Christ Our Righteousness and the 1888 Study Group
“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” 1 Timothy 4:1–2.

Today we have the futurists who are attempting to reapply the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, discounting the Spirit-of-Prophecy statement that new light will not contradict old light. We also find in many places the same teachings for which Ford was defrocked being preached in the pulpits, and very few objections are made. When the straight testimony is given in response, it is considered critical, and some have been censored and even disfellowshiped for promoting it.

Jack Sequeira, who promotes these Nicolaitan concepts, is now sponsored by some leaders to teach what is purportedly the 1888 message of righteousness by faith. In reality his is a new version of the New Theology. Desmond Ford was easy to identify. At Pacific Union College he openly renounced his belief in the investigative judgment. There was an immediate response from some laymen, pastors and leaders. The outcome of that episode is now history.

Jack Sequeira is much more subtle. He gives the 1888 message correctly, and then insidiously contradicts it with carefully chosen words and phrases. His book Beyond Belief is just one of a series of dangerous books that have recently come from our denominational presses. The articles in this and the following issue of Our Firm Foundation will clearly identify and deal with some of the erroneous and dangerous teachings contained in these books.

Justification and sanctification are one doctrine; you cannot separate the two. When one is justified he is sanctified. This experience produces righteousness, which is good works. Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit holding the willing suppliant in the relationship of justification. See Selected Messages, book 1, 397, 366; Testimonies, vol. 2, 355, 505.

The law of God can be kept perfectly by us in the same way Jesus kept it, by the Holy Spirit’s power, when we are willing to be made willing to merge our will with God’s in a continuous relationship of obedience to the truth. See The Faith I Live By, 114.

At the cross, God provided probationary grace, giving the human family an opportunity for a second probation. But the human family as a whole was not justified by Christ’s sacrifice. To justify is a judicial act; however, it must also reflect the heart condition of the repentant sinner. Repentance will be manifested by obedience to all of God’s known will. Such obedience is made possible when we unite our will with God’s will. Doing this results in our being clothed with the garment of Christ’s righteousness.

“But His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 312.

“In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty....

“Erroneous theories of sanctification...springing from neglect or rejection of the divine law, have a prominent place in the religious movements of the day. These theories are both false in doctrine and dangerous in practical results; and the fact that they are so generally finding favor, renders it doubly essential that all have a clear understanding of what the Scriptures teach upon this point.

Continued on 31
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

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Associate Editors—Bob Bresnahan, Clark Floyd, Kenneth Hodges, Preston Monterrey, Vernon Sparks, Harvey Stock
Production Manager—Harvey Stock
Editorial Secretary—Mary Floyd
Contributing Editors—Colin Standish, Russell Standish
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Invitation to Writers

We are accepting article-length (2300-3600 words) manuscripts for possible publication in Our Firm Foundation. We cannot give consideration to longer submissions. Whenever possible, we ask that manuscripts be submitted either on 3½- or 5½-inch floppy disk in IBM ASCII format or neatly typed, using double-spacing. If you desire notice of a decision in regard to your article, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Address all correspondence to Editors, Our Firm Foundation, P.O. Box 940, Eatonville, WA 98328.
On January 4 of this year, several representatives of Hope International and of Hartland Institute met all day with several representatives of the 1888 Message Study Committee. The meeting was convened with the intent of clarifying the beliefs of each group regarding the doctrine of the everlasting gospel.

For a number of months prior to this meeting there had been an increasingly wide denominational distribution of the book Beyond Belief authored by Jack Sequeira. We were subsequently approached by many concerned Seventh-day Adventists regarding this book and its predecessor The Dynamics of the Everlasting Gospel. Upon examining these widely circulated materials leaders at Hope International and Hartland Institute felt compelled to respond publicly, in sermons and articles, to what were perceived as being dangerous teachings. About the same time it was discovered that the 1888 Message Study Committee was publicly endorsing Beyond Belief.

Thus, when it became possible, the above three groups arranged to meet to discuss their differing perceptions regarding the gospel.

At the end of the January 4 meeting it was clear that both Hope International and Hartland Institute were in doctrinal agreement, but that there were notable differences between them and the 1888 Message Study Committee. Since the major differences centered around the teachings of the book Beyond Belief, it was felt appropriate to meet again when its author Jack Sequeira could be present. Because of this planned second meeting, the editorial staff of Our Firm Foundation decided to postpone the publishing of several articles which explained our serious concerns regarding a number of the teachings in Beyond Belief, teachings which were not in harmony with our understanding of the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy.

Thus, on February 1 and 2 of this year, representatives from the above three organizations met with Jack Sequeira for prayer and study to seek, if possible, a common understanding of the true 1888 message of Righteousness by Faith—the third angel’s message that must go to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Unfortunately, at the end of the two days of fellowship and discussion it was again clear that serious differences of understanding about the basic foundational principles of the gospel remained unresolved.

We are not discouraged by this fact, however, for in the following statement we read: “The perversion and misinterpretation of the Scriptures by the Pharisees, and even by those who claimed to believe His words, made it necessary for Christ to speak plainly. It is thought by some to be a misfortune when erroneous theories are advanced, but the Lord has said, ‘All things work together for good to them that love God.’ Romans 8:28. The contention among the Corinthians made it necessary for Paul to write his wonderful epistles to them. If the Gentiles had not backslidden from the faith, Paul would not have written, ‘I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you out of the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another.’ Galatians 1:6-7. It was a misapplication of the Scriptures, to prove falsehood and error true. If the Thessalonians had not misinterpreted the instruction they received, they would not have entertained the belief that the Lord was immediately to be revealed in the clouds of heaven, thus making it necessary for Paul to present the truth as it is in Jesus, leaving on record truth important for all time. And so opposition against light and truth called from Christ a clearer definition of the truth. Every time that error is advanced, it will work for good to those who sincerely love God; for when the truth is shadowed by error, those whom the Lord has made His sentinels will make the truth sharper and clearer. They will search the Scriptures for evidence of their faith. The advancement of error is the call for God’s servants to arouse, and place the truth in bold relief.” The Signs of the Times, January 6, 1898.

The editors of Our Firm Foundation came away from these meetings convinced that those who were present from the 1888 Message Study Committee, and associated thought leaders, are sincere men and women with good intentions. We are convinced, however, that despite their sincerity, they are attempting to put the stamp of truth upon doctrinal error and thus, for their own welfare and for the welfare of God’s people, they are to be met and opposed.

“False teachers may appear to be very zealous for the work of God, and may expend means to bring their theories before the world and the church; but as they mingle error with truth, their message is one of deception, and will lead souls into false paths. They are to be met and opposed, not because they are bad men, but because they are teachers of falsehood and are endeavoring to put upon falsehood the stamp of truth.” Testimonies to Ministers, 55.

“As we near the end of time, falsehood will be so mingled with truth, that only those who have the guidance of the Holy Spirit will be able to distinguish truth from error. We need to make every effort to keep the way of the Lord. We must in no case turn from His guidance to put our trust in man. The Lord’s angels are appointed to keep strict watch over those who put their faith in the Lord, and these angels are to be our special help in every time of need. Every day we are to come to the Lord with full assurance of faith, and to look to Him for wisdom... Those who are guided by the Word of the Lord will discern with certainty between falsehood and truth, between sin and righteousness.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 907.

Thus, in this and the following issue of Our Firm Foundation, we will be publishing articles that, by God’s grace, give a clear presentation of the truth contrasted with some of the errors taught by Jack Sequeira in Beyond Belief and endorsed by the 1888 Message Study Committee. May the Lord help each one of our readers not to follow men or emotions but to follow their love for the truth into a personal study that will test every spirit and every teaching by the law and the testimony. See Isaiah 8:20. □
Christ Our Righteousness and the 1888 Study Group

Last year my secretary received a letter from a conference president in which, among other things, he indicated that he had a concern about my presentations, because I did not have the opportunity to speak to those who might have a different understanding of the gospel from my own. He felt that it would help if I were to make presentations in front of well-honed theologians who could challenge some of the beliefs that I taught.

It is far from the truth that we preach only to those who believe the same truths that we believe. Indeed, virtually every week we face people with strongly divergent views. Nevertheless, it is true, that few of them, in the technical sense, are theologians. He suggested that I present my concepts of salvation, including justification and sanctification, to the pastors of his conference. To this my administrative committee and I agreed.

In talking with the conference president, he then said that there would be a second presenter, Elder Jack Sequeira, whom I knew a little, and understood to be connected with the 1888 Study Committee. I also knew that Elder Sequeira was a very talented presenter of his understandings, and that our General Conference president, Elder Folkenberg, held him in the very highest regard, and had recommended his tapes to the ministry. However, I had read none of his writings, and though I knew that there was a group from the Walla Walla City Church who had strongly challenged his theology, I had not, at that point, studied their objections, except to know that they were concerned about an alleged statement he had made that there were not two apartments in the sanctuary in heaven. Elder Sequeira has since denied this statement.

But at that point I obviously wanted to know what our differences were. I asked the conference president what the differences were in our understandings of salvation. He told me he thought the difference was that I taught that salvation included both justification and sanctification, and that Elder Sequeira taught that salvation was provided by justification alone. I was not a little surprised that he believed that Elder Sequeira would take that perspective. However, I was furnished with a set of tapes made from presentations by Elder Sequeira in the summer of 1993 at the Alberta Camp Meeting. I also was lent a copy of Elder Sequeira's latest book, Beyond Belief, and then a third person gave me some extracts from previously duplicated materials that he had produced. It did not take long in studying these to discover that indeed the conference president was correct. Elder Sequeira did believe that sanctification was not a qualification for salvation, important though it was to demonstrate that we had accepted the saving grace of Jesus provided through justification.

"The objective gospel (the imputed righteousness of Christ) is what qualifies us for heaven—both now and in the judgment. The subjective gospel (the imparted righteousness of Christ) does not contribute to our qualification for heaven; it gives evidence of the reality of Christ's imparted righteousness in the life." Beyond Belief,

"Justification means all of Christ's righteousness that He provided for us so that nothing more is required of us to qualify for heaven." Ibid., 103.

In the end, the meeting did not take place, the conference president, being counseled that no good purpose would be served by such a meeting. He was told that it would only "stir up the pot again," and that these issues of the gospel were not creating significant controversy at this time. I was disappointed, because I genuinely believe that God has given the gospel clearly in His Word and I have no doubt in my mind that the gospel includes both justification and sanctification.

But as I continued to study, the realization came very quickly to me that what Elder Sequeira was preaching was indeed what the 1888 Message Study Committee was promoting. It is this fact that makes this series of articles very difficult for me to write, for three leaders of the 1888 Study Committee I especially hold in high regard, since I know them well personally. I am talking about Elders Robert Wieland, Donald Short and Alex Smyan. I believe that all of these men are of the highest integrity. They love the Lord with all their heart, and sincerely believe the message that they are preaching.

I am wholly indebted to Elders Wieland and Short for the first glimmer of light on the message of Christ our righteousness as preached at and after the 1888 General Conference session. I had previously not so much as heard that such a message had been presented at a General Conference session until I read their manuscript under the title A Warning and Its Rejection.

Over the years I have talked a little with each, but particularly with Elder Wieland. In December of 1983, when Hartland held its first Bible Conference in the Ontario church in California, Elders Short and Wieland spoke at the same meetings. From there, both spoke at a number of what we first called Firm Foundation Conferences, and later Hartland Bible Conferences. Increasingly, however, I began to question some of the presentations of Elder Wieland. We spent much time together, often walking after meetings and dialoguing. I have now forgotten many of the topics that we talked about, but I remember that we dialogued significantly about "forensic, legal justification." We discussed agape, and also the statement, "It is easy to be saved, and hard to be lost."

Subsequent to 1986, when we last spoke together at a Hartland Bible Conference, we have had spasmodic contact one with the other. During one of these occasions we debated the issue of "God does not destroy." I also indicated in a letter to Elder Wieland that, perhaps unwittingly, he was moving in the direction of antinomianism\(^1\) and that he was presenting, not the 1888 message of Christ our righteousness, but a revision of that message that neither Waggoner nor Jones preached in the early days of their minis-

posed dialogue with Elder Sequeira would have centered.

Salvation—Justification Alone?

My conference president was absolutely correct when he said that I would present a gospel which included both justification and sanctification, because I believe that there is no way that we can escape this conclusion from the study of God's Word. Now I hasten to add that there are many who claim that Protestantism is a

They are to be met and opposed, not because they are bad men, but because they are teachers of falsehood and are endeavoring to put upon falsehood the stamp of truth.

gospel of justification alone and Catholicism is a gospel of justification and sanctification. This view arises out of the findings and decisions of the Council of Trent in 1545–1563 in which the bishops of Rome eventually decided the gospel included sanctification, whereas it is true that most Reformers held that the gospel was justification alone. Now it is to be pointed out that the Bible never says that the gospel is justification alone; the word "alone" is added by most Reformers.

However it is essential, before we look at the Bible, to understand what the Roman Catholic Church meant by sanctification. It was not sanctification by faith, it was not a sanctification that comes through the power of Jesus Christ. It was a works sanctification. They were dealing with the issue of sacramentalism. The issue of sanctification was whether or not the seven sacred sacraments had to be kept for salvation. Eventually, by majority vote, the bishops accepted that no one could be saved without keeping the seven sacred sacraments, which included the mass, extreme unction, penance, baptism, marriage, holy orders and confirmation. And so from the outset, I eschew any definition of sanctification established upon the works of man.

Some years ago in Australia, I listened to a preacher who made the dramatic statement: "To place justification and sanctification together in the gospel is to commit spiritual adultery." I was alarmed, especially as I noted no overt reaction
While all those who are sanctified obey the Word of God, they are not sanctified by mere obedience but by faith—a faith that works by love.

me what I believed, and I assured him I believe the same. Then I said, “It is on sanctification that we have a difference. From your sermon today, I would assume that sanctification is man’s imperfect work for God. No wonder that you indicate that you cannot put the two together, for you believe that justification is God’s perfect work, and that sanctification is man’s imperfect work.”

Again he challenged me. “Well, what do you believe sanctification to be?” I said, “I believe it also to be God’s perfect work for man through the death and ministry of His Son Jesus Christ.” It is upon this premise that I believe that the gospel is both justification and sanctification, and the thought of excluding sanctification from the gospel is to deny the message of Christ and the message of Paul. Paul, so often is “blamed” for the “justification alone” theology, but that is far from the truth.

Let us look at some of Paul’s assertions. “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” 2 Thessalonians 2:13. Emphasis added.

If we had no other text in all the Bible, this verse would prove, beyond any doubt, that sanctification is truly an essential qualification for salvation. Sister White, speaking of Jesus and the Father, confirms this point:

“Express to My Father the fact that

My name is dear to you, that you respect and love Me, and you may ask what you will. He will pardon your transgressions, and adopt you into His royal family—make you a child of God, a joint heir with His only begotten Son. Through faith in My name He will impart to you the sanctification and holiness which will fit you for His work in a world of sin, and qualify you for an immortal inheritance in His kingdom.” The Signs of the Times, June 18, 1896.

“Through the work of the Holy Spirit, and peace, be multiplied.” 1 Peter 1:2.

Jesus also confirmed that we are saved through sanctification.

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Acts 26:18.

At this point it is important for us to recognize what we are talking about. The word ‘justify’ means ‘righteous,’ to be forgiven, to be pardoned. The word, sanctify, means ‘holy,’ cleansed, and purified. In the English language, the word justify and righteous do not look alike, but in the Greek, they are almost the same word, coming from the same root. The word most commonly translated ‘just’ is dikaios, whereas the word most commonly translated to be made righteous is dikaios. Likewise in the Greek, the words, sanctify and holy are from the same root. The word most commonly translated to sanctify is hagiasos, whereas the word most commonly translated holy is hagios.

In some languages, usually the Romance languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian, the words are very similar: but in English we have confusion because they are quite different in our language. When we are dealing with justification we are dealing with righteousness, and when we are dealing with sanctification we are dealing with holiness. Let us look a little further. No one disagrees that we are justified by faith.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1.

But there are those who believe that we are sanctified by works. While all those who are sanctified obey the Word of God, they are not sanctified by mere obedience but by faith—a faith that works by love.

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.” 1 Peter 1:22. See also Galatians 5:6. Thus we are not only justified but also sanctified by faith.

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Acts 26:18.

These are the very words of Jesus as He spoke them to Paul on the road to Damascus. We are justified by faith, and we are sanctified by faith. Once this is
A Theological Picasso—Part 1

The following article is Part 1 of a review of Jack Sequeira's book entitled Beyond Belief: The promise, the power, and the reality of the everlasting gospel, (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1993).

The swirling colors on the book's jacket say it best. Jack Sequeira's Beyond Belief is a theological Picasso, an amalgamated gospel which blurs the irreconcilable contrast between the evangelical and the historic Adventist forces now contending for the soul of God's remnant church.

The book does contain many valuable insights. Like the 1888 Message Study Committee, with whom Sequeira has often associated, the book places strong emphasis on self-sacrificing love as the only acceptable motive for Christian behavior. Pp. 20–26, 90–91. It stresses the meaning of the cross beyond the assumptions and trivial icons of mainstream Christianity (p. 67), declaring that "What Satan and the world did to Christ on the cross, they will do to us. This is the 'offense of the cross' that all true believers must endure." P. 70. Sequeira effectively shows how the depth of what happened at Calvary has been obscured by the false doctrine of natural immortality. P. 75. And he states quite clearly that Christ in the incarnation took fallen humanity and was thus forced to contend with the flesh and its desires like fallen human beings. Pp. 146–147, 154.

Sadly, however, the book contains serious errors as well as blatant contradictions. Sequeira makes copious use of the favorite terminology of evangelical Adventism—commonly known as the New Theology. For example, terms like the "objective" and "subjective" gospels (pp. 31–33, 36, 64, 89, 99, 101, 137, 175), the "doing and dying" of Christ (pp. 93, 104), and the gospel as "good news, not good advice" (p. 104), are interspersed throughout the book. Those familiar with recent Adventist theological history will remember the prominence of these expressions in the teachings of Desmond Ford, Robert Brinsmead, and Geoffrey Paxton. Neither these terms nor the concepts they represent are found in Scripture or the writings of Ellen White. Rather, they are the product of post-Reformation Protestantism, from which many modern Adventists have derived their theology. This reviewer recently attended some meetings given by the author of Beyond Belief, in which he spoke of an invitation he had received from a group of evangelical pastors in the Washington, D.C., area—who, in Sequeira's own words, invited him because he, unlike other Adventists, "knew the gospel." Such praise from non-Adventist ministers is a dubious badge of honor for any faithful Seventh-day Adventist to wear.

Like so much of contemporary Adventism, Sequeira's book misunderstands the nature of legalism, and thus proceeds to misunderstand the gospel of grace. The fact that these misunderstandings are mingled with the truths, as we noted earlier, makes the misunderstandings all the more dangerous. In truth, Beyond Belief is an attempted marriage between historic and evangelical Adventism, a romance far too many have encouraged in recent times. The purpose of this review is to demonstrate, from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, the utter incompatibility of this relationship.

The Gospel and Salvation

The book begins with Sequeira speaking several times of the "unconditional" good news of the gospel. Pp. 8, 25, 29. He declares that the two great systems of Protestant theology, Calvinism and Arminianism, offer only conditional good news, in

Kevin Paulson writes from Loma Linda, California.
that the one (Calvinism) offers salvation only to those God has predetermined to be saved; while the other (Arminianism) offers salvation to all, but only on the provision that they believe and repent. P. 8. By contrast, Sequeira teaches that "God actually and unconditionally saved all humanity at the cross." Ibid.

We will later discuss what the cross and the plan of salvation have in fact accomplished for every human being. But nowhere does Scripture or Ellen White speak of salvation or the good news of the gospel as unconditional. No inspired writer ever uses this adjective in describing the saving process.

While it is true that God's love for all humanity is unconditional, salvation is quite another matter. This point is clarified in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Thus, while the whole world is the beneficiary of God's love, only those who believe in Him (with all that that implies) will receive salvation. In Paul's words: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to every man who has faith." Romans 1:16. One chapter later he declares, "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." Romans 2:13. "And being made perfect He [Christ] became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him." Hebrews 5:9.

The Old Testament agrees: "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy." Proverbs 28:13. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:7. None of these statements sound like unconditional salvation.

Ellen White agrees with Scripture. She states clearly that "There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ;" that "No man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place." Elsewhere we read: "Without regeneration through faith in His blood there is no remission of sins, no treasure for any perishing soul." "The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail." And in a definition of the gospel quite alien to much of contemporary Adventism, she declares: "The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life." The modern prophet also defines what it means to believe on Jesus: "To believe on Christ is to have God dwell in the soul 2:8-9; Titus 3:5. 'Christ in you' witnesses to—or gives evidence of—our salvation in Christ, but it is not meritorious (see Matthew 5:14-16; John 13:34-35; 14:12; Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:8)." P. 33.

"Justification means all of Christ's righteousness that He provided for us so that nothing more is required of us to qualify for heaven." P. 103. And, reminiscent of Robert Brinsmead and Geoffrey Paxton during the 1970s, Sequeira makes this audacious claim:

"The gospel of faith plus works, or justification plus sanctification, is at the heart of Roman Catholic theology. It is a subtle form of legalism." P. 25.

The above statements begin to expose the contradictions in Sequeira's theology. On the one hand, he says that "Christ in you" and the work of sanctification have no merit or saving value. P. 33, 170. On the other hand, he describes both justification and sanctification (objective and subjective gospels) as aspects of salvation. Pp. 31-32. On the one hand, he insists that the subjective work of imparted righteousness "does not contribute in the slightest way to our qualification for heaven." P. 32. On the other hand, he states that the Holy Spirit's work "subjectively changes a person's status from being 'in Adam' to being 'in Christ' and qualifies him for heaven." P. 136. He cannot be right both times.

Despite Sequeira's ambiguity on this point, the Bible is exceedingly clear that sanctification and the Spirit's work in us are part of the means of our salvation, not merely the fruits thereof. Though Sequeira piles a mass of scripture around two statements cited earlier, not one of these passages denies that sanctification and the internal work of grace have merit or saving value. In fact, one verse which he quotes twice (pp. 33, 170) says exactly the opposite—Titus 3:5:

"He saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of

N o man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place.
His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit.”

This passage clearly states that the Spirit’s work of regeneration and renewal are an actual part of the saving process, not its result. Another passage makes this fact even clearer: “God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.” 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

This verse should forever settle the question of whether sanctification is part of exclusively forensic be harmonized either with Scripture or the Spirit of Prophecy. In describing the scope of justification, Sequeira again mixes historic with evangelical Adventism, and does so without any inspired authority. He correctly states that justification not only declares but makes us righteous. P. 104. But he also claims that the forgiving aspect of justification applies not only to past sins, but also involves “the just penalty of the law on behalf of our sins, past, present, and future.” P. 103. This assertion sounds disturbingly like the overarching forgiveness popular among teachers of the New Theology, often illustrated by pictures of a man wearing a black suit with a white umbrella overhead. 16 Neither Scripture nor the writings of Ellen White support such a concept. Paul declares that God sent Christ “to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.” Romans 3:25, KJV. Nowhere does he or any other inspired writer speak of the remission of sins that are future. Some claim that the above verse has been mistranslated in the King James Version. Yet at least three other prominent versions say the same thing. The phrase “sin that are past” is translated “former sins” in the Revised Standard Version, “sins of the past” in the New English Bible, and “sins committed beforehand” in the New International Version.

Ellen White, once again, agrees with Paul:

“Christ bears the penalty for man’s past transgressions, and by imparting to man His righteousness, makes it possible for man to keep God’s holy law.” 17 “The only way in which he [the Christian] can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account. Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure.” 18

Nowhere it is stated that Christ’s righteousness stands in the place of sanctified success, for indeed, Christ’s righteousness and sanctified success are one and the same thing. The notion that tomorrow’s sins are forgiven today is utterly foreign to the inspired consensus. To teach overarching forgiveness is to teach that sin is inevitable, and the Bible denies it. “My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1. “If” is a conditional word. Forgiveness is available if we sin, not when.

Sequeira maintains, as many Christians do, that God never intended the law to be a means of salvation. Pp. 16, 156-157, 173. This idea is a half-truth which, as is often the case, conveys the effect of an untruth. In the first place, Sequeira himself acknowledges the role of the law in a fundamental aspect of salvation—as our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Galatians 3:24. P. 16. Paul makes a similar statement in Romans 3:20, when he declares that through the law comes knowledge of sin. Unless the law performs this vital function, there can be no salvation, for unless we know we are sinners we will feel no need of a Saviour.

If the process goes no further, it is true that the law cannot save us, for it is not enough merely to be convicted of sin. The heart and life must be surrendered to God’s control, without reservation. Thus the new-covenant experience is realized, in which the law ceases to be the outward lash of guilt and becomes instead the motivation of the heart. Deuteronomy 30:14; Jeremiah 31:31–33; Romans 10:8; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:8–10. No wonder the Bible states elsewhere: “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Psalm 19:7, KJV. “I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Psalm 119:11.

In short, the law cannot be a method of salvation so long as it remains outside of the heart. By contrast, when conversion takes place and the law is written upon the heart, it does become an instrument of our salvation.
When Sequeira distinguishes “works of faith” from the “works of the law” (pp. 96-97), he highlights an important biblical truth which much of contemporary Adventism has failed to clarify. Unfortunately, he fails to perceive the force of his own point, since he makes no effort elsewhere to distinguish between these two types of works. Indeed, the implications of this distinction are devastating for one of his main arguments—that believers are not saved by sanctification. Pp. 25, 32-33, 170. How can Sequeira teach that the works of faith make no more of a contribution to our salvation than the works of the law, when the Bible clearly teaches otherwise? Paul commands the believer: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:12-13. Contrary to Martin Luther’s assumption, James agrees with Paul: “You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.” James 2:24. In Ellen White’s words:

“Divine agencies are combining with the human in reshaping the character according to the perfect pattern, and man is to work out that which God works in.”

“While God was working in Daniel and his companions ‘to will and to do of His good pleasure’ (Philippians 2:13), they were working out their own salvation.”

“The work of gaining salvation is one of copartnership, a joint operation. . . . Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. God works and man works.”

Notice that none of these statements speak of responding to a salvation already finished. We do not read that Daniel and his companions were working out their response to salvation, or that the work of responding to salvation is one of copartnership. We read instead of working out and gaining salvation. These passages remind us of another which we quoted earlier, which is worth quoting again:

“The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life.”

Thus, according to Inspiration, sanctified obedience is not merely the result of salvation, but an integral part thereof. By distinguishing “works of faith” from the “works of the law,” Sequeira has stumbled upon a profound truth. Tragically, he fails to perceive the implications of this truth, for his contention is that no human works of any kind have any part in salvation.

Sequeira seems to embrace another popular but erroneous belief in contemporary Adventism—that the biblical “fight of faith” means fighting with self, but not with specific sins. P. 137. No such distinction can be found in either the Bible or in the Spirit of Prophecy. In the words of Scripture: “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1. “For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12. “Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Hebrews 12:4. KJV. Ellen White agrees:

“The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan.”

“Our part is to put away sin, seek with determination for perfection of character. As we thus work, God cooperates with us.”

“The Lord does not propose to perform for us either the willing or the doing. This is our proper work. As soon as we earnestly enter upon the work, God’s grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort.”

“Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he must be ever on guard, striving in Christ’s strength for victory.”

“We have a work to do to resist temptation. Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices must guard well the avenues to the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts.”

“‘There must be a constant, earnest struggling of the soul against the evil imaginings of the mind. There must be a steadfast resistance of temptation to sin in thought or act. The soul must be kept from every stain, through faith in Him who is able to keep you from falling.”’

The following statements thoroughly erase any distinction between battles with self, what some call the fight of faith, and the struggle against sin and Satan:

“The Christian life is a warfare. The apostle Paul speaks of wrestling against principalities and powers as he fought the good fight of faith.”

“God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected.”

**The Two Adams**

Sequeira understands the apostle Paul as teaching that humanity is divided into two camps—one headed by Adam, the other by Christ. Pp. 51-65. This idea is the basis of his understanding of the sin problem (pp. 11-17) and its resolution through what he calls the “in Christ” motif (pp. 33-35)—an understanding which launches him into some very dangerous waters.

While Sequeira denies the Augustinian doctrine of inherited guilt (p. 54), he effectively agrees with this doctrine, since he places the human sin problem outside the realm of choice. Just as he believes that all human beings were saved at the cross whether they like it or not (p. 8), Sequeira claims that all human beings are sinners whether they choose to be or not. Pp. 15, 52, 53, 56. This concept forms the basis of his whole theology of salvation; this fact becomes obvious as he

Continued on 31
Dear Friend,

I received your letter and printed matter, and have read them. It was good to hear from you. I have always appreciated your keeping the 1888 message before the church, for I strongly believe it also.

About three months ago I bought Elder Jack Sequeira's book Beyond Belief. Upon reading it I was very disappointed at his position on salvation, for I had heard you speak well of his writings. Then I received the 1888 Newsletter in which Helen Cate, the editor, had written about two pages praising that book and expressed her view that the message in the book would lighten the earth with God's glory. At first I thought perhaps Helen was expressing only her own opinion and had not consulted with you, but then I read a note you had written that said "Elder F himself loves Jack's message, which is in reality our message too." Evidently then your position is the same as Jack's. It was a real disappointment to me, for I never had the slightest idea that you believed what is written in that book.

You sent me material, including a part from your book Grace on Trial, and asked me to mark where you had gone astray. I am concerned about some of your positions, but more especially about some of the other material you sent. I am very seriously concerned about Jack Sequeira's book because I believe it could lead astray tens of thousands of our people who do little study, and do not check what they read with the Word of God.

Because of my strong convictions about the dangers written in this book, I will speak plainly about it. Since you accept Jack's position in his book, I will quote some of his statements and number them for ready reference when his position is clearly seen to be a contradiction. The quotations are from his book Beyond Belief.

There are so many obvious contradictions in the book that it would take another book to do justice to and comment upon them. His contradictions of inspiration are unavoidable, since he takes the position that salvation is unconditional. When one takes that position as his premise, he must be selective of scripture and leave the large abundance of evidence untouched. Eight statements from his book show his position on unconditional salvation.

1. "The objective truth of the gospel is that Jesus Christ has already accomplished everything necessary for sinful men and women to be declared righteous and candidates for heaven." P. 33.

2. "The devil has deceived many Christians into believing that justification by faith does not fully qualify them for heaven—that something more is necessary, that they must keep the law and do good works." P. 104.

3. "All three of these aspects of our salvation—justification, sanctification and glorification—have already been accomplished in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ." P. 30.

4. "The gospel of faith plus works, or justification plus sanctification, is at the heart of Roman Catholic theology. It is a subtle form of legalism." P. 25.

5. "Scripture also refers to salvation as what God accomplishes in us through the Holy Spirit. This aspect of salvation is not something in addition to the objective facts of the gospel." P. 31.

6. "The subjective gospel (the imparted righteousness of Christ) does not contribute to our qualification for heaven." P. 36.

7. "The entire human race is corporately one 'in Jesus Christ,' just as we are one 'in Adam.' What Jesus did, we have done, because we are corporately one in Him. His perfect life and death are consid-

Lowell Scarbrough, an author and retired building contractor, writes from Oroville, California.
ered to be our life and death as well. See Ephesians 1:3–12; 2:4–7.” P. 37.

8. “When Adam sinned, Paul says, he brought the judgment of condemnation and death to ‘all men.’ In the same way, when Christ obeyed, He not only redeemed humanity from the results of Adam’s sin, but much more He canceled all our personal sins (‘many offenses’) and brought the verdict of ‘justification of life’ to all men. Romans 5, verses 16, 18.

This divine love (divine nature) will be translated into obedience to God’s commandments. Jesus said, ‘He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is chosen, complete surrender and constant cooperation. Our part is small, but it is the deciding factor in our salvation (see Number 3 above).

Above is the unconditional salvation concept; below is the conditional concept.

The condition of salvation was given by the One who is our salvation, Jesus Christ. John 3:5 is one of the better-known texts in the Bible. “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Paul says, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8:14. Then to be born and led by the Spirit is the condition of salvation.

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Romans 5:5.

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” 1 John 5:1–2, NAS.

The most important work of the Holy Spirit is to impart God’s love to us. As we continue we will see that this love that the Spirit imparts is the same as Christ-impacted righteousness.

“The crowning work of the Holy Spirit...glorifies Christ by making Him the object of supreme regard, and the Saviour becomes the delight, the rejoicing, of the human agent in whose heart is wrought this transformation.” My Life Today, 49.

“It is the work of the Holy Spirit from age to age to impart love to human hearts, for love is the living principle of brotherhood.” Testimonies, vol. 8, 139.

These last quotations have defined the condition of salvation more closely. Now we know that the condition of salvation is the love of God in the heart (“If ye love me, keep my commandments.” John 14:15) by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Our being born and led by the Spirit—sanctification—did not take place when Jesus went to the cross. It involves man’s

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he gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life.

that loveth me.” John 14:21. Jesus also told the young ruler: “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:17.

In the time of the final crisis it can be said of God’s people: “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12.

Ellen White’s statements are too clear to be misunderstood, as the quotations below will show. Christ’s imparted righteousness to and in us—obedience to God’s laws—is essential to our salvation.

“His perfect obedience to all God’s commandments, opens to him the gates of the Holy City.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 920.

“From Genesis to Revelation the conditions upon which eternal life is promised, are made plain...keep My commandments and live, is the requirement of God.” Review and Herald, September 3, 1901.

Salvation “is obtained by willing obedience.” Christ’s Object Lessons, 117.

“The gospel that is to be preached to all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples presents the truth in clear lines, showing that obedience is the condition of gaining eternal life.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 972.

Do we make it clear to people when we preach and write that obedience is the condition of eternal life? Or do we tell them that Christ has already done it for them? See Beyond Belief, chapter 2.

Both Waggoner and Jones believed in the conditions of salvation as given in the inspired statements above. That fact will be clearly documented in the following:

On page 46 in Waggoner’s book, Christ and His Righteousness, under the heading, “The Righteousness of God,” he begins his study on the righteousness of the law as the righteousness of God.

On pages 56 and 57 he says: “We must have the righteousness of the law or we cannot enter heaven, and yet the law has no righteousness for one of us...It is not only truth, but it is the sum of
new birth.” The imparted righteousness in justification on page 57 was therefore the new birth, and that is the righteousness that can keep the law. Romans 5:5 says of the new birth that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us, and Waggoner refers to it as Christ’s imparted righteousness. There is no problem here, for God’s and Christ’s love are interchangeable words for Their righteousness.

We are fully assured that the gospel is Christ in men! and the preaching of it (the gospel) is the making known to men, the fact of Christ dwelling in them.

On page 67, Waggoner presents the forgiveness aspect of justification by faith, which he left out on page 57. He says, “Again, what brings justification, or the forgiveness of sins? It is faith.”

What we just considered in Waggoner’s message of justification by faith is exactly what Ellen White said was the most precious message, in Testimonies to Ministers, 91-92: “The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. . . . It presented justification through faith in the Saviour; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. . . . All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”

The message that carries with it Christ’s imparted righteousness for keeping all the commandments, is the message that will lighten the earth with Christ’s glory. See Selected Messages, book 1, 234-235, 363-364. That was the message that was the beginning of the loud cry of Revelation 18:1-2 (but was rejected then), and that is the message that will yet lighten the earth with Christ’s glory, and not a new message of unconditional salvation with all of its contradictions to God’s Word.

The new birth identified as Christ’s imparted righteousness— the condition of our salvation—is the message that God commanded to be given to the world and attended by the loud cry. Thank God it is not legalism. It is the answer to meeting the demands of the law, bringing glory to God with joy unspeakable.

Did A. T. Jones believe in unconditional salvation? Ellen White wrote a letter to him from New Zealand in 1893 about a dream she had. In this dream Jones was speaking and he said works amounted to nothing and there were no conditions.

Jones had become lax and somewhat confused himself. She told him that “he confused minds and that he looks in reality, upon these subjects as I do.” Then she quotes Matthew 19:17 where Christ answered the question of the young ruler about eternal life. And Jesus said, “If you would enter into life keep the commandments.” Then she said, “Here are conditions, and the Bible is full of conditions.” Selected Messages, book 1, 378. Ellen White had spent much time with Waggoner and Jones after 1888 and knew exactly what the two men believed. She knew by association and inspiration what Jones really believed. Evidently, Jones, as people sometimes do, became carried away with his subject and careless about his expressions. God sent the message of righteousness by faith by these two men. God did not send Waggoner with pure truth on the conditions of salvation in agreement with what Jesus stated in Matthew 19:17, and also send Jones to contradict what Jesus said in this verse.

Is the gospel only Christ’s life, death and resurrection? Let us look.


Obviously, this experience was Paul’s when he said, “Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Galatians 2:20.

“The impartation of the Spirit was the impartation of the very life of Christ.” Review and Herald, June 13, 1899.

Do you see the implication here that the gospel was in Paul? Yes, it is true. Christ’s righteousness is the gospel, and when it was imparted to Paul by the Holy Spirit, it was the gospel in Paul.

Ellen White, in commenting on Colossians 1:26-27, wrote: “Said the apostle [Paul], speaking of the gospel, ‘To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.’ ” Review and Herald, June 11, 1889.

Read Testimonies to Ministers, 18–19, to get a better understanding of Colossians 1:26-27. By Christ’s imparted righteousness God’s people are the supplement of His glory, and Christ is the great center from which radiates all glory. That is why Paul could say, Christ in you is the gospel in you.

Ellen White comments on Colossians 1:27: “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Jesus came to impart to the human soul the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God [or Christ’s righteousness] is shed abroad in the heart.

Selected Messages, book 1, 386. We note that she just explained “Christ in you the hope of glory” by referring to Romans 5:5: “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Then she says that because of the Jews’ tradition the gospel of Christ could not be placed in their hearts.

However men may endeavor to exclude sanctification from the gospel, the attempt is futile. In his book, The Everlasting Covenant, E. J. Waggoner, on page 25, agrees perfectly with this assertion. Waggoner’s statement reads: “The only way in which he [Paul] could be made to know it [the gospel] was to have Christ revealed in him. The conclusion therefore is that the gospel is the revelation of Jesus Christ, the power of God, in men. So we are fully assured that the gospel is Christ in men! and the preaching of it (the gospel) is the making known to men, the fact of Christ dwelling in them.” Again we see that the gospel includes Christ’s imparted righteousness through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in God’s people.

With the material we have covered on the conditions of salvation and the gospel, it becomes clear that Romans 8: 1–16 is the most exhaustive presentation of the conditions of salvation in all the Bible. Verse 1: They have no condemnation because they walk after the Spirit. Verse 2: He is called the Spirit of life. Verse 4: The law will be fulfilled in those who walk after the Spirit.
We just went through Waggoner’s presentation on keeping the law and it was identical to Romans 8:1–17. This chapter is fantastic. Notice verse 10: “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.”

Notice: “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.)” John 7:38–39. What is the living water? It is Christ’s imparted righteousness, by the Spirit. He that has the Spirit has life. Romans 8:10. The same is true of what Jesus told the woman at the well. “If you had asked of me I would have given you living water.” See John 4:10.

Ellen White describes well the living water in The Desire of Ages, 20. “In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven” and “has its source in the heart of God.” All of God’s people and the angels of the universe have the law of life in them through the Holy Spirit (The Desire of Ages, 161), and no one joins the heavenly universe without this law of life—Christ’s imparted righteousness through the Spirit that manifests itself in obedience to God’s commandments.

Friend, in the material you sent me you stated that “Writing under the blessings of the 1888 message, the Lord’s servant cleared up the problem of conditions.” Then you quote something from Manuscript 9, 1890. “The question will come up, How is it? Is it by conditions that we receive salvation? Never by conditions do we come to Christ. If we come to Christ, then what is the condition? The condition is that by living faith we lay hold wholly and entirely upon the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. When we do that, then we work the works of righteousness. But when God is calling the sinner in our world, and inviting him, there is no condition there; he is drawn by the invitation of Christ and it is not, “Now you have got to respond in order to come to God.”

Friend, this statement is clearly speaking of the sinner coming to Christ before conversion and not the one who is living a Christian life, or has willfully sinned and is returning. You said, “Under the blessings of the 1888 message the Lord’s servant [Ellen White] cleared up the problem of conditions.” I am really disappointed that you would take the position that Ellen White’s statements on the conditions of salvation before 1888 were all wrong. Was Christ wrong when He set forth the conditions to Nicodemus? We have documented here that the messengers of 1888 believed just what Ellen White believed on conditions. The manuscript that you said cleared up the condition of salvation was dated Manuscript 9, 1890. Consider the letter Ellen White sent to Jones in 1893 from New Zealand on conditions (Selected Messages, book 1, 377), which is quoted above. Had Ellen White reverted back to the conditions in 1893? No, friend, Ellen White had strong statements on the conditions of salvation after 1890 such as those in Review and Herald, September 3, 1901, and Christ’s Object Lessons, 391, 117 (1900), all quoted above. There are many such statements throughout her writings before and after 1888.

Let us look at the matter of corporate oneness in Christ, as Beyond Belief presents it, based on the two Adams in Romans 5:12–18. Jack does not accept verse 12 as it reads. He says it is not right to say that death has passed upon all men, for all have sinned. He says it should read, “death passed upon all men in Adam.” Beyond Belief, 52. His understanding causes the change of reading of the scripture in Romans 5:12: “Therefore if we insist that verse 12 (Romans 5:12) means that all men die because ‘all have sinned’ as Adam sinned—then we must make the analogy fit by arguing that all men live (or are obeyed, He not only redeemed humanity from the results of Adam’s sin, but much more He canceled all our personal sins (‘many offenses’) and brought the verdict of ‘justification of life’ to all men (verses 16, 18). This is the unconditional good news that the gospel proclaims.”

This broad statement removes all men from condemnation, Christian and non-Christian, through a forensic justification to life.

The author does not claim this forensic justification is a saving relationship with the sinner. But is the sinner’s condemnation removed without conversion? Paul wrote both the fifth and the eighth chapters to the Romans, and he says in Romans 8: 1: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

What is Paul saying here? He is saying that if you are not a real Christian walking after the Spirit, you are under condemnation. Verse 2 says, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” What is the Spirit of the law of life? We found in the foregoing study that Christ’s imparted righteousness is the law of life that comes by being born of the Holy Spirit. It is the justified because all have obeyed as Christ obeyed. Such an argument turns justification by faith into salvation by works.” Beyond Belief, 53.

Yes, all men do receive eternal life because they have obeyed as Christ obeyed; love is the condition. See Deuteronomy 32:46–47; 6:2–5 and Steps to Christ, 59–60. There is no “legalism or salvation by works” in being born and led by the Holy Spirit that imparts Christ’s righteousness or love to His people. Yes, Romans 5:18 does say, “Even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”

Pages 54–55 in Beyond Belief state: “When Adam sinned, Paul says, he brought the judgment of condemnation and death ‘to all men.’ In the same way, when Christ only way we can be free from condemnation and death, says Paul.

Romans 5:18 is taken to mean that all are justified with a forensic justification that removes condemnation from the sinner without his choice. If it were so, then Paul has contradictions in his letter to the Romans, John 3:18 reads: “He that believeth on him is not condemned.” Notice that he is not condemned if he believes; but what if he does not believe? “But he that believeth not is condemned already.” This assertion clearly reveals that Romans 5:12 should be understood just as it reads: “so death passed upon all men, for that all [personally] have sinned.”

The quotation of Waggoner that you sent me says: ‘There is not the slightest reason why every man that has ever lived should not
be saved into eternal life, except that they would not have it. So many spurn the gift offered so freely." The word “offered” denotes it as provisional. Colin Standish, as stated in his article in the October 1993 issue of Our Firm Foundation, 15, understands Romans 5:18 to be typical of John 12:32: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me.” Of course, very few have ever been drawn to Christ in proportion to the billions who have never heard of Christ. Ellen White says in speaking of the fall of Adam and Eve: “To them was to be granted a period of probation, during which, through faith in the power of Christ to save, they might become once more the children of God.” Prophets and Kings, 682. This statement we know is the truth. During this period of probation God would naturally provide man’s sustenance, such as heartbeat, air, food, water, and so on.

Friend, you have spent your life working for God to win souls to Him. I have no question about your integrity and sincerity. You have no doubt been instrumental in bringing many to Christ who will receive the crown of life. You have spent much of your life in mission fields such as Africa, sacrificing the comforts and conveniences of life (which I have enjoyed), and I appreciate the sacrifices you have made.

I have written you this letter with as much honesty and sincerity as you have always had. I believe you will see, from the words of inspiration presented here, major contradictions in the concept of unconditional salvation. That concept is dangerous and “beyond belief.” It is not the “most precious message” God sent. It is the Nicolaitan doctrine that Christ hated. Revelation 2:6, 15; Signs of the Times, February 25, 1897. If you see the light in the Word of God presented here, take it and run with it—we desperately need you. You can be instrumental in saving more souls now than in all the years past. I certainly believe that what has come to us in the words from Scripture, Ellen White, and Waggoner and Jones as presented in this letter, is the most precious message that came to us in 1888.

I pray for God’s blessing on you and your wife.

Sincerely your brother in Christ.

Lowell Scarborough

PS. Friend, because unconditional salvation is a contradiction of God’s Word and the true message of 1888, I feel duty bound before God to obey His counsels in 1 Timothy 5:20 and Testimonies, vol. 2, 15, by sending copies of this letter to others. ☐

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The justification provided by Christ’s life of obedience and His substitutionary death came freely upon all men unto life. Part of the contention is whether the life spoken of here is the first life which is temporal and probationary, or is Paul referring here to eternal life? The other area of contention is whether this justification is actually given unconditionally to all men, or whether it is justification made available to all men, and received by them, on the condition of their obedience. Thus we have several proposed explanations of the three words “justification of life”:

1. A forensic, or legal, justification of all men that unconditionally gives them eternal life.
2. A forensic or legal justification of all men that unconditionally gives them eternal life.
3. A forensic or legal justification of all men that unconditionally gives them eternal life until they reject it.
4. A justification of all men that makes available temporal life on conditions.
5. A justification freely available to all men, which, in association with sanctification—obedience—entitles one to, and qualifies one for, eternal life.

Evidence will show that temporal life is not maintained nor is eternal life given to any rational being without his choosing to obey the laws of the Creator of that life. Thus it must be concluded that there is no “justification of life,” either temporal or eternal, without the condition of obedience.

When Adam and Eve were created they were placed on probation. Eternal life would be theirs only if they demonstrated their willingness to live in obedience to the laws of the Creator.

The Purpose of Probation

“Angels on probation had been deceived by Satan, and had been led on by him in the great rebellion in Heaven against Christ. They failed to endure the test brought to bear upon them, and they fell. Adam was then created in the image of God and placed upon probation.” Redemption, vol. 2, 15.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, justice demanded that they, at that moment, suffer the wages of sin—eternal death. Adam and his potential descendants—the human race—would have, to the best of our knowledge, been exterminated for eternity the very day that Adam sinned had not Christ agreed, prior to the creation of this world, that if man should disobey, He would die for man in order that man might have a second chance. Thus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, promised to die the death that sinful man deserved in order that the human race could have a second probation. See Faith and Works, 21–22.

The purpose of this second, probationary, temporal life was to give opportunity for fallen men and women to become acquainted with the true character of God. Once they realized His selfless motives of love toward His created beings, they would respond by willing obedience to the principles governing their existence. The purpose of probationary time is to acquaint man with the “terms of salvation” (The Signs of the Times, June 24,
1903); to provide men opportunity to "return to their allegiance" to their Cre-
ator (The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 912); and "to form charac-
ters for the courts above" (God's Amazing Grace, 243). In mercy, God has
provided mankind temporal life in order that each human being can have the op-
portunity to be reconciled to God.

"Through His sacrifice we who are
now on probation are prisoners of hope. We are to reveal to the universe, to the
world fallen and to worlds unfallen, that there is forgiveness with God, that
through the love of God we may be
reconciled to God. Man repents, becomes
contrite in heart, believes in Christ as His
atonning sacrifice, and realizes that God is
reconciled to him." Fundamentals of
Christian Education, 370.

"Now is the hour of probation. Now is
the day of salvation. Now, now, is God's
time. In Christ's stead we beseech them to
become reconciled to God while they
may, and in humility, with fear and trem-
bling, work out their salvation." Testimo-

"In every age there is given to men
day of light and privilege, a proba-
tionary time in which they may become
reconciled to God." The Desire of Ages,
587.

Obedience a Condition of Temporal Life

Everything that God has created was
placed under law. "God is the Governor
of the universe. He has put everything under
law. Everything in the natural world is
under law." The Signs of the Times, Octo-
ber 1, 1895.

The order and harmony in the natural
world depend upon obedience to natural
law. "Everything in nature, from the mote
in the sunbeam to the worlds on high, is
under law. And upon obedience to these
laws the order and harmony of the natural
world depend." Thoughts From the Mount of
Blessing, 48.

Man, of necessity, was placed under
law. "God placed man under law, as an
indispensable condition of his very exis-
tence. He was a subject of the divine
government, and there can be no govern-
ment without law." God's Amazing Grace,
40.

"The requirement of God to obey and
live was given to Adam. The only way to
life is found through obedience." Review
and Herald, March 28, 1893.

All components and functions of physical man were made subject to natu-
ral law. "In the creation of man was
manifest the agency of a personal God.
When God had made man in His image,
the human form was perfect in all its
arrangements, but it was without life.
Then a personal, self-existing God
breathed into that form the breath of life,
and man became a living, breathing, intel-
ligent being. All parts of the human organ-
ism were put in action. The heart, the
arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands,
the feet, the senses, the perceptions of the
mind—all began their work, and all were
placed under law." Testimonies, vol. 8,
264.

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—pagans, atheists, and

Christians—alike enjoy temporal life so
long as they obey natural law. Christ's death
makes temporal life freely accessible to all, but
they must obey.

Thus, even our temporal probationary
life is provided, not unconditionally, but
upon condition of our obedience to natu-
ral law. The death of Christ on the cross
makes available to us the bounties of
nature (see The Desire of Ages, 660), but
we must eat, breathe and exercise if we
are to be benefited in the least by them.

God has not justified all mankind, for
Scripture refers to humanity as including
the unjust as well as the just. See Matthew
5:45. God does not unconditionally give
us probationary life, for saints and sin-
ners—pagans, atheists, and Christians—
ali
e enjoy temporal life so long as they
obey natural law. Christ's death makes
temporal life freely accessible to all, but
they must obey. Thus this temporal life is
an opportunity for all to learn to abide by
the universal principal of "obey and live."

A Condition of Eternal Life

Just as our temporal well-being de-
deps upon obedience to natural law, just
so our relationship (eternal life) with God
and His unfallen universe depends upon
obedience to the spiritual and the moral
laws of the universe.

"Everything in nature, from the mote
in the sunbeam to the worlds on high, is
under law. And upon obedience to these
laws the order and harmony of the natural
world depend. So there are great princi-
ple

les of righteousness to control the life of
all intelligent beings, and upon conformity
to these principles the well-being of
the universe depends. Before this earth
was called into being, God's law existed.
Angels are governed by its principles, and
in order for earth to be in harmony with
heaven, man also must obey the divine
statutes. "Thoughts From the Mount of
Blessing, 48.

Christ's substitutionary death made
available to all not only temporal, but also
eternal, life. God's promise to give ena-
bling grace to all who avail themselves of
it, to form an obedient, holy character and

Our title to eternal life is called justifica-
tion; and our fitness for eternal life is
called sanctification. See The Faith I Live
By, 116. None will be saved merely by
having a title to heaven, for none are
entitled to heaven—justification—with-
out also being fitted or qualified for
heaven—sanctification. "Through the
work of the Holy Spirit, the sanctification
of the truth, the believer becomes fitted
for the courts of heaven; for Christ works
within us, and His righteousness is upon
us. Without this no soul will be entitled
to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven un-
less qualified for its holy atmosphere by
through faith in my name He [the Father] will impart to you the sanctification and holiness which will fit you for His work in a world of sin, and qualify you for an immortal inheritance in His kingdom.

The Salvation of Infants

The fact that there is no salvational justification without transformation, or sanctification, is confirmed by the way God saves infants and children. If forensic justification could save anyone without their participation, it would guarantee salvation for infants and children, and the mentally retarded who never reach accountability. If "the free gift came upon all men unto [unconditional] justification of [eternal] life" and all are eternally saved until they reject it, then surely all infants, imbeciles and innocent children are unconditionally saved. Does Inspiration teach that such a forensic or legal salvation exists?

We are told that Eden restored will be safe from sin because "Every character has withstood the testing of evil, and none are longer susceptible to its power." *Education*, 302. This fact raises the question of how children, whose characters have not been tested and tried can be saved. We are told that the faith of the parents covers or substitutes for that not possessed by the child. "I know that some questioned whether the little children of even believing parents should be saved, because they have had no test of character and all must be tested and their character determined by trial. The question is asked, 'How can little children have this test and trial?' I answer that the faith of the believing parents covers the children, as when God sent His judgments upon the first-born of the Egyptians." *Selected Messages*, book 3, 313-314.

Thus small children are saved by substitutionary justification united with substitutionary sanctification. In other words, they are saved without their willful choice. However, their salvation depends upon the sanctified obedience of their human parent, not upon a purported justification, without the condition of obedience, provided by Christ's death on the cross.

Because "parents stand in the place of God to their children" (Review and Herald, October 14, 1875), when children are old enough to respond by obedience or by rebellion to parental authority, this obedience or rebellion then determines their salvation rather than the forensic or substitutionary obedience or disobedience of the parent. "God cannot cover iniquity even in children. . . . Will you suffer your children to be lost through your neglect? Unfaithful parents, their blood will be upon you, and is not your salvation doubtfully with the blood of your children upon you?" *Ibid*.

Thus again we see, there is no justification not conditional upon the obedience—sanctification—for either the child or the parent. Thus we can understand the importance of teaching children obedience to parental authority from their earliest moments. "From their earliest life children should be taught to obey their parents, to respect their word, and to reverence their authority.

"One of the first lessons a child needs to learn is the lesson of obedience. Before he is old enough to reason, he may be taught to obey.

"The mother's work should commence with the infant. She should subdue the will and temper of the child and bring its disposition into subjection. Teach it to obey, and as the child grows older, relax not the hand." *Child Guidance*, 82.

We are told that the mentally retarded children of believers who have the submission and obedience of a child will be saved; but those with reason will be saved only if they believe in Christ. "In regard to the case of A, you see him as he now is and deplore his simplicity. He is without the consciousness of sin. The grace of God will remove all this hereditary, transmitted imbecility, and he will have an inheritance among the saints in light. To you the Lord has given reason. A is a child as far as the capacity of reason is concerned; but he has the submission and obedience of a child. You are a responsible member of the family. You have been redeemed by the blood of the only begotten Son of God. He gave His life for you. He bore the penalty of sin and transgression for every son and daughter of Adam that they should not perish if they believe in Him, but have everlasting life." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, 210.

The slave who has been kept in ignorance and degradation without knowledge or choice will be as if he had not been. "I saw that the slave master will have to answer for the soul of his slave whom he has kept in ignorance; and the sins of the slave will be visited upon the master. God cannot take to heaven the slave who has been kept in ignorance and degradation, knowing nothing of God or the Bible, fearing nothing but his master's lash, and holding a lower position than the brutes. But He does the best thing for him that a compassionate God can do. He permits him to be as if he had not been, while the master must endure the seven last plagues and then come up in the second resurrec-

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cion and suffer the second, most awful death.” Early Writings, 276.

This statement refutes the claim that all are unconditionally punished in the lake of fire because of Adam’s sin—original sin—unless they accept salvation. It also disproves the claim that all are saved unconditionally because of Christ’s death—forensic justification—unless they reject salvation.

**Favor With God**

In Selected Messages, book 1, 343, we are told that Christ, by His death “restored the whole race of men to favor with God.” The General Conference Bulletin, April 8, 1901 states, “The world, divorced from God by sin, has been restored to favor by the sacrifice of His Son. With His own body the Saviour has bridged the gulf that sin has made.”

This seemingly unconditional restoration to God’s favor is in harmony with the fact that our initial life and the bounties of nature are provided freely to both the just and the unjust. However, Inspiration is clear that salvational restoration to God’s favor is conditional upon obedience.

“Christ has demonstrated that through His grace humanity can keep the law of God. He has demonstrated to the universe of heaven and to the fallen world, that, by the invitation of our gracious Sovereign, all who will believe on Him may receive pardon, and be restored to the favor of God.” Review and Herald, October 21, 1902. Emphasis supplied. See also The Signs of the Times, September 23, 1889; October 8, 1894; June 20, 1895; Reflecting Christ, 53; and Selected Messages, book 1, 223.

The sacrificial system first instituted at the gates of Eden-lost, teaches that man is not justified unto eternal life until the sinner repents and confesses his sins upon the innocent lamb. The condition for restoration to the salvational divine favor of God seems to be summarized in the following words: “Repent, and do the first works” (Revelation 2:5), is the only condition upon which God can restore you to favor. Those whom the Lord pardons [justifies], He first makes penitent.” Ibid., book 2, 83. See also ibid., book 1, 393–394.

By the weight of the evidence we must limit the concept of any unconditional “restoration to divine favor” to the unconditional provision of initial life for all humanity. This gift of initial life makes possible probationary life upon condition of obedience to natural law. This temporary, probationary life in turn makes it possible for a person to learn of, and to experience, the everlasting gospel of salvational repentance, pardon, and transformation—justification of life, which is by faith and is unto eternal life.

We have seen that man receives the opportunity of enjoying temporal life with or without justification. The physical life of Satan and the evil angels is also, apparently, sustained by the Creator without their being justified. The weight of the evidence leads us to conclude that Romans 5:18—“the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life”—is best understood to apply to salvational justification, but salvational justification cannot be separated from the condition of obedience by faith—sanctification—that qualifies us for eternal life.

E. J. Waggoner is in harmony with this interpretation of the phrase “justification of life” in Romans 5:18. He also views it as being conditional and as applicable to eternal life. He applies this verse to the gift offered so freely.” Waggoner on Romans, 101.

On another occasion, Elder Waggoner stated even more clearly that the “justification of life” of Romans 5:18 is conditional by stating that God brings justification within the reach of all men, but that only those who want it will get it. “The free gift came upon all men to justification of life.” Are all men going to be justified? All men might if they would, but says Christ: ‘Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.’ All are dead in trespasses and sins. The grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared unto all men. It comes right within the reach of all men, and those who do not get it are those who do not want it.” Bible Studies on the Book of Romans, E.J. Waggoner, Destiny Press, Queensland, Australia, 1981, 32.

W. W. Prescott also taught that the “justification of life” of Romans 5:18 is referring to salvational justification unto eternal life that is made available to all, but that it is not experienced until a person repents and yields to Christ’s wooing.

**R**epent, and do the first works” (Revelation 2:5), is the only condition upon which God can restore you to favor. Those whom the Lord pardons [justifies], He first makes penitent.

“‘The free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.’ Now is it not perfectly clear from the 18th verse that as condemnation upon all men, so justification of life came upon all men? Perfectly clear. The thought seems to me to be this—that in Jesus Christ all men were justified. 8th verse: ‘But God commends his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.’ Did He die for all? ‘That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.’ Now if all human beings should decide at once to repent and turn to God this very hour, would it be necessary for God to make any change in His plan? Do you not see He has done it all, for all men? . . . Every human being receives a tendency or feels a drawing toward righteousness; and if [he] does not resist, he will be drawn to righteousness, but he will receive for himself no consideration because of that righteousness or that drawing to right-
eousness unless he, himself, yields to that tendency. He will be drawn to Christ, he will be in Christ, and then he will personally receive the benefits of justification of life which came upon all men, just as in the other case when he yields to the tendency to sin he receives the condemnation personally which came upon all men in Adam." In Christ—The Divine Human Family, 26-27. Emphasis in the original.

In conclusion, the only example of justification without faith (involving willful choice), that is unto eternal salvation, is that of infants of believers, before they can manifest submission or rebellion to parental authority. They will be saved by the obedient life of the believing parent. The obedient and eternally saved parent, along with the innocent offspring, receives salvation, as will all of the redeemed, because of Christ’s present life of obedience lived out in the believer’s life.

"The Bible does not teach us that God calls us righteous simply because Jesus of Nazareth was righteous eighteen hundred years ago. It says that by His obedience we are made righteous. Notice that it is present, actual righteousness. The trouble with those who object to the righteousness of Christ being imputed to believers is that they do not take into consideration the fact that Jesus lives. He is alive today, as much as when He was in Judea. ‘He ever liveth,’ and He is ‘the same yesterday and to day, and for ever.’ Hebrews 13:8. His life is as perfectly in harmony with the law now as it was then. And He lives in the hearts of those who believe on Him.

"Therefore it is Christ’s present obedience in believers that makes them righteous.” Waggoner on Romans, 101-102.

Ellen White confirms this position. "Those who do not believe in Christ are not reconciled to God; but those who have faith in him are hid with Christ in God. ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ 1 John 1:9. Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the sinner may feel that he is pardoned, and may know that the law no more condemns him, because he is in harmony with all its precepts. It is his privilege to count himself innocent when he reads and thinks of the retribution that will fall upon the unbelieving and sinful. By faith he lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, and responds with love and gratitude for the great love of God in giving his only begotten Son, who died in order to bring to light life and immortality through the gospel. Knowing himself to be a sinner, a transgressor of the holy law of God, he looks to the perfect obedience of Christ, to his death upon Calvary for the sins of the world; and he has the assurance that he is justified by faith in the merit and sacrifice of Christ. He realizes that the law was obeyed in his behalf by the Son of God, and that the penalty of transgression cannot fall upon the believing sinner. The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law. ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whatsoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16.” The Youth’s Instructor, November 29, 1894.

The active obedience of Christ clothes the believing sinner with the righteousness that meets the demands of the law. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whatsoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

of Christ the existence of unconditional justification (without faith or willful choice) unto eternal life for all until they reject it is made even more remote by the inspired instructions regarding the salvation of the children of unbelievers:

“I had some conversation with Elder J. G. Matteson in regard to whether children of unbelieving parents would be saved. I related that a sister had with great anxiety asked me this question, stating that some had told her that the little children of unbelieving parents would not be saved.” Selected Messages, book 3, 313.

“This is a most delicate subject. Many unbelieving parents manage their children with greater wisdom than many of those who claim to be children of God. They take much pains with their children, to make them kind, courteous, unselfish and to teach them to obey, and in this the unbelieving show greater wisdom than those parents who have the great light of truth but whose works do not in any wise correspond with their faith.” Ibid., 315.

The servant of the Lord goes on to say that even though the infants of unbelievers have been taught to obey, the Bible does not definitely teach that there is a salvational justification without faith (forensic) provided by Christ’s death that saves such infants.

"This we should consider as one of the questions we are not at liberty to express a position or an opinion upon, for the simple reason that God has not told us definitely about this matter in His Word. If He thought it was essential for us to know, He would have told us plainly." Ibid.

Because of this lack of clear scriptural teaching of a salvational forensic justification for obedient children of unbelievers we are counseled that it would be better to dwell upon other subjects.

"The things He has revealed are for us and for our children. There are things we do not now understand. We are ignorant of many things that are plainly revealed. When these subjects which have close relation to our eternal welfare are exhausted, then it will be ample time to consider some of these points that some are unnecessarily perplexing their minds about.” Ibid., 315.

“1 said to Brother Matteson, ‘Whether all the children of unbelieving parents will be saved we cannot tell, because God has not made known His purpose in regard to this matter, and we had better leave it where God has left it and dwell upon subjects made plain in His Word.’ ” Ibid., 315.

Dear fellow brethren, the weight of the evidence warns us against believing a purported “unconditional justification” that saves all mankind until they individually reject that salvation. If we do so we are believing and promoting a gospel that goes beyond that which the Bible definitely teaches. We would be wise to “dwell upon subjects made plain in His Word.”

Note: We are told that infants without mothers will be in heaven probably because before they died they learned submission to parental authority. They will be motherless because after their deaths their mothers apostatized and were lost. See Selected Messages, book 2, 260.
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Continued from 7

understood, it is not spiritual adultery to put the two together; they are indeed such inseparable Siamese twins that to separate means to destroy both. Thus we acknowledge that we are justified by the sacrifice of Jesus, and that we are also sanctified by that same sacrifice.

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Romans 5:9.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25-27.

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Hebrews 13:12.

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 10:10.

But there is another issue that is present here, and that is that so many of the texts of the New Testament "marry" justification and sanctification. It is clear that Paul and Christ, and other writers of the Bible saw justification and sanctification as powerful segments of the same great salvational acts of God.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [justification], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [sanctification]." 1 John 1:9.

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins [justification], and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith [sanctification] that is in me." Acts 26:18.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins [justification]. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him [sanctification]." Acts 5:31-32.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption [justification]." 1 Corinthians 1:30.

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water [justification] and of the Spirit [sanctification], he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5.

"There is therefore now no condemnation [justification] to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit [sanctification]." Romans 8:1.

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

So important was this concept that Jesus "married" them together in the following statements.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors [justification]. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [sanctification]: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Matthew 6:12-13.

"She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee [justification]: go, and sin no more [sanctification]." John 8:11.

These are but some of the ways in which God "marries" the two together, thus this is not a minor problem. When in his book Elder Sequeira states that sanctification has nothing to do with our qualifying for salvation, he is in opposition to the clear words of Inspiration.

"The objective gospel (the imputed righteousness of Christ) is what qualifies us for heaven—both now and in the judgment. The subjective gospel (the imparted righteousness of Christ) does not contribute to our qualification for heaven; it gives evidence to the reality of Christ's imputed righteousness in the life." Beyond Belief, Jack Sequeira, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 36.

By the objective gospel, Elder Sequeira is referring to justification and by the subjective gospel he is referring to sanctification. And so while he sees a role for sanctification, it has nothing whatsoever to do with our qualifications for heaven. He confirms this belief again:

"Justification means all of Christ's righteousness that He provides for us so that nothing more is required of us to qualify for heaven." Ibid. 103.

Such statements cannot stand up to the message of the gospel of the New Testament. They are consistent with what a seminary professor declared to me in 1977:

There is therefore now no condemnation [justification] to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit [sanctification].

but perhaps the most important proof of all, that we must be both justified and sanctified comes is the final declaration of God concerning man at the close of human probation. "Let him that is righteous [justified] be righteous still and he that is holy [sanctified] let him be holy still." Revelation 22:11. It is fascinating to note that the Greek word most commonly used for righteous (dikaioi) is used in the first translation of "righteous," but in the second, it is the Greek word most commonly used for justified (dikaios). It is also true that the first mention of holy is the most common word used for holy (hagiazo), but the second is the word commonly used for sanctify (hagios). God does not save a justified-only people; it is a justified and sanctified people that He saves.

"Sanctification is a good principle, but it is not part of the gospel." But indeed, it is not only a good principle, it is as much a part of the gospel as is justification. This is not legalism, because legalism would turn to man's works as a basis of his salvation; but rather, properly understood, sanctification is not by works, but by faith, and it is impossible to separate justification and sanctification in the gospel.

Some years ago, I was invited to be interviewed by Paul Hunsberger, the well-known Evangelical writer and radio interviewer. In his program, "Meet Your Minister," he asked several questions, knowing full well that I was a Seventh-day Adventist minister. But the question that perhaps was most critical, was a simple one: "How is a man saved?" My
response was this: “We are saved through the death and ministry of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Not being satisfied that he had gotten to the bottom line of this Seventh-day Adventist minister, he pressed further and so I quoted Ephesians 2:8–9: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” But even that did not satisfy him, and so he asked more directly, “Well, what part do works play in salvation?” Without naming my source, I quoted Selected Messages, book 1, 377: “While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works.” He was satisfied. These good works are the result of the holy life that we live day by day by submitting our hearts and lives to Jesus.

I wish that in that interview I had quoted also verse 10 of Ephesians 2.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10.

Here Paul makes plain that it is not an antinomian gospel that he is presenting, but a full gospel built upon justification and sanctification, both of which are provided through the sacrifice of Jesus, both of which are appropriated to us by grace through faith that we might be prepared to be part of that company of the saints of all ages who are ready to go home to live with Jesus. In the light of the New Testament, the emphasis upon a justification-alone gospel cannot be sustained; indeed myriads will be lost, believing they are saved through God’s forgiveness when indeed they are continuing to live a life short of the victory that God has promised through Jesus. Christ’s righteousness cannot cover unforsaken sin. See Selected Messages, book 1, 366.

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,” Jude 24.

This issue of justification and of sanctification is not peripheral; it is indeed essential to salvation. Next month I intend to take up the issue of the futility of the objective gospel. □

1 Antinomian: One of a sect who maintains that, under the gospel dispensation, the law is of no use or obligation; or who holds doctrines which supercede the necessity of good works and a virtuous life.—Noah Webster, 1828, American Dictionary of the English Language.

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What Is the Church?

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March 1994  Our Firm Foundation  23
I wanted to express my appreciation for your wonderful, timely, and very much on-target publication, Our Firm Foundation. It truly feeds my soul. Enclosed is a small donation.

—MG, Oregon

You are in my prayers. May God be with you, continually giving you His discernment and wisdom and His love to meet every emergency, not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit.

—MH, Alaska

I wonder when God's professed people will wipe the scales from their eyes and realize that God will use other means than His organized church to finish His work if they fail in their calling. Our prophet has warned us for over a hundred years of these issues facing men when they take it upon themselves to rule as a hierarchy and not as God has ordained.

I believe if our leaders had followed God's counsel we would have no need for independent ministries such as yours. But we long ago quit following the Lord's counsel and started to put trust in man's leading. We are seeing a fulfillment of Testimonies to Ministers, 300, where she says men will try to control the work, but it will appear as though God takes the reins in His own hands.

Our church publications are full of philosophy instead of Bible doctrine which our people so desperately need at this time. How can we proclaim the three angels' messages when we don't even know what they are? Very many church members fall into this category today. I believe we have an untold number of ministers today who fit into this category also. Nothing means much except "just believe in Jesus" and all will be all right. Whatever happened to sanctification and obedience?

I personally am thankful for ministries like yours and look forward each month to my issue of Our Firm Foundation.

I pray that God will continue to guide and bless your work. Remember that Jesus was an "independent minister" also, but thanks be to God that He finished His work on earth! The rest of His work that He has entrusted to mortal man will also be finished in His time and His way. No organization nor group of men will stall the finishing of His work.

—RB, Kentucky

Please pray for me in every way, but especially that I will maintain a program of study and prayer to strengthen my knowledge that I might truly know what I believe. Also that I have the strength to turn the television off when it doesn't help my walk with God.

—BS, New Mexico

I am so grateful for your magazine. The articles are timely and encouraging to us who are in the churches across the nation. If it were not for your voice and others of like faith and thought many would simply feel that the church was making no effort to give the loud cry.

—AF, Tennessee

My mother and I are disabled and no longer able to attend church. You cannot imagine the good that Our Firm Foundation does. For us it takes the place of our Sabbath sermon. It is exactly what we need at this time, and no other papers or magazines are filling this need. I do wish everyone in this church would study their Bibles and Spirit of Prophecy. If they did, there would be no more diversity in our theology or doctrines.

—SR, California

From Overseas

I count it a joy to once again greet you and our dear brethren in Hope International. I am so much thankful to the Lord to have also granted me this short opportunity of writing you a few lines which I hope find you well and in a good condition.

First I thank the one who donated a subscription of Our Firm Foundation to me. I have received the first magazine, which is entitled "Letter to a Futurist." I have really learned much from this magazine, especially the topics of the shaking of Adventism, the health message, and others. I was happy to share these messages with my fellow brethren in the faith.

Since I don't have any donation to give to your ministry, I am pouring my prayers unto God for you. I believe that the Lord has ordained you for a special work in the everlasting gospel of the three angels.

May God continue to bless you all who have denied yourselves in order to move forward the consecrated ministry He has entrusted in your hands.

—BN, Africa

We continue to solicit your donations to assist us as we endeavor to respond to the many requests from poverty-stricken brothers and sisters in Africa and in other parts of the world. Your donations marked "Overseas Literature" will be used to send literature to those who are thirsty for the truth but are unable to purchase the materials for themselves.—Editors

Response to Earth's Final Warning

I have read your Earth's Final Warning, and I'm quite impressed. Please include my name in your Final Warning register of readers. And please inform me as to how I can have the book Keys of This Blood.

I am an ordained minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, but I keep an open mind and heart to events related to His coming. I am inclined to believe the true Sabbath as the day of the Great God and Saviour. Please send me your literature on such topics plus your interesting paper.

—RM, Puerto Rico
Relation of Faith and Works

Brother A. T. Jones:

I was attending a meeting, and a large congregation were present. In my dream you were presenting the subject of faith and the imputed righteousness of Christ by faith. You repeated several times that works amounted to nothing, that there were no conditions. The matter was presented in that light that I knew minds would be confused, and would not receive the correct impression in reference to faith and works, and I decided to write to you. You state this matter too strongly. There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. I know your meaning, but you leave a wrong impression upon many minds. While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works. God saves us under a law, that we must ask if we would receive, seek if we would find, and knock if we would have the door opened unto us.

Christ offers Himself as willing to save unto the uttermost all who come unto Him. He invites all to come to Him. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. You look in reality upon these subjects as I do, yet you make these subjects, through your expressions, confusing to minds. And after you have expressed your mind radically in regard to works, when questions are asked you upon this very subject, it is not lying out in so very clear lines in your own mind, and you cannot define the correct principles to other minds, and you are yourself unable to make your statements harmonize with your own principles and faith.

The young man came to Jesus with the question, "Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" Mark 10:17. And Christ saith unto him, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." He saith unto Him, "Which?" Jesus quoted several, and the young man said unto Him, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" Jesus said unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Here are conditions, and the Bible is full of conditions. "But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." Matthew 19:17, 20-22.

Points to Guard

Then when you say there are no conditions, and some expressions are made quite broad, you burden the minds, and some cannot see consistency in your expressions. They cannot see how they can harmonize these expressions with the plain statements of the Word of God. Please guard these points. These strong assertions in regard to works never make our position any stronger. The expressions weaken our position, for there are many who will consider you an extremist, and will lose the rich lessons you have for them upon the very subjects they need to know. . . . My brother, it is hard for the mind to comprehend this point, and do not confuse any mind with ideas that will not harmonize with the Word. Please to consider that under the teaching of Christ many of the disciples were lamentably ignorant; but when the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised came upon them and made the vacillating Peter the champion of faith, what a transformation in his character! But do not lay one pebble for a soul that is weak in the faith to stumble over, in overwrought presentations or expressions. Be ever consistent, calm, deep, and solid. Do not go to any extreme in
anything, but keep your feet on solid rock. O precious, precious Saviour, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he thatloveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him," John 14:21.

This is the true test—the doing of the words of Christ. And it is the evidence of the human agent's love to Jesus, and he that doeth His will giveth to the world the practical evidence of the fruit he manifestsin obedience, in purity, and in holiness of character.

Oh, my brother, walk carefully with God. But remember that there are some whose eyes are intently fixed upon you, expecting that you will overreach the mark, and stumble, and fall. But if you keep in humility close to Jesus, all is well... There is no place in the school of Christ where we graduate. We are to work on the plan of addition, and the Lord will work on the plan of multiplication. It is through constant diligence that we will, through the grace of Christ, live on the plan of addition, making our calling and election sure...

"For ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:10-11.—Letter 44, 1893.

No Compromise with Sin

Let my brethren be very careful how they present the subject of faith and works before the people, lest minds become confused. The people need to be urged to diligence in good works.

...as to what are right practices in eating and drinking, and in all the habits of life. The Lord designs that His human agents shall act as rational, accountable beings in every respect...

We cannot afford to neglect one ray of light God has given. To be sluggish in our practice of those things which require diligence is to commit sin. The human agent is to cooperate with God, and keep under those passions which should be in subjection. To do this he must be unwearied in his prayers to God, ever obtaining grace to control his spirit, temper, and actions. Through the imparted grace of Christ, he may be enabled to overcome. To be an overcomer means more than many suppose it means.

The Spirit of God will answer the cry of every penitent heart; for repentance is the gift of God, and an evidence that Christ is drawing the soul to Himself. We can no more repent of sin without Christ than we can be pardoned without Christ, and yet it is a humiliation to man with his human passion and pride to go to Jesus straightway, believing and trusting Him for everything which he needs...

Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation. Neither say that after you have done all you can on your part, Jesus will help you.

But though Christ is everything, we are to inspire every man to unwearied diligence. We are to strive, wrestle, agonize, watch, pray, lest we shall be overcome by the wily foe. For the power and grace with which we can do this comes from God, and all the while we are to trust in Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. Never leave the impression on the mind that there is little or nothing to do on the part of man; but rather teach man to cooperate with God, that he may be successful in overcoming.

Let no one say that your works have nothing to do with your rank and position before God. In the judgment the sentence pronounced is according to what has been done or to what has been left undone (Matthew 25:34-40).

Effort and labor are required on the part of the receiver of God's grace; for it is the fruit that makes manifest what is the character of the tree. Although the good works of man are of no more value without faith in Jesus than was the offering of Cain, yet covered with the merit of Christ, they testify (to) the worthiness of the doer to inherit eternal life. That which is considered morality in the world does not reach the divine standard and has no more merit before Heaven than had the offering of Cain.—Manuscript 26a, 1892.
**Now Is the Time**

Now is the time to “cover the earth like the leaves of autumn” with the three angels’ messages, using a low-cost two-color tabloid designed for mass distribution. “Nothing else is to occupy our mind.”

Tabloid contains:
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- An offer for a free copy of *Rome’s Challenge* and *Heralds of Peace*
- Advertisements for *The Great Controversy*, *The Conflict of the Ages* series, *Steps to Christ*, and other books

We are to herald this message to the cities of the world. We have no time to lose. Only moments of time remain for us to expose Satan’s two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, and how through the Papacy Satan plans to take the whole world captive.

In the USA the “Three Angels’ Semi-van” will deliver quantities of 400,000 or more tabloids. Sponsor a load yourself, or share costs with a group of friends. Distribute on foot or by mail. Donations are urgently needed for projects underway in Idaho and Oregon.

Act now before the Genocide Treaty and hate laws are enforced. Canada, Russia, and Europe could close anytime. Every day of delay will mean working under the most difficult conditions later. It is reported that two cities in Washington State recently passed an ordinance prohibiting distribution of materials showing any bias against the Jewish, the Protestant, or the Catholic religions. Ask God if you should use excess funds, or sell surplus assets, to help cover the earth with *Earth’s Final Warning*. Soon money will be worthless.

They are economically priced at 7¢ each plus shipping. Washington residents add 7.6% sales tax. Shipping: Direct to one address: 1-10 tabloids, add 35¢ each; 11+, add 11¢ each; 600+, add 5¢ ea.; 3000+, add 2¢ ea.

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*Large projects (100,000 or more) may cost less than the advertised bulk mailing price due to local printing, bulk mailing, etc. Please contact Hope International for details.
**The sponsor of this project is looking for a matching contribution.
The Waldensians—Are We Ready?

They loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:11. The Waldenses were a pure, simple and fervent people, treasuring the Word of God and liberty of conscience above life itself. Their greatest enemy was the apostate church, those who would not conform their characters to the great standard of God’s Word, but erected a standard to suit themselves, and determined to compel all to conform to it or suffer loss of rights, property and life itself.

No charge could be brought against the moral character of the Waldenses. Even the apostate church declared them to be a peaceable, quiet, pious people. But their grand offense was that they would not worship God according to the will of the apostate church. For this crime every humiliation, insult, and torture that men or devils could invent was heaped upon them. History reveals that it was an apostate church that crucified Christ and slew the apostles; it was an apostate church that persecuted the Waldenses; and Scripture foretells that it will be an apostate alliance (the threefold union) in the closing hours of the earth’s history which the devil will most effectively use to make war with “the remnant of her seed.”

“The remnant of her seed” means us. Or does it? Are we ready? Are we ready to stand as these pure, simple, fervent people stood? That is the question our family continually asked ourselves as we visited the Waldensian valleys in northern Italy. It is a question we all must seriously ponder. For there will again be a pure, simple and fervent people, who will so live for the glory and the honor of God that the indignation of the apostate church and the world will again be aroused, accompanied by persecution such as this world has never witnessed.

Are we ready? That question kept recurring in our family’s conversation as we roamed through the valleys which were a home and a shield to this pure church in the wilderness. We viewed Mt. Casteluzzo from whose mighty precipices thousands of fathers, mothers and children were flung. They were dashed upon the rocks below and left to die a lingering, painful death, because they would not surrender their apostolic faith to that of an apostate church. As we gazed at its peaks I asked my family: “Are we ready to stand in defense of the pure truth even at the cost of our lives?” To my surprise the question did not stir the response I anticipated.

Later that day, when we were standing on the edge of a precipice, I again asked the question, and again to my surprise there was little response. Then I took my son’s arm as if to toss him over the cliff and told him if he would cease his worshiping on the seventh-day Sabbath and agree to attend church on Sunday along with the majority, I would not fling him over the precipice to be dashed on the rocks below. As I moved him toward the edge, the reality of the life-or-death decision took hold. His flesh was aroused to preserve life at all cost. What would he do? Would he compromise and preserve his earthly life? Or choose to live by the Word of God, regardless of the consequences?

We all agreed in “profession” that we would choose to obey truth; but when standing on the edge of the precipice

Jim Hohnberger and his wife, Sally, of Restoration International, live in Polebridge, Montana, and have dedicated their lives full-time to reaching all people with the practical gospel.
contemplating the fall to a violent death below, every cell in our bodies revolted from making such a fatal decision. Would we "love not our lives unto the death" for the sake of a conscience void of offense toward God and man? We all agreed that God never gives the needed grace until the moment of actual need. We did, however, come away with the stark realization that if we are not making choices for right today, we will not make the choices for right when it is a matter of life and death. God does not magically prepare us at the time of the crisis; no, He prepares us day by day by presenting us with principled decisions, until right decisions become habit, and habit becomes character. Thus He prepared the Waldenses.

How is it with you? Are you daily choosing against inclination and impulse, against feeling and emotion, against appetite and passion? If so, then you will most likely stand for truth as did the Waldenses. If not, you are not ready for what is soon to come upon us as an overwhelming surprise.

The Valleys of the Waldenses

In all there are seven valleys, running like fingers from a hub, that make up the natural fortress of the Waldensian valleys in the Alps of northern Italy. These valleys were accessible only by foot in some areas with passes so steep and rugged that but one person could safely walk the trail. Some of these trails, or remnants of them, still exist today. One trail that we hiked skirted a sheer rock ledge. To veer more than six or eight inches from it would have been to plunge oneself into the raging torrent that lay below. Today most of the trails in the lower valleys have succumbed to paved roads, but in the upper reaches of these valleys are still to be found the ancient paths these committed people walked.

We hiked and trekked through all seven valleys: Rora, Bobbio, Pral, Lucerna, Bal- siglia, Angroga, and our favorite, the Pra Del Torno. We agreed that we would search out the Pra’s remotest parts and look for a site on which we as a family would have settled. We enjoyed walking upward through the lower settlements. Here the stone homes were often clustered together in little hamlets of as many as ten or twelve family units. A mountain stream almost always wound its way through these quaint hamlets. They were always situated in such a way that their slopes caught the southern sun, and so that there was ample ground to terrace for their gardens.

Desiring a more remote location, we hiked even higher, entering one hamlet after another until we were in the very heart of the Pra Del Torno. Here thousands had given up their lives over the decades rather than succumb to an apostate faith. Here at 5,500 feet, where the tree line begins to cease and the rocky crags take over, we found our refuge. We named it Kintla, which means end of the line. Off by itself was a simple rock home measuring twelve feet by thirty feet, having the living quarters above and the stable beneath. It was nestled into the mountainside and shielded by a large rock outcropping to the south and a ridge of the homes or hamlets. It was also evident that most of the dwellings had no kitches. The cooking area quite often was located outside in the midst of the dwellings. Here the wives would meet in the open air to cook their simple fare.

As our family considered the Waldenses’ simple life and food, we all sensed the utter devotion these people possessed. In comparison we sensed our need to recommit our lives that we too might live for His honor and glory alone. We sensed our need to go beyond believing and voicing the principles of truth, to living them out more in our lives, in our marriages and in our families.

How is it with you? Are you daily choosing against inclination and impulse, against feeling and emotion, against appetite and passion? If so, then you will most likely stand for truth as did the Waldenses.

Let us take still another look into the lives of the Waldenses and ask ourselves, Are we ready? Are we, are our families, ready to stand through a time of trouble such as never was? See Revelation, chapters 13 and 14.

The Waldensian parents, tender and affectionate as they were, loved their children too wisely to accustom them to self-indulgence. Before them was a life of trial and hardship, perhaps a martyr’s death. So they educated their little ones from childhood to endure hardship, to submit to parental authority, yet to think and act for themselves. Very early they were taught to bear responsibilities, to be guarded in speech, and to understand the wisdom of silence, for one indiscreet word might imperil the lives of hundreds of their brethren. See The Great Controversy, chapter 4.

From what we have observed in our travels it is obvious that the vast majority of our youth are self-indulged and not accustomed to difficulties or hardships. Most do not submit to parental authority; neither do they bear responsibility well; and certainly they are not guarded in their speech; nor do they understand the wisdom of silence. Much work lies ahead of us if we are truly to be the remnant of her seed.” We are not ready, friends. We desperately need to to get our base camps.
How many of us are following the counsel found in the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy to get out of the cities, to get out of debt, and to provide an asylum from the corruption and wickedness of the world and the fornication of the apostate church?

stealing our time; of such things as worldly prosperity and ease; and of a thousand items that invite attention, consuming our time but ending in nothing.

The Waldenses sacrificed their worldly prosperity and ease for the sake of the spiritual welfare of themselves and of their children. Their homes were utterly simple, built without mortar from the native rock of their mountain valleys. These modest homes varied in size from two hundred to eight hundred square feet and were located in a secluded setting, free from the corrupting influences of the society about them. Every spot of tillable land, including the less fertile hillsides and mountain sides, was arduously and perseveringly made to yield its increase. No mortgage encumbered their properties, nor were worldly influences allowed within their borders. Hard work, simple fare, close economy, hardship and privation were their lot, but what a blessing was theirs in this asylum from the corruption, wickedness and wrath of the world and the apostate church!

Have we sought such an asylum for our families? Are we sacrificing our families for the sake of worldly prosperity and ease? The apostle Paul pleads for us to seek such an asylum when he admonishes us to “Come out from among them, and be ye separate.” 2 Corinthians 6:17. John the Revelator echoes the call: “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:4. The Waldenses took seriously these principles of God’s Word, and thus, for over a thousand years, maintained the ancient faith.

Are we determined to maintain our allegiance to God and to preserve the purity and the simplicity of the apostolic faith? How many of us are following the counsel found in the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy to get out of the cities, are all-encompassing. They go beyond where any of us have yet ventured, yet they describe what we are all called to. They involve such a commitment that we will be willing to sacrifice everything and anything to know God better and to experience Him more. When we make this commitment there will be no sacrifice too great, if we can but be drawn closer to our Lord and Saviour.

Only the Holy Spirit can tell us what it is that is keeping us from possessing Him to the fullest. Each of us needs to search his own heart and, with Christ by his side, enter into the needed changes. Some may have to change their employment or occupation in order to get control of their lives. Some may need to sell their homes, property and possessions in order to simplify their lives and be debt free. Others will have to learn to manage anew their time, talents and finances, which will call them to new levels of self-denial and discipline. Still others will have intense struggles with their hereditary and cultivated habits and traits of character. But if we are going to be ready, then we must begin now to live that life to which we are called.

Are we willing to suffer all things for, “the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ?” Revelation 1:9. Are we ready to make such a commitment? Will it be said of us, “They loved not their lives unto the death”? Revelation 12:11. If so, then like the Waldenses, eternal vigilance will be our only safety, for we must choose to follow Christ at the loss of all things.

Our family left that historic valley of Pra Del Torno with renewed determination in our hearts to live out all the principles to which God has called His last-day people. Viewing the dedication of the Waldenses, instilled new dedication in our lives. As a family we agreed we would “love not our lives unto the death.” We determined we would value the principles of truth above houses and lands, friends and kindred, and even above life itself.
A Theological Picasso
Continued from 11
explains why choosing to sin cannot be the basis of our condemnation, for if it were—so he claims—our choice to live righteously would be the basis of our redemption. He writes:

“If we insist that verse 12 (of Romans 5) means that all men die because ‘all have sinned’ as Adam sinned—then we must make the analogy fit by arguing that all men live (or are justified) because all have obeyed as Christ obeyed. Such an argument turns justification by faith into salvation by works, the very opposite of Paul’s clear teaching in Romans.” P. 53.

Sequeira is right. Both condemnation and salvation must either be completely by our choice, or completely by the choice of another. Unfortunately, he comes down clearly on the wrong side of this issue. As we noted before, he fails to understand the implications of distinguishing “works of faith” from the “works of the law.” Pp. 96–97. Paul does not say that by the works of faith shall we be justified; he says that by the works of the law shall we be justified. Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:16. When both Paul and James describe the involvement of works in our justification (Romans 2:13; James 2:24), they are referring to the works of faith—“faith which worketh by love.” Galatians 5:6. But Sequeira obscures this point badly by saying that if people are saved because they obey “as Christ obeyed” (p. 53), it would be the opposite of Paul’s teaching that salvation is not by works. Ibid.

But was Christ obedient through the works of the law, or through the works of faith? The Bible is clear that faith was the means of Christ’s obedience (John 5:19, 30; 8:28), as it is with ours. 1 Peter 2:21–22; 1 John 3:3, 7. Paul’s theology is dangerously distorted if we claim that the duplication of Christ’s obedience in believers’ lives is not part of salvation, and that if we say it is, we are teaching salvation by works. When Paul declares that our salvation is not by works, he is speaking of works motivated by self-interest, to use Sequeira’s own words. P. 97. Paul is not speaking of the works of the indwelling Christ in the lives of converted Christians.

References
4 Unless otherwise noted, all biblical texts are from the Revised Standard Version.
6 Ibid, p. 366. See also 378.
7 ——, Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 113.
8 ——, The Desire of Ages, p. 671.
9 ——, SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 972.
10 ——, Review and Herald, April 5, 1887. See also May 3, 1887.
12 White, Steps to Christ, p. 63 (emphasis supplied).
13 ——, That I May Know Him, p. 19.
14 ——, Christ’s Object Lessons, pp. 331.
15 ——, Signs of the Times, May 19, 1889.

The picture described is on the cover.

17 White, SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1092.
18 ——, Selected Messages, book 1, p. 367.
19 ——, Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 130.
20 ——, Prophets and Kings, p. 486.
22 ——, SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 972.
23 ——, The Great Controversy, p. 510.
24 ——, Review and Herald, June 11, 1901.
25 ——, Testimonies to Ministers, p. 240.
27 ——, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 460.
28 ——, Sins and Daughters of God, p. 109.
29 ——, Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 222.
30 ——, Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 331.

Editorial
Continued from 2

True sanctification is a Bible doctrine. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonian church, declares: “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” 1 Thessalonians 4:3. And he prays: “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23. The Bible clearly teaches what sanctification is and how it is to be attained. The Saviour prayed for His disciples: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17. And Paul teaches that believers are to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” Romans 15:16. What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told His disciples: “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” John 16:13. And the psalmist says: “Thy law is the truth.” By the Word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is “holy, just, and good,” a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: “I have kept my Father’s commandments.” I do always those things that please him.” John 15:10; 8:29. The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.

“This work can be accomplished only through faith in Christ, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.” The Great Controversy, 468–469. All emphasis added.

In the articles in this and the following issue of Our Firm Foundation we are endeavoring to lead the reader in a review of the inspired teachings that give the proper relationships between obedience, justification, and sanctification.

Ron Spear, EDITOR

Faith and Works
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While Submitting to the Holy Spirit

Everyone who has a realizing sense of what it means to be a Christian, will purify himself from everything that weakens and defiles. All the habits of his life will be brought into harmony with the requirements of the Word of truth, and he will not only believe, but will work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, while submitting to the molding of the Holy Spirit—The Review and Herald, March 6, 1888.

Jesus Accepts Our Intentions

When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man’s best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who claim to have faith in Him, and yet are disloyal to His Father’s commandment. We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easygoing, accommodating, crossless religion. But Jesus says, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” Matthew 16:24.—The Signs of the Times, June 16, 1890.

Selected Messages, book 1, 377–382.
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