**Hope International**  
P.O. Box 940  
Eatonville, WA 98328  
USA (206) 832-6602  
Monday—Thursday 9:00–6:30  
Friday 9:00–12:00 Pacific Time  
Rt. 1, Box 10  
Falkland, B.C. V0E 1W0  
Canada (604) 379–2590  
Old Rectory  
Gazley, New Market  
Saffolk CB9 8RB  
England  
P.O. Box 307  
Riverstone, New South Wales 2765  
Australia  
P.O. Box 21-377  
Henderson 8, Auckland  
New Zealand

**Copyright © 1988**  
Hope International

---

**Table of Contents**

**Vol. 4, No. 1**  
**January 1989**

**Articles**

**The Cleansing of the Sanctuary**  
Adventism’s central pillar and its importance today  
Ron Spear  

**The Lord’s Work**  
Do you know what it is? or just think you do?  
Vernon Sparks, M.D.  

**The Devil’s Sleeper**  
Has it caught us napping?  
Donald E. Casebolt  

**Obedience Is Sanctification**  
God’s plan for us is better than we think  
Ellen G. White  

**The Lord’s Helping Hand**  
Whatever happened to our colporteurs?  
John Martin  

**TV and Movies for Christians?**  
It’s true—Philippians 4:8 is still in the Bible  
Dean Lifshay  

**To Fields of Service**  
The Lord of the harvest is calling; why don’t more respond?  
Ellen G. White  

**Truth and the Weight of the Cross**  
“Let him take up his cross, and follow Me”  
Patrick Hogan

**Departments**

**Editorial**  
Looking Back  
2  
19

**Food for Thought**  
Religious Liberty Update  
7  
22

**Hope International** is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.
The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

The study of the sanctuary message is a long-neglected study among the Seventh-day Adventist laity and ministry. "D-day" is just before us. Decision time is now. Probation is soon to close, and every Seventh-day Adventist is to be judged in the sanctuary above. But our High Priest is waiting for His people to perfect their characters by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God speaks to us through His last-day prophet: "In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence: 'Yound wanting.' By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged." Testimonies, vol. 8, 247

"The Jewish tabernacle was a type of the Christian church. . . . The church on earth, composed of those who are faithful and loyal to God, is the 'true tabernacle,' whereof the Redeemer is the minister. God, and not man, pitched this tabernacle on a high, elevated platform." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 931

What is in the sanctuary message that all of us must know to be ready for the sealing angel? Read with me this series of quotations from Ellen White:

"Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol—that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit:

'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' 1 Corinthians 3:16-17."

Every Seventh-day Adventist Christian knows that his body is the temple of God. But we are only God's temple when in full obedience to His holy law, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. By the design and construction of the tabernacle, God was teaching the great lesson of character perfection. The sanctuary of Moses' day was a tent with walls of gold-covered boards. The best craftsmen of the church were called and instructed how it was to be built. Every thread was important. The colors were chosen of God. All the furniture was symbolic. The daily service, the yearly rituals, the yearly feasts all taught lessons of the eternal value of character perfection.

"The Lord gave an important lesson to His people in all ages when to Moses on the mount He gave instruction regarding the building of the tabernacle. In that work He required perfection in every detail." In Heavenly Places, 154

"From eternal ages it was God's purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple. God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride. They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit. The
courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts. In cleansing the temple from the world’s buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin—from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul. ‘The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.’ Malachi 3:1-3. The Desire of Ages, 161

Therefore when sins are practiced in the life, the soul ceases to be a temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But God, incarnate in fallen human flesh, made a way for fallen humanity to again be God’s dwelling place, His temple. Through the ages of the ancient church of the Old Testament, the church was to learn the lesson of salvation by the symbols and the services of the sanctuary. All of these pointed to the Messiah, the incarnation of God, Jesus, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His perfect life and character were to be taught, revealed by His priests and then His people.

But tragically the ministry failed to grasp the important significance of the services in which they daily served, and therefore the people and the church failed to understand. The results are recorded of their infamous acts and apostasies. Their history was written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:11-12

“The Lord in His providence brings men where He can test their moral powers and reveal their motives of action, that they may improve what is right in themselves and put away that which is wrong.

Today, Jesus, in His priestly garments, is mediating for His people in the Most Holy Place. His church, His precious metal, the gold of eternity, He purifies by applying the fire of purification. “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:7. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. He watches carefully each soul that the fires of affliction and temptation are not greater than His people can bear. God speaks to us:

“Most heavenly Father sees the hearts of men, and He knows their characters better than they themselves know them. He sees that some have susceptibilities and powers, which, directed in the right channel, might be used to His glory to aid in the advancement of His work. He puts these persons on trial and in His wise providence brings them into different positions and under a variety of circumstances, testing them that they may reveal what is in their hearts and the weak points in their characters which have been concealed from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunities to correct these weaknesses, to polish off the rough corners of their natures, and to fit themselves for His service, that when He calls them to action they will be ready, and that angels of heaven may unite their labor with human effort in the work that must be done upon the earth. To men whom God designs shall fill responsible positions, He in mercy reveals their hidden defects, that they may look within and examine critically the complicated emotions and exercises of their own hearts, and detect that which is wrong; thus they may modify their dispositions and refine their manners. The Lord in His providence brings men where He can test their moral powers and reveal their motives of action, that they may improve what is right in themselves and put away that which is wrong. God would have His servants become acquainted with the moral machinery of their own hearts. In order to bring this about, He often permits the fires of affliction to assail them that they may become purified. ‘But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.’

“...But let us be sober, lest we also be found among them that perish with the ungodly.” 2 Peter 2:1. ‘For this that perseverance is most precious; and that in the providence of God shall be found the best. He will have the best preserved and furnished for future service; and the others He will have burned up as dross. They who have been in His refiner’s fire and have been purified, He will count as gold and silver; and in His temple will be found the true rose which was once a thorn. He will not be ashamed to associate with His own those who have beenHis own in the fire; and He will be ashamed to associate with those who have been His enemies in the fire, and will cast them out into outer darkness. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Heb. 12:29. He will not confound the work of His own; but shall honor and reward it. He is the author of the work, and shall be the finisher of it. The Lord will preserve the sons of Levi, and they shall purify, and shall cleanse the sanctuary. “Wherefore let us come now before the presence of the Lord with thanksgiving, and with a loud voice sing unto Him praises.” Ps. 95:2. The Lord is our Lord; and of our Lord we shall not be ashamed.”

January 1989 Our Firm Foundation 5
lays bare the secrets of all hearts?” Testimonies, vol. 4, 84-85

Again we read on page 89 of the same volume:

“Christ offers to sell this precious treasure to man: ‘Buy of me gold tried in the fire.’ The dead, heartless performance of duty does not make us Christians. We must get out of a lukewarm condition and experience a true conversion, or we shall fail of heaven. ‘I was pointed to the providence of God among His people and was shown that every trial made by the refining, purifying process upon professed Christians proves some to be dross. The fine gold does not always appear. In every religious crisis some fall under temptation. The shaking of God blows away multitudes like dry leaves. Prosperity multiplies a mass of professors. Adversity purges them out of the church. As a class, their spirits are not steadfast with God. They go out from us because they are not of us; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, many are offended.”

Let us not forget that Christ cannot finish His priestly work in the Most Holy Place until He has a people who understand and experience the cleansing of their own souls from every sin. “Christ is cleansing the temple in heaven from the sins of the people, and we must work in harmony with Him upon the earth, cleansing the soul temple from its moral defilement.” Review and Herald, vol. 2, 365. Let us not forget we are now in the day of atonement. “The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us, but in our hearts and characters.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 6, 1074

We have believed that the cleansing of the sanctuary was a judicial act of God only. We believe that someday God will tell Christ to throw down His censer in the Most Holy Place; then probation for the human family will come to an end, and the great controversy will be forever ended. But what we have not been willing to see is that before that moment, God has to have a people on earth whose soul temples are cleansed from all sin, who have the faith to believe that they can, by God’s power, cease to sin. The faith of Jesus in us is the only cure for sin; it is our only hope. “He who has not sufficient faith in Christ to believe that He can keep him from sinning, has not the faith that will give him entrance into the kingdom of God.” We have read in Testimonies, vol. 1, 144

“Nothing less than perfect obedience can meet the standard of God’s requirement. He has not left His requirements indefinitely. He has enjoined nothing that is not necessary in order to bring man into harmony with Him. We are to point sinners to His ideal of character and to lead them to Christ by whose grace only can this ideal be reached.”

“The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity and lived a sinless life, that men might have no reason to say that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome. Christ came to make us ‘partakers of the divine nature,’ and His life declares that humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin.” The Ministry of Healing, 180

“To be redeemed means to cease from sin.” Review and Herald, vol. 4, 321. “Christ died to make it possible for you to cease to sin.” Ibid., vol. 3, 181. “Christ is ready to set us free from sin, but He does not force the will.” Steps to Christ, 34. God cannot and will not force obedience to His sacred law. “There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God. The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life. Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren.” The Desire of Ages, 311

Let us remember the sacred testimony in 1 John 3:8-9, “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doeth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

This is the essence of the sanctuary message. Again the prophet speaks to us in the beginning of a new year, 1889:

“While Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. The glory, the fullness, the completeness of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance. The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ revealed in the life testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Saviour.”

“Christ does not bid His followers strive to shine. He says, Let your light shine. If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord’s glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. You cannot help shining within the range of your influence.”

“The revelation of His own glory in the form of humanity will bring heaven so near to man that the beauty adorning the inner temple will be seen in every soul in whom the Saviour dwells. Men will be captivated by the glory of an abiding Christ. And in current of praise and thanksgiving from the many souls thus won to God, glory will flow back to the great Giver.”

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” Isaiah 60:1. To those who go out to meet the Bridegroom this message given. Christ is coming with power and...
Food for Thought

WHEN THE sanctuary was to be built, and its furnishings made, the Lord directed Moses, saying, “Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount.” Moses was full of zeal to do God’s work. The most talented, skilful men were at his command to carry out his suggestions; and yet it was not given to him to make a bell, a pomegranate, a tassel, a fringe, a curtain, or any vessel of the sanctuary, except according to the pattern shown him as God’s ideal. . . .

It is in neglecting to follow the exact directions of the Word of God that many err. They turn away from God’s plans, to follow their own ideas. Christ Himself declared, “The Son of man can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”

So utterly was He emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself. He accepted God’s plan for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. If Jesus was so wholly dependent, declaring, “I do nothing of Myself,” how much more should we depend upon God for constant instruction, so that our lives might be the simple working out of God’s will? Oh, that failing, erring mortals would be content to seek wisdom from God, and be entirely submissive in working out His directions, in exemplifying His character.

If ever mortals toiled to send to Heaven an earnest cry, “Lord, show me Thy way; teach me the way of the Lord,” it is now. Only those will have a fitness for the mansions above who give to God full and implicit obedience. God knows that we should not appreciate His rarest gifts if we were not perfectly submissive to His will. And in keeping the way of the Lord there is great reward.

We shall be tempted by the adversary of souls to deviate from God’s way, to neglect to search the Scriptures in order that we may find out whether we are walking in the sparks of our own kindling, or in the light which God has given us. Oh, that we may be vessels unto honor, prepared for the Master’s use! Oh, that the work of the grace of God may so go forward in our hearts that we come to see the matchless charms that are revealed in Jesus.

Whatever may be our temperament, we are to form a character after the Divine Pattern; we have no excuse for retaining the mold and superscription of our own nature; for Christ has died that we may have His mold and superscription. We cannot retain self, and yet be filled with the fullness of God. We must be emptied of self. Heaven is gained only through the renunciation of self, and the receiving of the mind of Christ.

What we are at heart, we reveal in life. Our thoughts, our words, our actions, are the result of what we are; and our influence is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, according to whether we abide in Christ or not. In the judgment we shall be brought face to face with those whom we have had opportunity to help by directing them, through choice words of counsel, into right, safe paths. If we have a daily connection with God, we shall have a living, abiding interest in the saving of the souls of men, and our influence will be a savor of life unto life.

Let no one rob God of the service He requires. Halfhearted service is of no value. Have we not tried our own way again and again, and found it was but foolishness? In following our independent judgment, have we not virtually said, “Lord, I want not Thy way, for it does not please me; I want my own way; and if I can not do as I please, I will not serve Thee”?

How many have let go of Christ, to follow their own plans? Did Christ, the Majesty of heaven, have His way? Behold Him in the travail of soul in Gethsemane, praying to His Father. What forced those blood-drops of agony from His holy brow? Oh, the sins of the whole world were upon Him! It was separation from the Father’s love that forced from His pale, quivering lips the cry, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.”

Three times was the prayer offered, but was followed by, “Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, O God, be done.” This must be our attitude: “Not my will, but Thine, O God, be done.” This is true conversion.

Ellen G. White, Atlantic Union Gleaner, January 27, 1904
The Lord’s Work

In SEVENTH-DAY Adventist circles we are accustomed to hearing phrases such as “in the Lord’s work” and “doing the Lord’s work.” We say that our task and goal is to “finish the Lord’s work.” What do these phrases mean? Could it be that although we often refer to “the Lord’s work” we might have a hard time really defining its meaning? Some might question, “Does it really matter?” I believe that it matters a great deal as to our understanding of “the Lord’s work.” We can never finish something that we have not done. We cannot do something that we do not know about or understand.

In a sense any method that extends the knowledge of Christ as man’s personal Saviour from sin is a form of the Lord’s work. But is there a method in working that can in a special sense be referred to as “the Lord’s work”? “The Lord continually performed deeds of loving ministry, and this every minister of the gospel should do. He has appointed us to be His ambassadors, to carry forward His work in the world. To every true, self-sacrificing worker is given the commission, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’” *Review and Herald*, vol. 4, 387, emphasis supplied. We are all acquainted with this commission to carry the gospel to every creature in this world. We are told that the Lord has appointed us to be “His ambassadors to carry forward His work in the world.”

Again the question arises, Is there a particular way of laboring for Christ that can in a special sense be called “the Lord’s work”? In the same reference we are given a clue to the answer to our question. We are instructed to follow the work that Christ and His disciples did in order to do “the Lord’s work.” Thus the way the Lord and His disciples worked is in a special sense “the Lord’s work.” “Read carefully the instruction given in the New Testament. The work that the Great Teacher did in connection with His disciples is the example we are to follow.” *Ibid.* One of the purposes of Christ’s earthly life was to show how we are to work. “The Great Teacher, while on this earth, gave His whole life to teach us how to work as devoted, consecrated missionaries for God.” *Battle Creek Letters*, 113

How then did Jesus as our example do His work? “Christ is our example. Of His work we read, Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. . . . They brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and He healed them.

“Christ healed the people, and then to those whom He healed and to those who had witnessed His healing, He preached the gospel of the kingdom. This is *the work* outlined before those who have in trust the greatest wealth of truth ever committed to mortals.” *The Australasian Union Conference Record*, 119, emphasis supplied

Christ first ministered to the physical needs of those about Him, then He presented to them the gospel of the kingdom. He united physical healing and spiritual healing into one work. The union of these two endeavors is the true

Dr. Vernon Sparks is the Medical Director of Life Abundant Missionary Institute.
gospel of the kingdom. "The union of Christlike work for the body and Christlike work for the soul is the true interpretation of the gospel." My Life Today, 224. This united ministry was the ministry of the twelve apostles and the seventy. It is to be the work of the Lord's messengers today.

"In all His labors He united the medical missionary work with the ministry of the Word. He sent out the twelve apostles and afterward the seventy, to preach the gospel to the people, and He gave them power also to heal the sick and to cast out devils in His name. Thus should the Lord's messengers enter His work today." Counsels on Health, 517. That which God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

"The Lord Jesus is our example. He came to the world as a servant of mankind. He went from city to city, from village to village, teaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing the sick. Christ spent more time in healing than in teaching. As Our example, Christ linked closely together the work of healing and teaching, and in this our day they should not be separated." Gospel Herald, 137. Even in our day of modern science with the tendency towards greater and greater specialization the ministry to the physical and spiritual needs of man is to be united in one work.

"The Holy Spirit never has, and never will in the future, divorce the medical missionary work from the gospel ministry. They cannot be divorced. Bound up with Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Word and the healing of the sick are one." Special Testimonies, Series B, 256. In defining the gospel ministry, the messenger of the Lord clarifies that it is the union of what society too often considers to be separate ministries. "To take people right where they are, whatever their position or condition, and help them in every way possible—this is gospel ministry.... This work is to embrace all that was embraced in Christ's ministry." Review and Herald, vol. 4, 372

"The gospel ministry is an organization for the proclamation of the truth to the sick and to the well. It combines the medical missionary work and the ministry of the Word. By these combined agencies, opportunities are given to communicate light, and to present the gospel to all classes and all grades of society. God wants the ministers and the church members to take a decided, active interest in the medical missionary work." Ibid.

Upon His ascension to heaven the Lord gave His followers His ministry of healing. "When Jesus was about to ascend to His Father, He gave His ministry of healing to His followers, leaving with them the commission, 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you even unto the end of the world.'" Battle Creek Letters, 113

"One who believes in Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour is to be a co-worker with Him, bound up with His heart of infinite love, co-operating with Him in works of self-denial and benevolence. Christ has withdrawn Himself from the earth, but His followers are still left in the world. And they are to give in word and action, and in their unselfish benevolence, a representation of Christ's love." Pacific Union Recorder, 1. Yes, Christ, the great Medical Missionary is our example for our work today. The union of the ministry of the Word and the ministry of health is in a special sense 'the Lord's work.'

"Christ stands before us as the pattern Man, the great Medical Missionary—an example for all who should come after. His love, pure and holy, blessed all who came within the sphere of His influence. His character was absolutely perfect, free from the slightest stain of sin. He came as an expression of the perfect love of God, not to crush, not to judge and condemn, but to heal every weak, defective character, to save men and women from Satan's power.... What, then, is the example that we are to set to the world? We are to do the same work that the great Medical Missionary undertook in our behalf. We are to follow the path of self-sacrifice trodden by Christ." Loma Linda Messages, 61

"Christ, the great Medical Missionary, is our example. Of Him it is written, that 'He went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner sicknesses and diseases among the people.' He healed the sick, and preached the gospel. In His service, healing and teaching were linked closely together. Today they are not to be separated." Ibid., 338. Christ taught His method of ministry to mankind's needs to His disciples. Their ministry demonstrates how we are to work today. Following their methods, we will have success.

"Christ understood the work that needed to be done for suffering humanity.

Christ came as an expression of the perfect love of God, not to crush, not to judge and condemn, but to heal every weak, defective character, to save men and women from Satan's power.
Satan will invent every possible scheme to separate those whom God is seeking to make one. We must not be misled by his devices. The medical missionary work is to be connected with the work of the third angel’s message, as the hand is connected with the body.” Ibid., 339

Who have been called to do “the Lord’s work”?

Every Medical Practitioner—
“Every medical practitioner, whether he acknowledges it or not, is responsible for the souls as well as the bodies of his patients. The Lord expects of us much more than we often do for Him. Every physician should be a devoted, intelligent, gospel medical missionary, familiar with Heaven’s remedy for the sin-sick soul, as well as with the science of healing bodily disease.” Medical Ministry, 31

Nurses—“In our schools and sanitariums nurses should be trained to go out as medical missionary evangelists. They should unite the teaching of the gospel of Christ with the work of healing.” Gospel Herald, 137

Ministers—“If our ministers would work earnestly to obtain an education in medical missionary lines they would be far better fitted to do the work Christ did as a medical missionary. By diligent study and practice, they can become so well acquainted with the principles of health reform, that wherever they go they will be a great blessing to the people they meet.” Medical Ministry, 239

Literature Evangelists—“It is medical missionaries that are needed all through the field. Caravansers should improve every opportunity granted them to learn how to treat disease.” Ibid., 249

Each Worker—“Let each worker put into practice what he knows regarding the treatment of disease. Thus suffering may be relieved, and opportunities will be found to break the bread of life to starving souls.” Pacific Union Recorder, 3

Students and Teachers—“It is essential that students be taught how to do missionary work, not only by pen and voice, but by working with them in various missionary lines. All about us there are persons who need to be taught how to cook and how to treat the sick. By engaging in these lines of work we practice the truth as it is in Jesus. Teachers and students need to study how to engage in this work. The teachers should take students to places where help is needed, giving them practical instruction in how to care for the sick.” Spalding-Magan’s Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White, 126

Parents—“All can do something. In an effort to excuse themselves, some say, ‘My home duties, my children, claim my time and my means.’ Parents, your children should be your helping hand, increasing your power and ability to work for the Master. Children are the younger members of the Lord’s family. They should be led to consecrate themselves to God, whose they are by creation and by redemption. They should be taught that all their powers of body, mind, and soul are His. They should be

Saviour’s example of cross bearing and self-denial. They are God’s witnesses, revealing His compassion and love, and ascribing all the glory to Him whom they love and serve. Testimonies, vol. 7, 25-26

Those With One Talent—“The Lord desires every one to do his best. You may think that you can do very little; but remember that in the parable of the talents, Christ did not represent all the servants as receiving the same amount. To one servant was given five talents; to another, two, and to still another, one. If you have

If you have but one talent, use it wisely, increasing it by putting it out to the exchangers. Do what you can to roll back the wave of disease and suffering that is sweeping over our world

trained to help in various kinds of unselfish service. Do not allow your children to be hindrances. With you the children should share spiritual as well as physical burdens. By helping others they increase their own happiness and usefulness.” Review and Herald, vol. 4, 439

Children—“The medical missionary work is to burst all barriers. All are invited to take a part in it, and help where help is needed. The wealthy are to be reached, and their sympathy and assistance solicited; for are they not the Lord’s stewards? Idle children are to be instructed; they are to enlist in the army of workers to help the sick and suffering. Train the children, for they are the Lord’s heritage.” Battle Creek Letters, 26

The Unlearned—“Those whom God chooses as workers are not always talented, in the estimation of the world. Sometimes He selects unlearned men. To those He gives a special work. They reach a class to whom others could not obtain access. Opening the heart to the truth, they are made wise in and through Christ. Their lives inhale and exhale the fragrance of godliness. Their words are thoughtfully considered before they are spoken. They strive to promote the well-being of their fellow men. They take relief and happiness to the needy and distressed. They realize the necessity of ever remaining under Christ’s training, that they may work in harmony with God’s will. They study how best to follow the

but one talent, use it wisely, increasing it by putting it out to the exchangers. Do what you can to roll back the wave of disease and suffering that is sweeping over our world. Come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty powers of darkness.” Loma Linda Messages, 72A

Every Man—“God calls upon every man to co-operate with the great Medical Missionary Worker, and to go forth into the highways and byways.” The Paulson Collection, 15-16

Every True Believer—“The Saviour lived on this earth a life that love for God will constrain every true believer in Christ to live. Following His example, in our medical missionary work we shall reveal to the world that we are His representatives and that our credentials are from above.” Review and Herald, vol. 5, 50

Thus we see that the Lord's special work of a combined spiritual and healing ministry is enjoined upon all of Christ's followers. At the time of baptism each of us has been set apart in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost to do the Lord's healing work. "The Lord wants every one of us to educate himself for God. At baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost we were set apart to engage in the very work that Christ came to the world to do. What was He? —In the highest sense He was a
It is a personal individual ministry that we have vowed to carry out. Someone else cannot do our work for us. "Christ commits to His followers an individual work—a work that cannot be done by proxy. Ministry to the sick and the poor, the giving of the gospel to the lost, is not to be left to committees or organized charities. Individual responsibility, individual effort, personal sacrifice, is the requirement of the gospel." Ibid., vol. 6, 244.

Even if we give our funds to support other workers but selfishly withhold ourselves, we have not fulfilled our vows. "As a people, we are not deficient in talent. There are men and women among us whose labors God would accept if they would offer them to Him, but there are so very few who have the spirit of sacrifice. Some will hand out readily of their means, and feel that when they have done this, there is no more required of them. They make no special sacrifice in thus doing. Money is good as far as it goes, but, unless accompanied by personal effort, will go but a little way toward converting souls to the truth. Not only does God call for your money, ... but He calls for your time. While you have given of your means, you have selfishly withheld yourselves. One earnest worker in the vineyard is worth more than a million of money without men to do the work. This giving of yourselves will be a sacrifice if you have a correct estimate of the work, and realize its claims." Sons and Daughters of God, 263.

The Lord needs our individual assistance.

"I was in prison, and ye came unto me. We shall have to give of our means to support laborers in the harvest field, and we shall rejoice in the sheaves gathered in. But while this is right, there is a work as yet untouched that must be done. The mission of Christ was to heal the sick, encourage the hopeless, bind up the broken-hearted. This work of restoration is to be carried on among the needy suffering ones of humanity. God calls not only for your benevolence, but your cheerful countenance, your hopeful works, the grasp of your hand. Relieve some of God's afflicted ones. Some are sick and hope has departed. Bring back the sunlight to them. There are souls who have lost their courage; speak to them, pray for them. There are those who need the bread of life. Read to them from the Word of God. There is a soul sickness no balm can reach, no medicine heal. Pray for them, and bring them to Jesus Christ. And in all your work, Christ will be present to make impressions upon the human hearts." Spalding-Magar's Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies of Ellen G. White, 140.

Every one of us is needed to work as a Christian philanthropist—sharing with others that which we have. "Intelligent, self-denying, self-sacrificing men are now needed—men who realize the solemnity and importance of God's work, and who as Christian philanthropists will fulfill the commission of Christ. The medical missionary work, if properly done, is a work of soul saving; it is the proclamation of the gospel message." Review and Herald, vol. 6, 441.

True medical missionaries will do the combined ministry of the Lord's work. "In one hand they are to carry the gospel for the relief of sin-burdened souls; and in the other hand they are to carry remedies for the relief of physical suffering. Thus they will be true medical missionaries for God." Medical Ministry, 328.

Carrying out the combined ministry of the Lord's work will produce a Christ-like character in the worker.

"All can labor for the salvation of those who are out of the ark of safety. When church members stand pledged to the service of God, pledged to do missionary work; when they take hold of the work unselfishly, because they love the souls for whom Christ died, and are desirous of uniting with the Great Missionary, He will come very near to them to instruct them. Life is full of opportunities for the practical missionary. Every man, woman, and child can sow each day the seeds of kind words and unselfish deeds. The world is not a playground where we are to amuse ourselves; it is a school in which we are to study earnestly and thoroughly the lessons given in the Word of God. There we may learn how to receive and how to impart. There we may learn how to seek for souls in the highways and byways of life. If those who engage so earnestly in the games of this world would strive as earnestly for the crown of life which faeth not away, what victories they would gain! They would become true missionaries, and would see how much could be done to relieve suffering humanity. What a blessing this would be! What we need is practical education. When ministers and people practice the lessons Christ has given in His Word, they will become Christlike in..."

Many will go out to labor for the Master who have not been able to take a regular course of study in school. God will help these workers. They will obtain knowledge from the higher school.
The Devil’s Sleeper

THIS STUDY WILL not be a deep theological discussion. Not that there isn’t a definite need for deep theology. But there are times when God’s remnant people need to deal with more mundane matters. We need occasionally to give consideration to what we eat, how we exercise, what we wear, how we adorn our bodies.

The devil certainly is not asleep, nor does he have something he travels in called a sleeper—such as a Pullman railroad car. The word “sleeper” used here has several definitions, but the one germane to this discussion is “a previously disregarded thing that unexpectedly achieves success.” Satan has a “thing” that today is to a great extent disregarded by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but has been exceedingly successful in the devil’s hands. This “thing” is scarcely ever mentioned anymore in official papers of the church. Surprisingly, it also is seldom mentioned in the papers of the independent ministries. Preachers scarcely ever allude to it from the pulpit. Yet it is about this “thing” that Ellen White wrote, declaring that it “is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 647. If there is something that is doing more than anything else to separate God’s followers from Him, shouldn’t we be paying it earnest heed? Shouldn’t we be warning the church about it?

This “thing” is dress or fashion. “Fashion is deteriorating the intellect and eating out the spirituality of God’s people.” Ibid. With the two foregoing quotations in mind let us look further at how some are prone to clothe, adorn, and decorate their bodies. Within God’s remnant church there is appearing a greater use of fingernail polish, eyeshadow, and other facial makeup. We must candidly ask, “What is the purpose of this kind of decoration?” Apparently only to draw attention to oneself. This is not a God-inspired motive. There is a growing tendency to wear less and less clothes, and more figure-revealing clothes.

Careful reading of the Spirit of Prophecy reveals a number of quotations regarding modesty. In the days of Ellen White no one wore shorts or sun dresses or the scanty bathing suits seen today. Thus she did not speak to these issues. It appears that her use of the word modest referred more to the lack of excesses and pretensions, to showy extravagant dress, to costly array. Nevertheless, I believe if she were now alive, she would be greatly dismayed and would speak forcefully against the shorts, the sun dresses, the tight jeans, the tight sweaters, and the revealing bathing suits worn today. I wish to present historical information to buttress my thinking and then further quotations from the Bible and Sister White. The historical information will not be an exhaustive treatment of the subject, but only a few select examples to show what standards were in the past.

In 1923 Arkansas moralists (not Seventh-day Adventists), emboldened because they had defeated a bill intended to legalize Sunday baseball, made proposals for laws that would prohibit mixed swimming and wearing clothes on stage outlining any part of the body between the neck and knees, bathing suits which strike above the knee, below the hollow of the neck, the sleeves of which do not come down well over the shoulder and are not of sufficient material to be opaque. See Liberty May-June 1983, 17.

F.M. Wilcox, for many years editor of the Review and Herald, wrote an editorial against mixed swimming in the June 13, 1929, issue of the Review. He wrote: “It is impossible for us to understand how men and women can consistently dress in a state of half nudity at a bathing beach, when if they were to do it in the same manner on any of the public streets of our cities they would be considered as acting in a most indecent part, and would subject themselves to arrest.”

Donald Casebolt, M.D. writes from Kirtland, New Mexico.

Donald E. Casebolt

12 Our Firm Foundation January 1989
A 1939 Gallup poll found that a majority of adults in the United States thought it was indecent to wear shorts for street wear (Signs of the Times, May 1986, 6). Dr. Harold Shryock, a highly respected Seventh-day Adventist physician stated in an article “Keynotes for Happy Courtin’”: “Don’t let your friend find you in lounging clothes, shorts, or a swim suit.” (Youth’s Instructor, July 19, 1960). The March 1971 edition of Ministry contained a letter to the editor written by Don Hawley, the editor of Life and Health, questioning our standards of modesty. He concerendy wrote: “We decry the wearing of shorts, the backless back, the plundering neckline; … such people are half naked.” As recently as 1986 the brochure advertising the West Virginia 1986 camp meeting gave the following as one of its General Rules and Regulations: “Modesty is expected of all and excludes shorts and similar attire.”

We have gone from a situation when in 1939 the majority of people in the United States considered shorts indecent for street wear to the place that many Seventh-day Adventists feel no compunction about appearing in public in shorts. One must ask how this change has come about? There are, I believe, two reasons. One is the lamentable tendency for a segment of the church to follow the habits, customs, and practices of the world. The second is for what could be considered a more worthwhile reason, that is, the fitness movement. In order to jog or take part in other fitness activities many people feel they must wear shorts. Today many people are running long distances. The marathon, for example. Adventist churches and institutions have sponsored these events. The obvious question is: “If it is OK to be half-dressed for a marathon, why can’t you attend a church picnic in the same attire?”

As a physician having a great interest in preventive medicine and a deepening concern over changing church standards, I have found it of much interest that running has not yet been proved to be as beneficial as once thought. In fact, the medical news magazine Medical World News of August 10, 1987, pointed out that “garding for 45 minutes is as good as running for two hours in keeping coronary artery disease from killing.” (Emphasis supplied). There have been other articles in the medical press by well-recognized researchers presenting essentially the same concepts. Have we been justified in casting aside our previous standards of modesty for the unproven benefits of jogging? I fear that we have not.

Some have excused the tendency to wear less and less clothes as being necessary to escape the heat. Having lived and labored for the past years in the desert of Monument Valley caring for the Navajos I have been almost amazed by the dress of the traditional Navajo women. On the hottest days (up to 100 degrees) they wear velvet blouses closed at the neck with sleeves reaching to the wrists. Their skirts reach to the ankles and they wear underskirts. In Moslem countries, where the scanty clothing worn by Westerners is pointed to as a sign of moral decadence, there is not the tendeny toward nudity seen in European countries and the United States. Some of these Moslem countries, such as Arabia, have quite warm temperatures.

What does the Bible say on this subject? It says nothing about the wearing of brief clothing just as it has nothing specifically to say about the use of cocaine, heroin, or angel’s dust. Nevertheless, it enunciates general principles. For example: “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.” 1 Timothy 2:9. The Lord’s instructions in Numbers 15:37-39 should have some significance for His people. “And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Speak unto the children of Israel and bid the New Testament we are often referred to ancient Israel for examples. If God gave such definite directions to His ancient people in regard to their dress, will not the dress of His people in this age come under His notice? Should there not be in their dress a distinction from that of the world? Should not the people of God, who are His peculiar treasure, seek even in their dress to glorify God? And should they not be examples in point of dress, and by their simple style rebuke the pride, vanity, and extravagance of worldly, pleasure-loving professors? God requires this of His people.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, 1114. And “Here God expressly commanded a very simple arrangement of dress for the children of Israel for the purpose of distinguishing them from the idolatrous nations around them. They were not to serve their own desires, or to imitate the idolatrous nations around them, but to remain a distinct, separate people, that all who looked upon them might say: These are they whom God brought out of the land of Egypt, who keep the law of Ten Commandments… God’s people have, to a great extent, lost their peculiarity, and have been gradually patterned after the world, and mingling with them, until they have in many respects become like them. This is displeasing to God. He directs them, as He directed the children of Israel anciently, to come out from the world, and forsake their idolatrous practices, not fol-

God expressly commanded a very simple arrangement of dress for the children of Israel for the purpose of distinguishing them from the idolatrous nations around them.
Obedience Is Sanctification

Ellen G. White

AND WALK in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.’’ Ephesians 5:2. In all the fullness of His divinity, in all the glory of His spotless humanity, Christ gave Himself for us as a full and free sacrifice, and each one who comes to Him should accept Him as if he were the only one for whom the price had been paid. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; for the obedient will be raised to immortality, and the transgressor will rise from the dead to suffer death, the penalty of the law which he has broken.

Obedience to the law of God is sanctification. There are many who have erroneous ideas in regard to this work in the soul, but Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and added, “Thy word is truth.” Sanctification is not an instantaneous but a progressive work, as obedience is continuous. Just as long as Satan urges his temptations upon us, the battle for self-conquest will have to be fought over and over again; but by obedience, the truth will sanctify the soul. Those who are loyal to the truth will, through the merits of Christ, overcome all weakness of character which has led them to be moulded by every varying circumstance of life.

Many have taken the position that they cannot sin because they are sanctified, but this is a delusive snare of the evil one. There is constant danger of falling into sin, for Christ has warned us to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. If we are conscious of the weakness of self, we shall not be self-confident and reckless of danger; but we shall feel the necessity of seeking to the Source of our strength, Jesus our righteousness. We shall come in repentance and contrition, with a despairing sense of our own finite weakness, and learn that we must daily apply to the merits of the blood of Christ, that we may become vessels fit for the Master’s use. While thus depending upon God, we shall not be found warring against the truth, but we shall always be enabled to take our stand for the right. We should cling to the teaching of the Bible, and not follow the customs and traditions of the world, the saying and doings of men. When errors arise, and are taught as Bible truth, those who have a connection with Christ will not trust to what the minister says, but, like the noble Bereans, they will search the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so. When they discover what is the word of the Lord, they will take their stand on the side of truth. They will hear the voice of the true Shepherd saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” Thus you will be educated to make the Bible the man of your counsel, and the voice of a stranger you will neither hear nor follow.

If the soul is to be purified and ennobled and made fit for the heavenly courts, there are two lessons to be learned—self-sacrifice and self-control. Some learn these important lessons more easily than do others, for they are exercised by the simple discipline the Lord gives them in gentleness and love. Others require the slow discipline of suffering, that the cleansing fire may purify their hearts of pride and self-reliance, of earthly passion and self-love, that the true gold of character may appear, and that they may become victors through the grace of Christ. The love of God will strengthen the soul, and through the virtue of the merits of the blood of Christ we may stand unscathed amid the fire of temptation and trial; but no other help can avail to save but Christ, our righteousness, who is made unto us wisdom and sanctification and redemption. True sanctification is nothing more or less than to love God with all the heart, to walk in His commandments and ordinances blameless. Sanctification is not an emotion, but a Heaven-born principle that brings all the passions and desires under the control of the Spirit of God; and this work is done through our Lord and Saviour.

Spurious sanctification does not glorify God, but leads those who claim it to exalt and glorify themselves. Whatever comes in our experience, whether of joy or sorrow, that does not reflect Christ and point to Him as its author, bringing glory to Him, and sinking self out of sight, is not true Christian experience. When the grace of Christ is implanted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, its possessor will become humble in spirit and will seek for the
society of those whose conversation is upon heavenly things. Then the Spirit will take the things of Christ and show them unto us, and will glorify, not the receiver, but the Giver. If, therefore, you have the sacred peace of Christ in your heart, your lips will be filled with praise and thanksgiving to God. Your prayers, the discharge of your duty, your benevolence, your self-denial will not be the theme of your thought or conversation, but you will magnify Him who gave Himself for you when you were yet a sinner. You will say: "I give myself to Jesus. I have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." As you praise Him, you will have a precious blessing, and all the praise and glory for that which is done through your instrumentality will be given back to God.

The peace of Christ is not a boisterous, untamable element made manifest in loud voices and bodily exercises. The peace of Christ is an intelligent peace, and it does not make those who possess it bear the marks of fanaticism and extravagance. It is not a rambling impulse, but an emanation from God. When the Saviour imparts His peace to the soul, the heart will be in perfect harmony with the Word of God; for the Spirit and the Word agree. The Lord honors His Word in all His dealings with men. It is His own will, His own voice, that is revealed to men, and He has no new will, no new truth, aside from His Word to unfold to His children. If you have a wonderful experience that is not in harmony with the expressed direction of God's Word, you may well doubt it; for its origin is not from above. The peace of Christ comes through the knowledge of Jesus whom the Bible reveals.

If happiness is drawn from outside sources, and not from the Divine Fount, it will be as changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend on any circumstance in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living waters, and happiness and peace drawn from Him will never fail, for He is a wellspring of life. Those who trust in Him can say: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Psalm 46:1-4

We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by His perfect obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression. Jesus regained heaven for man by bearing the test that Adam failed to endure; for He obeyed the law perfectly, and

The Lord requires at this time just what He required of Adam in Eden—perfect obedience to the law of God. We must have righteousness without a flaw, without a blemish. God gave His Son to die for the world, but He did not die to repeal the law which was holy and just and good. The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is an unanswerable argument showing the immutability of the law. Its penalty was felt by the Son of God in behalf of guilty man, that through His merits the sinner might obtain the virtue of His spotless character by faith in His name. The sinner was provided with a second opportunity to keep the law of God in the strength of his Divine Redeemer. The cross of Calvary forever condemns the idea that Satan has placed before the Christian world, that the death of Christ abolished not only the typical system of sacrifices and ceremonies but the unchangeable law of God, the foundation of His throne, the transcript of His character. Through every device possible Satan has sought to make of none effect the sacrifice of the Son of God, to render His expiation useless, and His mission a failure. He has claimed that the death of Christ made obedience to the law unnecessary, and permitted the sinner to come into favor with a holy God without forsaking his sin. He has declared that the Old Testament standard was lowered in the gospel, and that men can come to Christ, not to be saved from their sins but in their sins. But when John beheld Jesus he told His mission. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. To every repentant soul the message is, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18

*Signs of the Times*, May 19, 1890
I am a literature evangelist. I make no apology—I love my work, and on the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy I believe in its incredible and still largely untapped potential for good. I see thousands of laymen pondering their role in the Lord’s work, looking for their calling in life, and I wonder whatever happened to the once-credible public image of the old-fashioned “colporteur.” Let’s look again at the inspired counsel.

“Why is there not a more diligent seeking of the Lord, that hundreds may be filled with the Holy Spirit, and may go forth to proclaim the truth, ‘the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following’? Our commission is to let the light shine forth everywhere from the press. By the printed page the light reaches the isolated ones, who have no opportunity to hear the living preachers. This is a most blessed missionary work. Canvassers can be the Lord’s helping hand, opening doors for the entrance of truth.

“We must arouse the zeal and earnestness of the canvassing agents, calling on them to take the light into the dark places of the earth. There is no release for any who have talents and capabilities. They are required to be the Lord’s instruments, required to co-operate with the Lord Jesus in shedding the light of heaven into this sin-darkened world.” Colporteur Ministry, 20

There are other quotations stressing the fact that many should engage in literature evangelism: “There is missionary labor to be done in the distribution of tracts and papers, and in canvassing for our different publications. Let none of you think that you cannot engage in this work because it is taxing, and requires time and thought. If it requires time, give it cheerfully; and the blessing of God will rest upon you. There never was a time when more workers were needed than at the present. There are brethren and sisters throughout all our ranks who should discipline themselves to engage in this work; in all our churches something should be done to spread the truth. It is the duty of all to study the various points of our faith, that they may be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within them, with meekness and fear.” Ibid., 21-22

These points are very important and well taken, but there is one point that too often is put into second place: daily conversion. “Canvassers need to be daily converted to God, that their words and deeds may be a savor of life unto life, that they may exert a saving influence. The reason why many have failed in the canvassing work is that they were not genuine Christians; they did not know the spirit of conversion. They had a theory as to how the work should be done, but they did not feel their dependence upon God.” Ibid., 48. All need a genuine, daily conversion, especially those sharing the gospel by the printed page. A total dependence upon God is required for every word spoken.

“Just to the degree in which the Word of God is received and obeyed, will it impress with its potency and touch with its life every spring of action, every phase of character. It will purify every thought, regulate every desire. Those who make God’s Word their trust will quit themselves like men and be strong. They will rise above all baser things into an atmosphere free from defilement.” The Ministry of Healing, 136

“Many who profess the faith know not what true conversion is. They have no experience in communion with the Father through Jesus Christ, and have never felt the power of divine grace to sanctify the heart. Praying and sinning, sinning and praying, their lives are full of malice, deceit, envy, jealousy, and self-love. The prayers of this class are an abomination to God. True prayer engages the energies of the soul and affects the life.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 534-535

Prayer is the lifeline of the Christian, for it is by prayer that we maintain our connection with the divine. While walking and doing the daily duties, we must pray to Jesus. Prayer is not a position, but an attitude of mind. We must be sensitive to His sweet presence. “Abide in me and I in you,” Jesus says. “As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in Him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:4-5, RSV

“Our life must come from the parent vine. It is only by personal union with...”

John Martin is the Literature Evangelism Trainer for Hope International.
Christ, by communion with Him daily, hourly, that we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 47-48.

As we are drawn nearer to Christ, we will realize more our need of constant communion with Him. The following are seven important requirements for maintaining our daily connection with the True Vine.

1. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” James 4:7-8, RSV. We must submit our wills to Christ daily, hourly, testing each thought by His thoughts, each word by His words.

“He who places himself unrestrainedly under the guidance of the Spirit of God, will find that his mind expands and develops. He obtains an education in the service of God which is not one-sided and deficient, developing a one-sided character, but one which results in symmetry and completeness. Weaknesses that have been manifested in a vacillating will and powerless character, are overcome, for continual devotion and piety bring the man in such close relation to Christ that he has the mind of Christ. He is one with Christ, having soundness and strength of principle. His perception is clear, and he manifests that wisdom which comes from God.” Selected Messages, book 1, 338

“As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enabling.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 333

2. Obey God’s Word. “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” 1 John 2:3. Parents, how do you know that your children love you? Is it not by seeing them do what you ask them to do?

“If thou wilt enter into life, ‘He added, ‘keep the commandments.’ [Matthew 19:17] The character of God is expressed in His law; and in order for you to be in harmony with God, the principles of His law must be the spring of your every action.

“Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents obedience to it as the condition of eternal life—the same condition that was required of Adam before his fall. The Lord expects no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the

covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden—harmony with God’s law, which is holy, just, and good.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 391

“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of communion with Him, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train.” The Desire of Ages, 672

We must be sensitive to the working of the Holy Spirit. We are told in Luke 22 of Peter’s willingness to lay down his life for his Master, but his own promises were like ropes of sand. It is not what we can do but what Jesus can do if we let Him.

“There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon

The strongest and noblest characters rest upon the foundation of patience and love, and trusting submission to the will of God
divine love ruling in the heart exterminates pride and selfishness. ‘Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.’ The purest joy springs from the deepest humiliation. The strongest and noblest characters rest upon the foundation of patience and love, and trusting submission to the will of God.” Ibid., 168.

Love is a principle working in our heart, an action shown to others. To love as Jesus loves is to be like Him.

“Love is the principle that underlies God’s government in heaven and on earth, and this love must be interwoven in the life of the Christian. . . . The heart that is influenced by this holy principle will be carried above everything of a selfish nature.” The Faith I Live By, 43.

To have the love of Jesus—Jesus put His arms around lepers and made them whole—could we love a handicapped person in the way Jesus did?

5. Deny self and take up your cross. This fifth requirement in daily cooperation with Christ is found in Matthew 16:24. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” KJV. This principle hinges directly upon the fulfillment of the previous principle, loving the way Jesus loves.

“Every true, self-sacrificing worker for God is willing to spend and be spent for the sake of others. Christ says, ‘He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.’” By earnest, thoughtful efforts to help where help is needed, the true Christian shows his love for God and for his fellow beings. He may lose his life in service; but when Christ comes to gather His jewels to Himself, he will find it again.” Messages to Young People, 302.

Jesus tried many times to bring the principle of self-sacrifice home to His disciples. In Luke 22:35 Jesus asked them if they found themselves in need of anything when He had sent them out; they replied—nothing.

“Today the Saviour calls us, as He called Matthew and John and Peter, to His work. If our hearts are touched by His love, the question of compensation will not be uppermost in our minds. We shall rejoice to be co-workers with Christ, and we shall not fear to trust His care. If we make God our strength we shall have clear perceptions of duty, unselfish aspirations; our life will be actuated by a noble purpose, which will reach forward in our growth with Christ.

“The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to ‘go on unto perfection’; to grow up ‘unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’” The Great Controversy, 470.

How many of us over the age of twenty like to drink milk from a bottle? Of course not! As we grew, we developed teeth for chewing. The same holds true in the Christian life. If we don’t grow we will die.

“Singleness of purpose, wholehearted devotion to God, is the condition pointed out by the Saviour’s words. Let the purpose be sincere and unwavering to discern the truth and to obey it at whatever cost, and you will receive divine enlightenment. Real piety begins when all compromise with sin is at an end.” Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 91.

7. Tell of Jesus’ wonderful love and what He has done for you. Jesus says: ‘Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.’ Matthew 5:14, KJV

Have you ever bought a new car? What do you do, go home and park it in the garage? No! You want to show it to everyone; you can’t keep quiet. When you really know Jesus, you can’t keep quiet; you must tell others about His wonderful love and what He has done for you.

“But Jesus did not bid the disciples, ‘Strive to make your light shine;’ He said, ‘Let it shine.’ If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence. If those who profess to be followers of Christ are not the light of the world, it is because the vital power has left them; if they have no light to give, it is because they have no connection with the Source of light.” Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 41.

Let the purpose be sincere and unwavering to discern the truth and to obey it at whatever cost, and you will receive divine enlightenment. Real piety begins when all compromise with sin is at an end.
A right conception of the past is of untold worth in evaluating the present and planning for the future. But too often our spiritual heritage, which is of far greater importance than accounts of battles waged and won, is lost sight of. Worse yet, there has been a deliberate attempt by certain vested interests to distort and confuse thousands of years of ecclesiastical history. The following selection from B.G. Wilkinson's Truth Triumphant (Pacific Press, 1944; now available from Leaves-of-Autumn Books) gives only a fragment of the sacred history of the "church in the wilderness" which preserved the gospel and the Word of God in their purity through the long centuries of Roman Catholicism's dominance.—EDITORS

TERTULLIAN, who wrote about seventy-five years after the death of the apostle John, speaks of the spread of Christianity in the following language:

"For upon whom else have the universal nations believed, but upon the Christ who has already come? For whom have the nations believed—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and they who inhabit Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, and they who dwell in Pontus, and Asia, and Pamphylia, tarriers in Egypt, and inhabitants of the region of Africa which is beyond Cyrene, Romans and sojourners, yes, and in Jerusalem Jews, and all other nations; as, for instance, . . . varied races of the Gaetulians, and manifold confines of the Moors, all the limits of the Spains, and the diverse nations of the Gauls, and the haunts of the Britains (inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ), . . . in all which places the name of the Christ who is already come reigns."

By whom was the knowledge of Christ brought to all these places? By those Christians who had the spirit of the genuine Syrian theology. However, there were others who taught false doctrines. Gnosticism, a product of Alexandria, Egypt, Antioch's rival, was a union of pagan philosophy and gospel truths. While it was founding churches and building colleges, it rejected the Old Testament, denied Creation, and held in contempt all Jews, even Christian Jews. In these words, the historian Newman aptly describes the difference between the theology of Antioch and that of Alexandria. "In the great Christological controversies of the fourth and following centuries Alexandria and Antioch were always antagonists, Alexandria representing a mystical transcendentalism and promoting the allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures; Antioch insisting on the grammatico-historical interpretation of the Scriptures, and having no sympathy with mystical modes of thought."

Whence came that marvelous missionary activity of the church of the East for a thousand years? It originated in the regions of Antioch and Edessa . . .

The apostle to the Gentiles, after founding Syrian Christianity, was called to plant the gospel among the Galatians, in the heart of the large Celtic branch of the human family. The Celts of Galatia were of the same family, and spoke the same language as the Irish, Scotch, British, Welsh, and French.

Thus the Holy Spirit set another stream flowing rapidly which was to water the lands of the West. As India and China were to be bound to the West by Syrian Christianity, so Ireland and the western rim of Europe were to touch the East through Celtic Christianity. By one of those strange phenomena of history—may it not well be called providential?—the Galatians, a numerous branch of the Gauls from France, had pushed their way into Asia Minor. With all the fiery nature of the Celtic race, they had invaded and subdued Italy and sacked Rome in the fourth century before Christ. Not satisfied with this success, they broke into Asia Minor, and, settling there, became the founders of the province of Galatia.

Paul prepared to pass them by as he journeyed west, but the Holy Spirit disposed otherwise. A severe affliction compelled him to tarry in their midst. He won the love and devotion of these people, and soon there were raised up what he pleased to call "the churches of Galatia." Patrick entered Ireland in the latter half of the fourth century. He found a well-organized and healthy Celtic Christianity there. Evidence goes to show that Celtic Ireland learned the gospel from the believers in Galatia. One writer, who has made special research in Oriental history, says, "The Christianity which first reached France and England (i.e., Gaul and Britain) was of the school of the apostle John, who ruled the churches in Asia Minor, and therefore of a Greek, not Latin, type."

There is abundant evidence of intercommunication between Ireland, France, and Galatia in the three hundred years between Paul and Patrick. That the Celts in France were evangelized by the Celts in Asia Minor is shown by a well-known event in the history of the French church. About seventy years after the death of the apostle John, the churches in southern France suffered a terrible persecution at the hands of the pagans. The distressed believers in 177 sent a pathetic account of their afflictions, not to Italy or to Africa, but to their brethren in Asia Minor.

"In order to understand the situation, political and ecclesiastical, in southern France, we must bear in mind that the Gauls of the West and the Galatae of the East were of the same stock, and that each branch, though several nations intervened, retained unimpaired its racial characteristics."

Thus Ireland received the gospel from Asia Minor, by way of the sea and by way of the Celtic believers in southern France; and they, in turn, obtained the light from the Galatians to whom Paul had ministered.

Truth Triumphant, 25-27

For information concerning a video documentary of this history of the ancient Sabbath-keeping churches, write or call James Arrabito, Box 205, Angwin, CA 94508; (707) 965-2786
IT IS Saturday night, and there is nothing to do. Someone suggests watching a movie on TV or renting a video. There may also be a good movie playing at the school gym. The new Seventh-day Adventist Church member speaks up, “Doesn’t the Bible speak against watching movies?” Someone finally responds, “It’s all right. Most movies don’t have anything bad in them anyway.” “Well then, let’s ask God to bless what we watch,” blurs out the new member. The older members are silent. Who ever heard of praying before watching a movie? Unfortunately, most Christians leave God behind when they decide to watch TV and movies. Why do they leave God behind? Because God does not approve of most movies and TV programs.

One problem with TV and movies is that they take up the time that could and should be used for the study of God’s Word. The Bible says, “The sword of the Spirit is the word of God.” Ephesians 6:17. There is a life-and-death battle fought every day in the spiritual life of a Christian. Without the sword of the Spirit to fight off the devil, the Christian is doomed. Unfortunately, some Christians behave just like foolish soldiers by meeting the enemy unprepared and unarmed. Foolish soldiers do not take time to learn how to use their swords for physical combat. Worse yet, they stupidly leave their weapons at home when they go off to war. Satan knows all too well that those who don’t take time to study God’s Word (the sword of the Spirit) and carry it in their hearts and minds continually will be powerless against sin. This is the reason that Satan has put so many obstacles, like TV and movie-watching, between the Christian and the study of God’s Word.

The “movie” of Ellen White’s generation was a theatrical performance—a play or skit performed before an audience. A movie is simply a recording of a theatrical performance but is more realistic because it is not confined by the limitations of the live stage. Technology, through the use of special effects, has removed these limitations from movies. Therefore a movie has much more impact on a viewer than a theatrical performance.

Referring to theatrical performances, Mrs. White states:

“Satan’s work is to lead men to ignore God, to so engross and absorb the mind that God will not be in their thoughts. The education they have received has been of a character to confuse the mind and eclipse the true light. Satan does not wish the people to have a knowledge of God; and if he can set in operation games and theatrical performances that will so confuse the senses of the young that human beings will perish in darkness while light shines all about them, he is well pleased.”

Adventist Home, 401-402

A Seventh-day Adventist pastor told me of his battle with watching TV. Every night when he came home from work, he turned on the TV and watched the movies to relax. This continued until he was watching many hours of TV every night. The TV consumed all his time and he studied his Bible less and less. Whenever his wife tried to talk to him, he said, “Quiet! I can’t hear the TV.” His relationship with God and with his wife went downhill. One day he realized that he would lose God and his family unless something changed. As he prayed for guidance, the Holy Spirit told him to stop watching TV and to get rid of the TV set. Realizing that the TV had become an abomination and a curse, he got rid of it immediately. His relationship

Dean Lifshay is a student of theology at Pacific Union College, Angwin, CA.
with God and with his wife then improved greatly. He never thought that a little thing like the TV could do such great damage. Likewise, Christians should remove any obstacle that would destroy their relationship with God or their families.

Deuteronomy 7:26 says: “Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.”

The vow of every Christian should be: “I will not spend precious moments in reading [or watching] that which will be of no profit to me and which only unfits me to be of service to others. I will devote my time and my thoughts to acquiring a fitness for God’s service. I will close my eyes to frivolous and sinful things. My ears are the Lord’s, and I will not listen to the subtle reasoning of the enemy…. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and every power of my being shall be consecrated to worthy pursuits.” Testimonies, vol. 7, 64

TV and movies are not only time consuming, but the immoral sentiments and beliefs of movie writers are portrayed throughout their films. The Ten Commandments should be the biblical guidelines for a Christian’s morals and ethics. Those who reject these guidelines are infidels because they are rejecting God’s Word. Jon Benson in his article “Just Entertainment?” says that movie writers usually cater to the public in the areas of morals and ethics; otherwise they could not sell their product. College People, April 1984, 13

Unfortunately, the morals and ethics of this generation not only approve of but also promote indecency and sin. This is the reason that immoral movies are so successful. Benson also points out: “Filmmaking is as much a tool as a hammer or a butter knife, and in all three cases the use of the tool as constructive or destructive depends on the character and attitudes of the one wielding the tool. In the hands of the wrong person even something as innocuous as a pillow can be used as a means of smothering a sleeper. And in the case of movies, viewers have to contend with a plethora of wielders, all struggling for control of the tool.” Ibid., 12

Most movie writers condone breaking the commandments—Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor, (Exodus 20:13-16), through the attitudes they give their characters. For example, consider the movie Fiddler on the Roof. It seems innocent enough. Nevertheless, Tevye, the leading character, says, “If being rich is a curse, may God smite me with it and may I never recover.” We may laugh, but this attitude, of which the movie approves, breaks the tenth commandment, “Thou shalt not covet.” Exodus 20:17. Referring to these types of infidel writers Mrs. White states:

“There is no influence in our land more powerful to poison the imagination, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life, than theatrical amusements

“Another source of danger against which we should be constantly on guard is the reading [or watching the productions] of infidel authors. Such works are inspired by the enemy of truth, and no one can read [or watch] them without imperiling the soul. It is true that some who are affected by them may finally recover; but all who tamper with their evil influence place themselves on Satan’s ground, and he makes the most of his advantage. As they invite his temptations, they have not wisdom to discern or strength to resist them. With a fascinating, bewitching power, unbelief and infidelity fasten themselves upon the mind…. Those who value their salvation should shun infidel writings [and productions] as they would shun the leprous.” Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 135-136

The Bible also says: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18

The opposite principle also applies: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the filth of sin, are changed into the same image from filth to filth, even as by the spirit of the devil.” If Christians behold Jesus, they will be changed into saints, but if they behold commandment breaking, they will be changed into commandment breakers. All should follow the example of David who said: “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.” Psalm 101:3

Christians should always be cautious of the sentiments and beliefs characterized in movies and TV programs, and should not watch those that portray and approve of the breaking of the commandments.

Since many movies and TV programs are filled with infidelity, drinking...
realities of life, than theatrical amuse-
ments.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 652-653

Many have had a problem with TV and movies similar to my Seventh-day Adventist pastor friend. The more they watched, the less they had an interest in reading the Bible. Another friend who had this same problem said that when he finally sat down with his Bible, he actually found it boring. It did not uplift him as it once had before he started all his TV and movie-watching. This realization upset him so much that he fell on his knees and cried out to God. God reminded him that the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in a defiled temple (mind). God also added: “Don’t watch those defiling TV programs and movies. Guard against this temptation by getting rid of your TV set.” Finally, he realized that the TV had so defiled his mind that the Holy Spirit could not easily impress him with the truths of the Bible. But when he followed God’s instructions, Bible reading became easier, and he fell in love with the Bible again. Thank the Lord that He “up-
holdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.” 2 Peter 3:9

It becomes obvious that Christians should not watch movies and most TV programs because God does not approve of them. Since TV and movies take up precious time from reading God’s Word, and vividly portray commandment breaking, which in turn destroys a thirst for the pure water of life found in the Bible, Christians should turn from them. Therefore Christians, and especially Seventh-day Adventists, should confidently follow God’s rule set forth in the Bible: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:8 (emphasis supplied)

**Religious Liberty Update**

**Important Change:** One of the most unnoticed achievements of the Reagan Administration has been to enhance the status of Christians and Christianity in America’s public life. Devout Christians have been included in policy-shaping positions. Reagan has opposed abortion and supported tax relief for private schools which are religious. His Supreme Court appointees have been people who resist the secularism of their recent predecessors. All this has been easy to overlook, but it represents an important change away from the trend of the entire period from World War II to the Carter years. The Wanderer, July 14, 1988 (Catholic)

**Prophetic Role:** In a stirring speech repeatedly interrupted by applause, Lutheran Pastor Neuhaus noted the singular and prophetic role of the Catholic Church in today’s world. He noted the important front-line roles played by Pope John Paul II and by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—formerly Office of the Inquisition). He defined “the Catholic moment” as “a moment of opportunity … for the Roman Catholic community in the U.S. to take the lead in demonstrating the possibility of renewing moral discourse in the public square” (joining church and state). Catholic League Newsletter, May 1988

**Pivotal Move:** In much of the world, politicians alone have sought to solve acute difficulties—without success—so help is being asked from a big, left-out force: religious leaders. This is the intent of a first-of-its-kind international conference of lawmakers and spiritual leaders. The “Global Conference of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival” co-chair, Rev. James Park Morton, dean of New York’s Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine, said “The United Nations is as hamstrung as the government of the United States in that spiritual leaders are not allowed any participation.” We’re just half-dealing with the problems. That may sound like heresy in the U.S., with its “separation of church and state.” The mutual religious-political involvement is particularly essential in countering industrial and technological trends threatening life on Earth. Said Rep. James Scheuer, D-N.Y., “We must merge the ethical and practical, politician and priest, secular and sacred.” “It is the first time in modern history for spiritual and political leaders to get together to ponder the potentials of human survival,” observed former U.S. Ambassador Angier Biddle Duke, The Sacramento Bee, April 9, 1988

**First Time:** “Of all the dialogues we have all over the country and all over the world, the one with the Orthodox has been given priority,” said Dr. John Borelli, Vatican spokesman. After Mass, the Patriarch [of the Orthodox church] joined the Pope in pronouncing a blessing from St. Peter’s central balcony. A first ever. Our Sunday Visitor, June 10, 1988 (Catholic)

**American Debt?** “According to my Bible, individual and nations that observe the Sabbath Day [he means Sunday] to keep it holy are blessed,” said James P. Wesberry, Lord’s Day Alliance executive director. “If we are to save the flesh, it must be of the spirit. If we are to save America, it must be of the Sabbath. One of the greatest debts America owes the Sabbath Day is its contribution to such improvement in human character.” Sunday, First Quarter/Second Quarter 1988

**Goodbye Freedom?** During his term in office, Reagan never had the right line-up of justices to get what he wanted on abortion, affirmative action, and religion. Now, it seems that he has five who will support his agenda. Both conservative and liberal lawyers say that the court will move to the right—cutting back on affirmative action, giving religion a greater role in government and granting states more authority to regulate abortion. Los Angeles Times, July 5, 1988
The Devil’s Sleeper
Continued from p. 13

Further quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy give a fuller understanding of how our Lord views the subject of dress.

“One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress. . . .

“...it was the adversary of all good who instigated the invention of the ever-changing fashions. He desires nothing so much as to bring grief and dishonor to God by working the misery and ruin of human beings. One of the means by which he most effectually accomplishes this is the devices of fashion, that weaken the body, as well as enfeebles the mind and belittles the soul.” The Ministry of Healing, 290-291

“Satan is constantly devising some new style of dress that shall prove an injury to physical and moral health; and he exults when he sees professed Christians eagerly accepting the fashions he has invented.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 634. “It is a shame to our sisters to so forget their holy character and their duty to God as to imitate the fashions of the world. . . . The subject of dress demands serious reflection and much prayer. . . . My sisters, your dress is telling either in favor of Christ and the sacred truth or in favor of the world. Which is it?” Ibid., 641. “Simplicity of dress will make a sensible woman appear to the best advantage. We judge of a person’s character by the style of dress worn. . . . A modest, godly woman will dress modestly.” Ibid., 643

“I was shown that the people of God should not imitate the fashions of the world. . . . In these last days, fashions are shameful and immodest. . . . The inhabitants of earth are growing more and more corrupt, and the line of distinction between them and the Israel of God must be more plain, or the curse which falls upon worldlings will fall on God’s professed people.” Ibid., vol. 1, 188-189

“The lust of the eye and corrupt passions are aroused by beholding and by reading. . . . Avoid reading and seeing things which will suggest impure thoughts.” Ibid., vol. 2, 410. Sadly, when men and women go around half-dressed, corrupt passions are aroused.

I am convinced that many of our dear Adventist sisters do not understand the male mind—or they would dress in a different fashion. As Joe Crews has so ably pointed out in his book Creeping Compromise “God made man in the beginning with a very sensitive sexual nature that could be quickly aroused by the sight of female nudity. Woman, on the other hand, was created with a sexual nature which would not be so easily stirred, especially by sight. She was made to be more responsive to touch and tenderness.” Creeping Compromise, 31

We are living on the borders of the Promised Land. Is it not time that, by God’s grace and through His power, we bring every phase of our lives, including our dress, into harmony with His plans?”

The Wilderness Way

Christian wilderness expert Mike Lowe offers hometown, tailor-made Bible and survival lessons from nature. Churches, schools, outdoor clubs and families can simply write or call The Wilderness Way to schedule training or seminars in their area. The following lessons are available:

- Firecraft
- Sheltercraft
- Camprcraft
- Wild Edible Plants
- Orienteering
- Nature Sermons

For scheduling or more information write or call
The Wilderness Way
P.O. Box 9023
Spokane, WA 99209
(509) 326-2766

January 1989 Our Firm Foundation 23
To Fields of Service

I HAVE WORDS to speak to you in reference to the calls that are from time to time made in behalf of the colored people, and the funds that shall come in response to these calls. It is stated by Brother [C. P] Bollman that the work for the colored people is frequently deprived of the means that should come to the workers there, and that, therefore, that field does not receive all the donations intended for it.

I desire to say to you, my brethren, that not one penny of the means that comes in from different sources for the work in the Southern field should be diverted to the work elsewhere. If the Lord has opened the hearts of His people to give to this field that its distressing needs may be met, let it not be truthfully said that any portion of the means given are withheld from the field for which it was intended.

The standard of truth is to be lifted in new territories in the South. School buildings, humble but neat, are to be erected in various places. Churches are to be established. Some of the school buildings may be erected by the students themselves, under the instruction of men who understand this line of work. If the work of instruction is faithfully done, every stroke can be made to tell in the education of the students. And the buildings will be an object lesson to those living in the community, as well as a channel through which souls will be converted to the truth.

My brethren, I ask you in the name of the Lord, that you be careful how you handle the donations that are made to the Southern field. Not one dollar is to be turned aside to any other field. I entreat of you to be very careful.

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. This is a question that should sometimes be considered, but it is not the Lord’s plan that means should be withheld from Madison, because they are not bound to the conference. The attitude which some of our brethren have assumed toward this enterprise shows that it is not wise for every working agency to be under the dictation of conference officers. There are some enterprises under certain conditions, that will produce better results if standing alone.

When my advice was asked in reference to the Madison school, I said, Remain as you are. There is danger in binding every working agency under the dictation of the conference. The Lord did not design that this should be. The circumstances were such that the burden bearers in the Madison school could not
bind up their work with the conference. I knew their situation, and when many of the leading men in our conferences 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. But this matter need not be blazed abroad.

In their change from Berrien Springs, Brethren Sutherland and Magan made many sacrifices. The Lord counseled them where to go, and in their labors at Madison, they have worked far beyond their strength. But under the direction of the Lord they are capable of doing a good work. They will give to the students who come there an education altogether different from what has been given in Washington during the past years. They will not only labor to impart an education in book knowledge and manual work, but they will endeavor to teach the students to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

These teachers should be regarded, not as men who have had no valuable experience, but as men who have in the past accomplished a great and good work, and who have suffered privations for the cause of God. They have not expected their just dues. Had some of their brethren been better able to reason from cause to effect, there would be a different record. The restrictions by which their hands have been tied are not pleasing to the Lord. They might have had a sanitarium and suitable buildings, and they might have been years in advance of where they now are. I would say, Let justice now be done.

The world is our field. God’s children who feel a burden for the work of the message are to be allowed to work where the Spirit directs them. Let not a forbidding power be exercised to restrict them in their work. Let God accomplish His work through the agencies that He chooses. A great mistake has been made in the exercise of human authority in God’s work, and I am bidden to proclaim the message: “Break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free.” I am bidden to say to church members, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” Isaiah 60:1.

When the disciples returned from their first missionary tour, the Saviour asked them, “Lacked ye anything?” And the answer was given, “Nay, Lord.” The same power that supplied the needs of the first disciples will provide for the necessities of those who today go forth to labor earnestly to give the last gospel message to the world. Oh, why do men and women feel so little burden to take up the work that needs to be done? Angels of God are waiting to go forth with them in this work.

In the restrictions that have been placed on some who desired to do a definite work, many have found an excuse why they should not engage in active work, should be done. The Lord has a controversy with His ministers, because they have not taught church members how to work for perishing souls.

Ask our brethren how they will answer when the question is asked, What have you done with the means I lent you in trust? Shall we feel justified when we are obliged to say, “I spent it for self, for dress, and amusements”? In the day of final reckoning, the Lord will deal with each soul individually.

The Bible has not been studied as it should have been, that we might under-

Lay your plans before God. Tell Him that you desire to serve Him, give up your desires to Him, and He will teach you His way.

missionary work. I am bidden to bear my testimony against unnecessary restrictions being laid on those who desire to act a part in the work of the Lord.

In all their associations together, God desires His followers to guard their personal responsibility to Him, and their individual dependence upon Him. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. No ruling power of man over man is to be exercised. We have as a people lost much time and means, because we have not followed closely the Lord’s plans for us. By carrying out their own devisings, men get in the way of the Lord, and close up the avenue by which He would reach those who need the blessings of the gospel.

My brethren, stand out of the way of your fellow beings. Do not, by act of yours, hinder the work that God would have done for the people of the South in bringing to them the light of the truth. Time is passing rapidly, and the truth has yet to go to thousands in this field. Do not hinder, but pray and work, that God may use His human agencies as He designs.

Again and again the Lord has presented to me the needs of the unworked South. I have also been shown that our men in responsible positions need to feel the converting power of God on heart and mind and soul, or they will in their self-sufficiency, hinder the work that stand the will of God for His children. I now call upon presidents of conferences and men in responsible positions to set in operation every possible means by which the members of the churches may learn how to work for the perishing. Let those who have had experience teach those who are inexperienced. Let them pray together, and search the Word of God together.

There is a great work to be done right in the shadow of our doors. In order to accomplish all that is expected of us, the command must be obeyed, “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.” Luke 12:33. Oh, that those who profess the name of Christ would return to the Lord His own talents and of means!

More decided calls should be made for volunteers to enter the whitening fields. Unless there is more done than has been done for the cities of America, church members will have a heavy account to meet for neglected duties. We pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:10. We profess to believe that the commission given to the first disciples includes the followers of Christ in 1907. But what are we doing? I pray that the Holy Spirit may move upon human hearts, that many may go forth as did the early disciples, making their way to
homes and to churches, where men and women are waiting for a knowledge of present truth. My heart is sore when I see the blindness that is upon God's people.

There are among our church members faithful souls who feel a burden for those who know not the truth for this time. But one will say to such, The conference will not support you if you go here or there. To such souls I would say, "Pray to God for guidance as to where you shall go; follow the directions of the Holy Spirit, and go, whether the conference will pay your expenses or not."

"Go work today in my vineyard," Christ commands. When you have done your work in one place, go to another. Angels of God will go with you, if you follow the leadings of the Spirit.

To our brethren and sisters in America, the call must go to awake. There is missionary work to be done in this country, as verily as in any heathen land. When you have made your donation for the work in foreign fields, do not stop, thinking you have done all your duty. You are to be a light in the world. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

There is no time to spend in frivolity. Deny self, and dress and live simply. Remember that there is a message to be borne to those who are in darkness, a work to be done for the Master. The Lord will bless all who will take part in the work of preparing a people to meet Him in peace. We should be terribly in earnest. Lay your plans before God. Tell Him that you desire to serve Him, give up your desires to Him, and He will teach you His way.

Manuscript Release 582, 3-9; Letter 314, 1907, 1-7 (To Elders Daniels and Evans, September 23, 1907)

---

**The Lord's Work**

*continued from 11*

course of study. "Many will go out to labor for the Master who have not been able to take a regular course of study in school. God will help these workers. They will obtain knowledge from the higher school." *Special Testimonies, Series B, 214-215*

All can become intelligent on this subject by studying appropriate literature. "But few can take a course of training in our medical institutions. But all can study our health literature, and become intelligent on this important subject." *Medical Ministry, 320.* "Let our people show that they have a living interest in medical missionary work. Let them prepare themselves for usefulness by studying the works that have been written for our instruction in these lines. These books deserve much more attention and appreciation than they have received." *Testimonies, vol. 7, 63*

What methods of treatment will characterize the Lord's work? What will be the backbone of the Lord's ministry of healing? "There are many ways of practicing the healing art, but there is one way only that Heaven approves. God's remedies are the simple agencies of nature that will not tax or debilitate the system through their powerful proper ties. Pure air and water, cleanliness, a proper diet, purity of life, and a firm trust in God are remedies for the want of which thousands are dying; yet these remedies are going out of date because their skillful use requires work that the people do not appreciate. Fresh air, exercise, pure water, and clean, sweet premises are within the reach of all with but little expense." *Testimonies, vol. 5, 443*

"Pure air, sunlight, abstinence, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies." *The Ministry of Healing, 127.* These readily available simple remedies can be practiced and shared by all. The essential part of the Lord's work—for the three angels' message—is to teach obedience to the natural laws of our being, thus giving glory and honor to the Creator. "To make natural law plain, and to urge obedience to it, is a work that accompanies the third angel's message. Ignorance is no excuse now for the transgression of law." *Counse ls on Health, 21*

To do the Lord's work we must do as He did. "Jesus came in personal contact with men. He did not stand aloof and apart from those who needed His help. He entered the homes of men, comforted the mourner, healed the sick, aroused the careless, and went about doing good. And 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 did." *My Life Today, 227.* Christ's example must be followed. "Christ's example must be followed by those who claim to be His children. Relieve the physical necessities of your fellow men, and their gratitude will break down the barriers, and enable you to reach their hearts." *Ellen G. White Pamphlets in the Concordance, vol. 1, 57*

We are not to delay in doing the Lord's work—the medical missionary work that He began. "Christ is no longer in this world in person, to go through our cities and towns and villages, healing the sick. He has commissioned us to carry forward the medical missionary work that He began; and in this work we are to do our very best.... I have been instructed that we are not to delay to do the work that needs to be done in health reform lines." *Loma Linda Messenger, 384.* One day, and one day soon, the Lord's work will be done.

"There will soon be an awakening that will surprise many. Those who do not realize the necessity of what is to be done, will be passed by, and the heavenly messengers will work with those who are called the common people, fitting them to carry the truth to many places. Now is the time for us to awake and do what we can." *Ibid., 83*

The Lord will raise up agents to do His will. "I will instruct the ignorant, and anoint with heavenly eyes the eyes of many who are now in spiritual darkness. I will raise up agents who will carry out My will to prepare a people to stand before Me in the time of the end." *Testimonies, vol. 7, 101-102.* One day, and one day soon, the Lord's work will be finished, for His work—the medical missionary work—will cover the whole earth "as the waters cover the sea." "We shall see the medical missionary work broadening and deepening at every point of its progress, because of the inflowing of hundreds and thousands of streams, until the whole earth is covered as the waters cover the sea." *Medical Ministry, 317*

If someone will one day do "the Lord's work," why shouldn't we? If one day "the Lord's work" will be finished, why not now?
Truth and the Weight of the Cross

The heavy, rough cross was laid upon the bruised and bleeding shoulders of Jesus, who accepted it without complaint. Jesus was weak from lack of food and sleep, from emotional and physical abuse, and repeated scourgings. His sufferings He patiently endured from the time of His arrest through the judicial proceedings, which were the greatest perversion of justice in all human history.

The weight of the cross was too much for Jesus to bear in His weakened condition. He collapsed under its burden. Yet He still accepted the cross when it was laid upon Him, even though He was unable to carry it. Though suffering great physical pain, Jesus glorified God with His patience, which did not fail.

It was not only the physical weight of the cross which was a burden for Jesus. The emotional burden was equal to—and yes, far heavier than—the physical weight. The cross was an instrument of shame. Acts of the Apostles, 77. It was a symbol of rejection. While hanging on the cross, Jesus felt that His own Father had forsaken Him. This thought brought Him inexpressible despair. In spite of this emotional burden, Jesus still accepted the cross.

One major reason that Jesus had to bear the cross with its physical and emotional burdens and had to suffer upon it was so that truth could triumph. The truth about God’s love for humanity. The truth about the destructiveness of sin. The truth about Satan’s malevolent character. The truth that mankind, through God’s grace, can fully keep the Ten Commandments. All these truths were made manifest and confirmed for ages to come at the cross. But truth could not be vindicated without Jesus’ bearing the cross and its heavy weight.

Unfortunately, many people did not—and still do not—want to hear and understand truth—especially spiritual truth which involves bearing a weighty cross. The religious leaders of Christ’s day were foremost in rejecting Him and the truth He taught during His life and by His atoning sacrifice on the cross. If that were not enough, these religious leaders influenced many of the people to harden their hearts against Jesus and His truth. This rejection of Jesus by its leaders and people led to the rejection of the Jewish nation as God’s chosen people in A.D. 34 and to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The rejection of truth carried with it an enormous loss, both for time and for eternity.

Since Christ’s time on earth, individuals, churches, and nations continue to reject truth when following truth involves accepting the weight of the cross. There are a number of reasons given for rejecting truth. Perhaps these five are the most common: (1) truth may be inconvenient to follow, (2) truth frequently upsets the status quo, (3) truth may arouse opposition, (4) truth may bring reproach, and (5) truth is often unpopular.

As a result of truth’s weighty and frequently unsettling nature, a number of ways have been developed to reject truth and its claims. Some ways are blatant and bold. Truth is rejected with anger, hostility, and violence by persons, groups, organizations, and governments. Advocates of truth—particularly if it is unpopular—do their best to hide the truth and make it disappear. In some cases, the truth has been refuted and made to vanish. This rejection of truth has been the cause of many people to be imprisoned, tortured, and killed. Since the day of Stephen, many have died for the truth of the Bible. Many who have stood for Jesus and the truths of the Bible have died in the twentieth century.

Other ways of rejecting truth are more subtle, and thus more dangerous.

Patrick Hogan writes from Maugansville, Maryland.
Bible truth may be verbally professed by persons and churches, but ignored in the lives of those persons and in the actions of those church organizations. The proclamation of truth may be neglected by individuals and even by entire denominations under the guise of “tactfulness” or to promote “ecumenical brotherhood.” Church organizations may profess belief in certain spiritual truths and then weakly defend, or even refuse to defend, those truths when they are under attack from within or from without the church organization.

A number of truths believed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, such as the Genesis account of Creation and the binding claims of God’s Ten Commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath, have been under attack for many years from within the Adventist Church. Both the world and many professed Christian denominations have opposed the special truths of the Bible which the historic Adventist faith has upheld. This opposition, however, has not been unexpected. Not many will accept truth when following that truth involves accepting the weight of the cross.

Tragically, in recent years, the spiritual truths upheld by the historic Adventist faith have also come under increasing attack from within the Adventist Church. As a result of these attacks, both external and internal, many Adventist lay members, pastors, evangelists, teachers, and church leaders are hesitant to stand firmly for these truths. There is equivocation among some Adventist pastors, scholars, and teachers over the accuracy of the account of Creation found in the first two chapters of Genesis. Some are even questioning the accuracy of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. There is equivocation at all levels in the church over whether Christ assumed fallen or fallen human nature when He became incarnate. The importance of God’s Ten Commandments, the seventh-day Sabbath, and Spirit-empowered obedience to these truths are gradually being de-emphasized in many Adventist pulpits, classrooms, and church publications.

Let us consider four important spiritual truths, and also some of the opposition surrounding each truth. We will learn that these truths are unpopular with the world, or with the popular religious denominations, or in some cases, with both. In addition, these truths are also unpopular with some members of the Adventist Church. Believing and defending these truths—whether as individual Adventists or as a denomination—will involve accepting the cross with its weight of opposition, reproach, and unpopularity. Are Adventists—both as individuals and as a denomination—prepared to accept the weight of the cross?

**Creation**

The Word of God opens with this majestic truth: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis 1:1. This truth is mentioned throughout the Old and the New Testaments. Consider these examples from the Old Testament. “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.” Exodus 20:11. “I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.” Isaiah 44:24. “Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm.” Jeremiah 32:17

In the New Testament we find statements on Creation such as the following: “Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.” Acts 4:24. “God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 3:9. “Worship Him particularly the subjects of biology and the social sciences.

Even the Christian world has not been exempt from the influence of organic evolution. Few Christian denominations accept the Creation account in Genesis 1 and 2 in a literal sense. Theistic evolution is the result of attempts to amalgamate the Bible’s teachings on creation and organic evolution.

Unfortunately, the influence of the theory of organic evolution is being felt within the Adventist Church. Articles have been written by some Adventist scientists and teachers which openly question the validity of the first two chapters of Genesis. Attempts are being made within the Adventist Church to modify the Bible’s teachings on Special Creation to bring them into harmony with the concept of organic evolution.

It is true that the biblical account of God’s Creation of the world contained in the first and the second chapters of Genesis is held up to contempt and scorn by many in the secular world. The majority of worldly scientists, educators, and intellectuals reject the Genesis account of Creation and hold to organic evolution. Much of the professed Christian world also rejects the Bible’s account of Creation. Those who believe the Bible story of Creation as a literal, truthful account are dismissed by the world, many professed Christians, and

To accept contempt and ridicule while standing for Bible truth is difficult. It can involve painful emotional suffering. Christ Himself “suffered keenly under abuse and insult.”

That made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:7

The truth of God’s Special Creation of the earth as taught in Genesis 1 and 2 was accepted for centuries by Christians. The truthfulness of the account of Special Creation, however, has been under attack for over 125 years since Darwin published his book *The Origin of the Species*. The theory of organic evolution captured the thinking of many in the scientific world. It then moved on to deeply influence the educational system, even some Adventists as “naive,” “intellectually shallow,” or “simple-minded.”

To accept contempt and ridicule while standing for Bible truth is difficult. It can involve painful emotional suffering. Christ Himself “suffered keenly under abuse and insult.” The Desire of Ages, 700. This suffering is made even more painful when it is brought about by the actions and the words of professed brothers and sisters in Christ.

Nevertheless, will Seventh-day Adventists accept the weight of the cross, even though the weight involves receiv-
ing coldness, contempt, and ridicule from many in both the secular and the religious worlds (and even from some within the Adventist Church), and stand firmly for the truth about God’s Creation of this world contained in the first two chapters of Genesis.

**The Ten Commandments**

The Ten Commandments are an expression of the principle of love (The Desire of Ages, 607) and the foundation of God’s government in heaven and on earth. *Temperance*, 164. In fact, they are representative of God Himself. *The Story of Redemption*, 183. And yet, tragically, they are regarded lightly by man.

*Testimonies*, vol. 3, 161

As a result of the disregard of God’s commandments, we live in a lawless age. Crimes occur at the highest levels of government and industry, as well as in the streets. Criminals and criminal behavior are frequently glorified by the media. The system of justice is many times perverted through the actions of dishonest judges and corrupt attorneys. Murders of men, women, and children occur with horrifying frequency.

Lawlessness is promoted by so-called “intellectuals” and “philosophers” under such names as “ethical relativism” and “situation ethics.” Their corrupt philosophies do away with fixed standards, especially fixed moral and spiritual standards. This intellectual lawlessness excuses, justifies, and rationalizes just about every type of crime, perversion, and wickedness.

Unfortunately, many professed Christians, including pastors, teachers, and church leaders, are promoting lawlessness. It is not uncommon to hear from some professed Christians that the Ten Commandments were “nailed to the cross,” or even that Jesus Himself supposedly “abolished the Ten Commandments.” In a gross misrepresentation of the teachings of Jesus and the apostle Paul, they declare that God’s grace abolishes the necessity of obedience to His Ten Commandments.

If all this were not enough, we find an astounding situation within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a church which for years has taught the binding claims of God’s Ten Commandments and the necessity of Spirit-empowered obedience to those Commandments. In light of this teaching of many years, is it not incomprehensible that many Adventist lay people, pastors, teachers, scholars, theologians, and church leaders are claiming “that you cannot keep the law?” or that you don’t need to keep the law? or that it is even legalistic to try to keep the law? What an abomination to admit teachers of “lawlessness” within the precincts of God’s remnant church!”


“In His divine plan of salvation, God gave His only begotten Son, that every voice may be silent upon the point that it is not possible for humanity to keep the law of God.” *Review and Herald*, vol. 3, 628

Please remember one vital point: If the Ten Commandments could have been abolished, or altered to accommodate man’s sinful condition, then Jesus did not need to come to earth and to sacrifice His life on the cross. The claim that the death of Jesus abolished God’s words. In Matthew 5:17 He stated, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” (Read Matthew 5:17-28). In Matthew 19:17 Jesus told the rich young ruler, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments,” and in verses 18 and 19 He mentioned several of the Ten Commandments. Jesus, in His actions and His words, honored the Ten Commandments throughout His life on earth.

In these closing hours of earth’s history, multitudes are opposed to keeping God’s commandments. This is true both of worldlings and of many professed Christians. Opposition awaits those who, by their lives and words, would vindicate God’s law and the truth that it can be obeyed through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. And that opposition will come, not just from worldlings and professed Christians, but also from many Seventh-day Adventists who believe the errors and falsehoods of modern theology which teach that God’s law cannot be kept perfectly in this life.

Nevertheless, will Seventh-day Adventists accept the weight of the cross, even though the weight involves receiving opposition and rejection from the secular world, the professed Christian world, and even deceived Adventists, and stand for the truth about the perpetuity of God’s Ten Commandments, their binding claims on humanity, and live out those claims through the power of the Holy Spirit?

**The Sabbath**

The seventh-day Sabbath, along with the institution of marriage, is one of God’s two gifts which He gave mankind in the Garden of Eden. God re-emphasized the Sabbath when He wrote with His own finger the Ten Commandments on two tables of stone which He gave Moses at Mt. Sinai. The fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8-11) on the Sabbath and its observance is the commandment which identifies God as the Giver of the law, and also points back to the account of God’s Creation of the world contained in the first two chapters of Genesis. Jesus kept the Sabbath when He came to earth. (See Matthew 12:1-12; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 4:16; 6:1-10) According to Isaiah 66:23, the Sabbath will be kept in the new earth.

The seventh-day Sabbath is a major Bible truth. Yet few Bible truths have been subjected to more vicious attacks.
from professed followers of Christ and from professed Christian churches than the Sabbath truth. Pamphlets, tracts, and even entire books have been written by individuals and also church denominations in order to attack the biblical truth of the seventh-day Sabbath.

There have been a number of flimsy excuses and rationalizations advanced for ignoring the Bible truth of the seventh-day Sabbath. For example, claims are put forth that the Sabbath is "for Jews only." Was Adam a Jew? It is stated that the Sabbath "cannot be kept on a round world." One can only wonder why such ridiculous excuses are not applied to the other nine commandments.

People who have accepted the truth about the seventh-day Sabbath and who conscientiously observe it have been maligned. Sabbath observers have been attacked by some professed Christians as "Judaizers," "legalists," and "disparers of the gospel of grace."

Tragically, during earth's final hours, lawlessness will abound, not only in the secular world, but far worse, even within the professed Christian world. The rejection of God's Ten Commandments will be emphasized by the rejection of the seventh-day Sabbath by most of mankind. A sizeable portion of the professed Christian world, urged on by deceived pastors, teachers, and writers, will reject the seventh-day Sabbath. Eventually, laws will be enacted in this country and around the world to exalt the first day of the week and to penalize those who observe the Sabbath. Savage, violent opposition will meet those Christians who honor God and all of His Ten Commandments, including the fourth.

Nevertheless, will Seventh-day Adventists accept the weight of the cross, even though such weight involves receiving persecution from the professed Christian world, as well as the secular world (and also from many apostate Adventists who forsake God, His law, and His people during this time), and stand for the truth about the seventh-day Sabbath as God's true holy day and His seal?

The Antichrist and the Beast

During the Protestant Reformation, the Reformers identified the Roman Catholic Church as the antichrist, the beast power, the little horn, the man of sin, the mother of harlots, and other descriptions taken from the prophetic portions of the Bible, notably from the books of Daniel and the Revelation. The Reformers developed a system of prophetic interpretation which came to be known as the historical school of prophecy.

As a diversionary tactic to focus attention away from the Reformers' identification of the Papacy as the antichrist and the beast power described in prophecy, two Jesuit scholars developed prophetic interpretations which, although mutually exclusive, turned many people's minds from accepting the Papacy as the fulfillment of prophecies regarding the antichrist.

The rejection of the historical school of prophecy by the majority of Protestants has helped produce an ecumenical attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church

The Jesuit Alcazar created the pretender school of prophetic interpretation [which teaches that the prophecies of the Apocalypse have already been fulfilled] in an attempt to show that the prophecies regarding the antichrist and the beast were fulfilled before the time of the popes. Alcazar's theory declared the prophecies in Revelation were "fulfilled in the downfall of the Jewish nation and in the overthrow of pagan Rome." He also made Nero the antichrist. The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, vol. 2, 506-507. This school of prophetic interpretation generally has been accepted by the mainline Protestant denominations, including the fourth.

The Jesuit Francisco Ribera developed the futurist school of prophecy which claims that the prophecies of Revelation will be fulfilled at the end of time by some future supernatural individual. According to Ribera's theory, the antichrist will reign for a literal three and one-half years before the Second Advent and will make war against the saints. "He (Ribera) taught that Antichrist would be a single individual, who would rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, abolish the Christian religion, deny Christ, be received by the Jews, pretend to be God, and conquer the world—and all this in the brief space of three and one-half literal years!" Ibid., 489-490

The futurist school of prophetic interpretation was adopted by some Protestantism's acceptance of these two conflicting, Jesuit-created theories has

1. Shielded the Papacy from detection as the antichrist described by Paul, the little-horn power described by Daniel, and the beast power described by John.

2. Allowed the influence and power of the Papacy to grow throughout the world, especially in the news media, among government leaders, and in the Protestant world.

3. Resulted in the rejection of the historical school of prophecy by the majority of leaders, pastors, scholars, teachers, and lay people in the Protestant world.

The rejection of the historical school of prophecy by the majority of Protestants has helped produce an ecumenical attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church. As a consequence of this attitude, it is considered "bigoted," "malicious," and "intolerant" to preach about the Papacy as the fulfillment of Bible prophecies of the antichrist and the beast power.

This ecumenical attitude toward Roman Catholicism has produced some serious changes within the Adventist Church. Some Adventist pastors and evangelists refuse to preach on the beast and his mark. Sermons on the importance of coming out of Babylon—which includes the Protestant churches—are becoming a rarity in the Adventist world. Articles on the antichrist, the beast, the seal of God, the
mark of the beast, and Babylon seldom appear in official Adventist publications. About eleven years ago, an Adventist leader gave the late Pope Paul VI a church medallion.

In this age of "ecumenism," "liberality," and "broad-mindedness," it will not be popular for Adventists to present the straight truth about the Roman Catholic system being the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Adventists cannot preach the straight testimony regarding the antichrist and the beast power and expect to receive applause from the Roman Catholic Church, the majority of Protestant churches, or the world. Nor can Adventists sound the second angel's message warning people about Babylon and expect to receive praise from the professes Protestant world.

Nevertheless, will Seventh-day Adventists accept the weight of the cross, even though the weight involves hatred, opposition, and persecution from many Catholics, Protestants, and worldlings, and stand for and preach the truth of the Bible prophecies regarding the antichrist and the beast power, and the necessity of coming out of Babylon?

The Weight of Truth's Cross

These four biblical truths presented in this article have been used to illustrate the connection between truth and the weight of the cross. The more inconvenient to follow, or unpopular the biblical truth, the heavier will be the weight of the cross in accepting that truth. The more boldly and plainly unpopular biblical truth is proclaimed, the more heavily the weight of the cross in the form of opposition and persecution will rest upon those who faithfully proclaim it.

Seventh-day Adventists cannot honor God by faithfully and forthrightly proclaiming the plain truths contained in the Bible and expect to have the praise of either the secular or the religious worlds. And it is dishonoring to God and His truth for Adventists to muffle the proclamation of any of that truth for any reason, especially to obtain the favor of the world. Furthermore, the muffling of the proclamation of God's truth is an extremely serious matter which will result in the Lord's being unable to pour out His fullest blessing and power on the Adventist Church. It would be well to consider the words of the apostle Paul, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Galatians 1:10

Let all Seventh-day Adventists—lay people, pastors, teachers, evangelists, administrators, and church leaders—determine that in the power and through the strength of God we will stand firmly for biblical truth—especially that biblical truth which is unpopular with the secular and religious worlds—and accept the cross with its weight of opposition and even persecution. When we do this, we will be walking in the narrow path with Jesus. And when the fight is over, we will hear these wonderful words from Jesus, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matthew 25:21

Life Abundant Missionary Institute

40416 123rd Ave. Ct. East, Eatonville, WA 98328 (206) 832-6602

"At baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost we were set apart to engage in the very work that Christ came to the world to do. What was He? In the highest sense He was a missionary, and He was a healing missionary." Review and Herald, vol. 4, 369

We currently offer the gospel worker three training programs that provide valuable instruction and experience.

» Colporteur Training - Four days' intensive training and practice for anyone interested in working part-time or full-time as a self-supporting literature evangelist.

» Home Health Instructor - A three-months' training program for those interested in combining medical missionary work with their literature evangelism.

» Lifestyle Instructor - A six-months' program for those who want to receive training as a lay Bible worker/evangelist after they have completed the Home Health Instructor course.

» Beginning dates for all three programs are

  Monday, January 23, 1989
  Monday, May 22, 1989
  Monday, September 18, 1989

» IMPORTANT! — So that we may serve you better, please notify us in advance of your intention to enroll in any of the programs. Write today for more information.
Food for Mind and Heart

Tell of His Power
by Ralph Larson
309 pages, 2500 Spirit-of-Prophecy quotations on God's loving provisions for us that we may obey His law and "become the sons of God."
New, Powerful, Timely, Logical, and Needed
$12.95

Preach the Word
by Ralph Larson
96 pages of solid, practical help for anyone who is called upon to preach. Twelve simple methods of sermon preparation that will be a great help to many.
$2.50

Spirit of Prophecy
volume one
by Ellen G. White
From the fall of Lucifer to the time of Solomon
12 tapes in vinyl case, $29.95

Triumphant Living
by Ellen G. White
(Steps to Christ, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, and The Sanctified Life)
12 tapes in vinyl case, $28

Life, Teachings, and Miracles
of Our Lord Jesus Christ
by Ellen G. White
(Spirit of Prophecy, volume two, 1877 edition)
12 tapes in vinyl case, $28

Please add 10% to cover postage and handling. Orders over $75 are shipped at no charge

Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328
Address Correction Requested
Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed