Still Here — Why?
The Legacy of Robert H. Pierson
See page 4
Dear Readers of Our Firm Foundation,

We are nearing home. The evidence overwhelmingly shows that probation for the world and the church is about to close, suddenly and unexpectedly. The majority in the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be overtaken by an overwhelming surprise. God gave us a warning through His prophet:

"God is permitting the elements of confusion and disorder to bear sway for a season. A power from beneath is working to bring about the last great scenes in the drama—Satan coming as Christ, and working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are binding themselves together in secret societies. Those who are yielding to the passion for confederation are working out the plans of the enemy. The cause will be followed by the effect." Testimonies, vol. 8, 28. See Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, 989.

For more than one hundred years our church has attempted to fulfill the gospel commission to finish the work, and yet we fall further behind each year. The population explosion that adds approximately 350,000 new babies into our world each day, resulting in an average increase of seventy-five to eighty million souls added to our global challenge each year, shows that we are hardly scratching the surface. We must understand now that all the programs and the billions of dollars that we have spent on evangelizing the world and nurturing the church has been, to a great degree, ineffective in completing the gospel commission.

Why? The answer can be found in God's statement through His last-day prophet, Ellen White:

"It was not the will of God that the coming of Christ should be thus delayed. God did not design that His people, Israel, should wander forty years in the wilderness. He promised to lead them directly to the land of Canaan, and establish them there a holy, healthy, happy people. But those to whom it was first preached, went not in 'because of unbelief.' Their hearts were filled with murmuring, rebellion, and hatred, and He could not fulfill His covenant with them.

"For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unceasing and strife among the Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.

"We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ's sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.

"By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord's return.

"It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain." Evangelism, 696-697.

Insubordination is a very serious charge. During wartime, insubordination to a military officer's orders can bring the death sentence to the insubordinate, and yet the church is charged with insubordination. God designed that we should have schools of the prophets, but in almost every aspect of our educational system we have adopted worldly standards of accreditation so that our institutions of learning would be accepted by the world. As a result of our disobedience we have already lost approximately seventy percent of our youth to the world.

Our sanitariums were designed to introduce the health message to the world, and through medical missionary work to teach people how to get well and to stay healthy by practicing the eight natural remedies. We slowly changed from the counseled sanitarium work to a more acceptable medical hospital practice. Over a billion dollars indebtedness is the result of our insubordination.

Our publishing houses were ordered by God through the prophet to publish books, literature, and tracts in the languages of the world, placing a strong emphasis on printing the prophetic books and articles by our prophet, Ellen White. But again we have failed. Books of a new order are coming from our presses. See Selected Messages, book 1, 204-205. These books deny our understanding of the sanctuary message and the warning of the three angels' messages to the world. Also, our evangelism now copies much of the Evangelical soul-winning programs for church growth.

But God has told us we are not to bring people into membership until they have given a strong evidence of their conversion:

"Only when the church is composed of pure, unselfish members, can it fulfill God's purpose. Too much hasty work is done in adding names to the church roll. Serious defects are seen in the characters of some who join the church. Those who admit them say, We will first get them into the church, and then reform them. But this is a mistake. The very first work to be done is the work of reform. Pray with them, talk with them, but do not allow them to unite with God's people in church relationship until they give decided evidence that the Spirit of God is working on their hearts." Review and Herald, May 21, 1901.

We now boast of having over eight million members, but how many know

Continued on 6
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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Audio subscription (2 cassettes per month): US $48.00 per year. For foreign subscriptions please inquire regarding postage.

Hope International publications may be obtained from the following sources:
Hope International
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Eatonville, WA 98328
USA (360) 832-6602
Monday—Thursday 9:00-5:30
Friday 9:00-12:00 Pacific Time
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Table of Contents
Vol. 10, No. 9  September 1995

Articles

Still Here—Why? A heartfelt appeal to God’s remnant people. Robert H. Pierson 4

Correct Doctrine, Christless Lives In debating the theory of the truth, have we lost the tender love of Christ? Russell Standish 7

When God Defined Healthful Dress, Part 1 How can we dress modestly and healthfully? Vernon Sparks 8

All Who Live Godly . . . shall suffer persecution. Will I be able to stand? Clark Floyd 12

What Shall We Read? Principles for wholesome reading, listening, and viewing. Ellen G. White 14

Organization and Finances The Exodus in Type and Antitype, Part 9 Taylor Bunch 16

Prove All Things Are we faithful, modern-day Bereans? Ron Spear 24

Are We in the Faith? Are you at peace with God and with your brethren? Ellen G. White 26

For a Witness Unto All Nations The Lord is bidding His people to sow beside all waters. Ellen G. White 28

Departments

Editorial ..................... 2  Medical Missionary Corner .......... 20
Lessons From Past Experiences .... 23 Letters ......................... 31

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

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Still Here—Why?

The Legacy of Robert H. Pierson

The late Robert H. Pierson was president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists from 1966 to 1977. This appeal to God’s people was first printed in the Review and Herald of December 13, 1973, in the section entitled “Heart to Heart.”

WHY hasn’t the work been finished? Why hasn’t Jesus come, and why aren’t the saints in the kingdom? Today we hear different reasons advanced explaining why we are still in the land of the enemy. It is a matter of character development, some say. Others declare the great commission has not been fulfilled—the Advent message has not as yet been proclaimed as a witness to all nations. Still others contend that the church has not fully accepted the message of righteousness by faith as presented at the 1888 General Conference session held in Minneapolis; hence the loud cry has not sounded, the work is not finished, and we are still here. All of these explanations may be contributing factors, but I want to give you another thought worth pursuing, worth your prayerful consideration when you wonder about the delay in the Lord’s return.

Read these words of God’s last-day prophet thoughtfully. They were written in the year 1901: “We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years, as did the children of Israel; but for Christ’s sake, His people should not add sin to sin by charging God with the consequence of their own wrong course of action.” Evangelism, 696. Emphasis supplied.

Insubordination is disregard for authority—in this instance disregard for the authority of the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy—disregard for the counsel God has so clearly and graciously given His last-day people.

“But I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. . . . They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.” Proverbs 1:24–30.

In Moses’ day God’s chosen nation suffered from the same spiritual malady that plagues the people of God in our day. “For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.” Ibid.

In these words Ellen White expands upon insubordination—linking it closely with unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion. She further describes some of the results of deliberate disregard for the authority and counsel of God. It is manifest in worldliness, unconsecration, and sometimes strife.

Ah, you say, but where have we disregarded the Lord’s admonition? When have we spurned His counsel? Let us take a prayerful look at some inspired statements that should cause us to ponder and pray most earnestly. How do you measure up?

“God has called us to uplift the standard of His downtrodden Sabbath. How important, then, that our example in Sabbathkeeping should be right.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 352–353. There is no question about it. More of us than we care to admit have grown lax in remembering God’s holy day—pleasure trips, beach excursions, restaurant dining, idle talk. What about God’s counsel regarding true Sabbath observance? Are we insubordinate?

Some of you may be tempted to “turn me off” at this juncture—“Just another harangue on ‘externals’—legalism!” I appeal to you to hear me through. You will find plenty of Jesus before I finish!

Many of us need to do much praying—and changing—when we read these next lines: “Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God.” Ibid., vol. 4, 647. If true when written, how is it with us now?

Don’t slip over this inspired counsel too quickly. Are there seeds of insubordi-
nation in your relationship to the solemn warnings regarding light that many pass off with a gesture of the hand as merely an external? God says it is separating many from Him!

What about amusements? “The true Christian will not desire to enter any place of amusement or engage in any diversion upon which he cannot ask the blessing of God.” Adventist Home, 515. Think it over! Insubordination?

Could the following statements have any relationship to your practice? “Tea and coffee drinking is a sin.” Counsels on Diet and Foods, 425.

“Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God’s people to walk no more with them.” Ibid., 382. Think about these words next time you eat out—or at home.

Our diet, the Lord’s messenger declared, may kindle fires of insubordination. “The Lord did not provide His people with flesh meat in the desert, because He knew that the use of this diet would create disease and insubordination.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 1, 1112-1113. Dare we treat these words lightly? Do they apply to you—to me?

Some who have to do with the operation of medical institutions perhaps should think on some further inspired counsel also. “Meat eating should not come into the prescription for any invalids from any physicians from among those who understand these things. Disease in cattle is making meat eating a dangerous matter.” Counsels on Diet and Foods, 411. Does rationalizing ever become insubordination?

The Word of God has something to say about worldliness. “Do not set your hearts on the godless world or anything in it. Anyone who loves the world is a stranger to the Father’s love.” 1 John 2:15, N.E.B. How easily the world obscures our Father’s face.

What about our music? “Music is acceptable to God only when the heart is sanctified and made soft and holy by its facilities. But many who delight in music know nothing of making melody in their hearts to the Lord. Their heart is gone ‘after their idols.’” Evangelism, 512. Do some of our tastes and choices ever become insubordination?

Teachers, school administrators, and board members may well pray over this instruction: “We do not honor God when we go aside from the only true God to inquire of the god of Ekron. The question is asked, Is it because there is not a God in Israel that ye have gone to the god of Ekron to inquire?” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Ellen G. White Comments on 2 Kings 1:3, vol. 2, 1036.

I realize only too well some of the complexities we face in our educational program today. I do not want to be critical, but I am anxious. How frequently, perhaps unconsciously, do we pattern portions of our educational program after Ekron and how prominent a role does the Bible play in our church schools, academies, colleges, universities?

Struggle Over Ornamentation

“Some of the first counsels to the church having to do with a relationship with God touched on this point. The constant struggle over ornamentation, jewelry, and the wedding ring; the flouting of the counsels which have come to us regarding the disparity in the remuneration of physicians and other denominational workers. Ellen White portrayed very clearly the fruitage of the carrying out of these principles, first in our publishing house in Battle Creek—and this

Only externals—little things—you say?

When we disregard God’s counsel, and it is causing us “to remain here in this world,” the name of the game in Heaven’s language is insubordination.

Bookstands are choked with cheap literature these days. Is there any counsel for us on this subject? “Cheap works of fiction do not profit. They impart no real knowledge. . . . They take time which should be given to the practical duties of life and to the service of God.” Fundamentals of Christian Education, 92.

Recently, a friend of mine, whom most of you would know if I mentioned his name, wrote me a letter after we had concluded a prayerful discussion on the subject of insubordination. I want to share two paragraphs of his letter with you. He sums it all up in these words:

“I believe that as we get the fuller view, which one cannot escape when he gets into this study of the deeper element of the challenge of authority, and as Ellen White puts it, ‘insubordination,’ our minds will be led to see some of the elements which can easily stand in the way of the speedy finishing of the work. To name a few, we might list: a growing laxness in Sabbath observance; an acceleration in the experience of Seventh-day Adventists in resorting to law and lawsuits, laying their troubles before the courts of the land, which is forbidden in the Word of God and pointed out as being particularly offensive to God; laxness in regard to the health reform in its broad aspects, and in some cases defiance; pride and the love of dress and the lack of modesty in dress.

was one of the problems in the [1890s]—and the medical work. The dishonesty on the part of church members in their obligations to God concerning the tithe. And I could go on and on.”

Only externals—little things—you say? When we disregard God’s counsel, and it is causing us “to remain here in this world,” the name of the game in Heaven’s language is insubordination.

Does it annoy us to be reminded of these things? Reproof is distasteful to the human heart. “The spirit of murmuring against reproof has been taking root and is bearing its fruit of insubordination.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 199.

Parents may contribute to insubordination in their children. “If the parents would stand pledged to sustain the authority of the teacher, much insubordination, vice, and profligacy would be prevented.” Ibid., vol. 5, 89.

Some of us as pastors, church officers, and administrators should prayerfully consider whether we are guilty of sowing seeds of insubordination in the hearts of fellow leaders or church members by conducting our work as dictators. “The highhanded power that has been developed, as though position has made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever and by whomsoever it is exercised. This lording it over God’s heritage will create such a disgust of man’s jurisdiction that a state of insubor-
Jesus’ blood provides the way out of this world. Our acceptance of this provision and our unconditional surrender to His will and authority is our only hope of entrance into His kingdom—soon!

Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” He says, John 15:10.

With Jesus there was no striving, no resisting. He willingly and fully yielded Himself day by day to the leading of His Father. Nothing was too small, nothing was too great to prompt His loving obedience.

He was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” Chapter 5:8. “Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,

despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Chapter 12:2.

Harmony With God’s Will

With Jesus it was not a question of how little He could do to be in harmony with His Father’s will. There was not the slightest trace of insubordination in His life or ministry. “My meat is to do the will of him which hath sent me,” said Jesus. John 4:34. Again, “I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” Chapter 5:30.

When the evil one tempted the Master with love of the world, Jesus set the example we as God’s people must follow today. “Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Matthew 4:7-10.

Neither did He falter on the question of appetite, or on any other point. “We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15.

Jesus was obedient to “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4. No insubordination!

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him.” Hebrews 3:1-2.

Jesus’ blood provides the way out of this world. Our acceptance of this provision and our unconditional surrender to His will and authority is our only hope of entrance into His kingdom—soon!

“We may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years.”

Jesus provides a better way—the way of full submission and obedience to the will of our heavenly Father. Result? An early entrance into His kingdom.

Editorial

Continued from 2

the experience of the three angels’ messages—victory over sin in their lives by the power of the Holy Spirit? See Testimonies, vol. 1, 144; The Desire of Ages, 311; Ministry of Healing, 513, 492; Matthew 5:48; and 1 Peter 1:15-16.

To increase church membership God does not call for souls who are ignorant of the conditions of salvation so clearly taught in the Scriptures and supported by the Spirit of Prophecy. He has commanded His church, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, to present to the world the conditions of holiness and perfection of character by the Holy Spirit’s power as a condition of salvation. Yet, again we have failed. God speaks to us in this final hour of our probation:

“None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ’s character. In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through cooperation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God’s assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.

“Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. The holiness that God’s Word declares he must have before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man’s obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ’s righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault. Constantly he is to pray to the Saviour to heal the disorders of his sin-sick soul. He has not the wisdom or the strength to overcome; these belong to the Lord, and He bestows them on those who in humiliation and contrition seek Him for help.

“The work of transformation from unholliness to holliness is a continuous one.” Acts of the Apostles, 531-532.

Yes, insubordination is a very serious charge brought by God against His church, His leaders, pastors, and laity in this final hour. In 1973, our General Conference president, Elder R. H. Pierson, wrote an article in the Review on insubordination. “Still here, Why?” We have reprinted it in this month’s issue. Read it carefully.

Ron Spear, EDITOR
Correct Doctrines Christless Lives

S
ome designate themselves as “Genuine Seventh-day Adventists;” a few call themselves “Congregational Seventh-day Adventists;” others “Independent Seventh-day Adventists;” others “Historical Seventh-day Adventists;” while still others prefer to be known simply as “Seventh-day Adventists.” But this minority in God’s church worldwide share a deep interest in the preservation of the biblical doctrines of God’s church, irrespective of their designation. Each deplores the destruction of God’s truths not only by certain seminary professors, but by our publishing houses and even by many church administrators and ministers. Such concern is proper.

However, it is time for those of us, of whom I am one, who acknowledge these appalling trends in our church, to examine our own souls and motivations. In my daily devotions as I prayerfully study Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, I find many grounds to examine my own heart. That I am deeply sorrowful over the manifest apostasy within our midst, is beyond dispute. My entire childhood dream of our church as pure and holy has been shattered by facts too prolific and manifest to ignore. That I cherish the plain testimony of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, I know in my heart. Thousands share my convictions and emotions, but this is not enough. We expend enormous hours and endure weary days responding to the call to proclaim little-heard truths worldwide. But this is not enough.

It is to us whom God speaks, “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” Revelation 2:2-5.

Are we in serious danger of having our candlestick removed out of its place? Have we need of repentance? Us? But we have witnessed so faithfully. We have borne every form of scorn. We have stood though the heavens fall. We love the truth. Surely this condemnation must be applied to those destroying the faith. Surely not us! Yes, us! “Our doctrines may be correct; we may hate false doctrine, and may not receive those who are not true to principle; and may labor with untiring energy; but even this is not sufficient. What is our motive? Why are we called upon to repent?” Selected Messages, book 1, 370; emphasis added.

What is our problem—the major problem of those of us who stand loyally for God’s truth and for the purity of His standards? Sister White plainly delineates our greatest danger: “Let each one see if in contending for the truth, if in debating on the theory, he has not lost the tender love of Christ.” Ibid.

This is a solemn statement for each of us to consider under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In all honesty, the vast majority of us must confess that on occasions the defense of the truth has become a matter of ego involvement rather than a humble desire to defend the faith of our Saviour. “Is there not danger that many are going forward with a profession of the truth, doing missionary work, while the love of Christ has not been woven into the labor?” Ibid. Yes, there is. Do we love church administrators who promote error, or do we despise and revile them? Do we seek their salvation? Does Christ’s love for them fill our hearts?

Do we experience a sense of exhilaration, however little, when yet another abomination of those who treat us unjustly, is exposed? Or do we, like Christ, yearn for their salvation, weep for their fall, and pray for their restoration?

But surely, we believe, God is well pleased when we preach His truth, not only within the church, but proclaim it to the world. Are we not fulfilling His divine commission to preach in every corner of this earth? Does not our God record in the books of record our faithful witness? “A belief in the theory of the truth is not enough. To present this theory to unbelievers does not constitute you a witness for Christ.” Ibid., 370-371. Sister White explains that to be a genuine witness our hearts must be gladdened by the light He has revealed to us and that this is an essential element in our experience and labors. Each of us requires a deeper commitment than we now possess. We must plead that our Lord will bestow such upon us.

We have the truth. Of this fact we possess not the least doubt. We mouth our understandings of the enormous responsibility our God has placed upon us. We claim a zeal to do His bidding. We sense a privilege to serve Him. But “those who have so great truths, so weighty reforms to present to the people, have not had a realization of the value of the atoning Sacrifice as an expression of God’s great love to man. Love for Jesus, and Jesus’ love for sinners, have been dropped out of the religious experience of those who have been commissioned to preach the gospel, and self has been exalted instead of the Redeemer of mankind.” Ibid., 371.

Our prayer is for a Christ-centered witness, a witness which our Saviour exemplified. May our God dispel our smug complacency and fill us with His Spirit as we understand His holy calling. ☐

Russell Standish

September 1995 Our Firm Foundation 7
GOD'S method of settling the issues of the great controversy between Christ and Satan includes a final generation living in harmony with the physical and spiritual laws of the universe.

The “time of the end” of Daniel 12:4 indeed ushered in a time when “knowledge shall be increased.” The last two centuries have been characterized by an opening of man’s mind to the great truths of the Bible and also to the laws of the natural world. For humanity to be brought to a final decision to either serve the Creator God or to serve self, sin, and Satan, it was necessary for God to reveal His will for the physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of man’s life.

For a final generation to demonstrate through their lives of obedience the efficacy of Christ’s life, death, heavenly ministry, and His ability to save His people from their sins in the vindication of God’s character, it was necessary for humanity to know, in an increased degree, the principles of His kingdom. To help identify His remnant people and to give them a clearer, more specific understanding of His will, God gave the remnant movement an end-time messenger—Ellen G. White.

Some nineteen years after the Great Disappointment, God began giving His people a clearer understanding of health reform through a vision to Ellen White on June 6, 1863. In 1865, she introduced the remnant people to the relationship between dress and health with these words: “Mothers have been in the practice of dressing their infants in reference to fashion instead of health.” Selected Messages, book 2, 465. “My sisters, there is need of a dress reform among us. There are many errors in the present style of female dress.” Ibid., 473.

In the 1800s, Satan clearly had great success in devising styles of women’s dress that proved “an injury to physical and moral health.” Counsels on Health, 599. The fashionable woman’s attire consisted of laced corsets worn for the purpose of forming a wasp-like waist having a diameter of no more than twenty inches. The long dress reached to the ground and trailed behind, tending to sweep up dirt and filth. Multilayered, heavy, ruffled underskirts or petticoats were supported on the waist and hips, thus compressing the internal organs further. Large hoops, worn to distend the skirts, tended to allow the air to chill the lower limbs and made immodest exposure inevitable as the women had to raise the skirts to avoid the filth of the streets and to board or disembark from public conveyances.

The fashionable dress was also very awkward, occupying the woman’s mind and hands as she moved about out-of-doors:

“The long dress is very inconvenient in walking upon the streets in crowded villages and cities. The long skirts sweep up the tobacco spittle, and all manner of filth. In this case, fashion attaches to women cloth used as a mop. If she goes out after a shower, when all nature is refreshed and smiling in gladness, and the birds seem to be having a grand jubilee, and everything in nature is gloriously attractive, her thoughts are upon her dress. Both hands are required to elevate the dress, lest it becomes drabbled. And with her very best efforts, this is not prevented altogether.” Health Reformer, April 1872.

Even before the Lord gave messages condemning the fashions of the 1800s, society itself was beginning to awaken to the multiple problems of improper dress. One popular journal reported a physician as stating that nearly half of the business of the medical profession was regarding health problems of the organs in the lower part of the abdomen of women caused by improper dress. The Household as quoted in Health Reformer, November 1871.

More than a decade prior to Ellen White’s first written message on dress reform, a member of Congress, the Honorable Gerrell Smith, was quoted as follows:

“A reformation in the dress of women is very much needed. It is indispensable to her health and usefulness. While in the prison of the present dress, she is, and ever will remain, comparatively unhealthful and useless.” The Story of Our Health Message, 113.

In the early 1850s, a group of prominent women began a movement to change women’s styles of dress. Their reform ideas regarding women’s dress were accepted and promoted by the physicians of Dr. James Jackson’s health institute, then at Glen Haven and later at Dansville, New York. The reform was promoted widely through their publication Water Cure Journal and later Laws of Life. Their reform dress did away with the constricting corsets and dragging, heavy skirts. Their dress was about to the knee (later raised to mid-thigh), and the limbs were

When God Defined Healthful Dress, Part 1

Vernon Sparks, M.D.
clothed with trousers. Originally, the trousers were quite full and were called "bloomers," but later they were quite straight and mannish. Their reform dress style became known as the "American Costume." It was promoted through several private publications and also through national conventions which were widely covered by the public news media. Its reputation was tarnished in the minds of some because it was adopted by spiritualists. See ibid., 113-118.

Ellen White’s messages from the Lord were thus not the first regarding reform in women’s dress, nor were they the most publicized. As Satan so often does, he tried to preempt God’s timing for a reform and led the popular reform movement to go from one extreme to another. The Lord’s messenger acknowledged that the “American Costume” solved many of the health problems of the fashionable, dragging-skirt style, but also that immodesty was increased and that it was patterned after the clothing of men. Thus, neither popular dress style of the time was acceptable to the Lord.

“We do not think it in accordance with our faith to dress in the ‘American Costume,’ to wear hoops, or to go to an extreme in wearing long dresses which sweep the sidewalks and streets.” Testimonies, vol. 1, 424.

Ellen White went on to say, “There is a medium position in these things. Oh, that we all might wisely find that position and keep it!” Ibid., 425.

Thus it was that God revealed to Ellen White a reform dress that was between the two extremes. It was designed by God to be both healthful and modest.

In the health reform vision of June 6, 1863, God’s messenger was shown three groups of women with their dresses described in the following words:

“The first were of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering its filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.

“The dress of the second class which passed before me was in many respects as it should be. The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant, Fashion, had imposed upon the first class; but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to disgust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a great measure their own influence. This is the style and influence of the ‘American Costume,’ taught and worn by many at ‘Our Home,’

Dansville, New York. It does not reach to the knee. I need not say that this style of dress was shown me to be too short.

“A third class passed before me with cheerful countenances, and free, elastic step. Their dress was the length I have described as proper, modest and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and sidewalk a few inches, under all circumstances, such as ascending and descending steps, and so forth.” Review and Herald, October 8, 1867.

She explained that the proper “length was not given me in inches” but that in

but God was not to have His way with His people. Church members at Battle Creek, upon seeing the reform dress adopted by Health Institute patients, began a blind and bitter opposition, agitating the issue and forcing a premature defense of the dress. While many “accepted” God’s reform dress, opposition took many forms.

“While many of the young adopted this dress, some endeavored to shun the cross by indulging in extra trimmings, thus making it a curse rather than a blessing. To those who put it on reluctantly, from a sense of

**Fashion had so strong a hold upon them that they were slow to break away from its control, even to obey the dictates of reason and conscience.**

her best judgment it was nine inches from the floor. Ibid. Not more than one or two light skirts were to be worn to help distend the dress (Testimonies, vol. 1, 523), and the skirts were to be suspended from the shoulders. Ibid., vol. 4, 635. The limbs were covered “by wearing lined pants, gathered into a band and fastened about the ankle, or made full and tapering at the bottom; and these should come down long enough to meet the shoe.” Ibid., vol. 1, 461.

Improved physical and mental health was God’s important reason for reforming the dress of His people:

“God would now have His people adopt the reform dress, not only to distinguish them from the world as His ‘peculiar people,’ but because a reform in dress is essential to physical and mental health.” Ibid., 525.

Ellen White first put on God’s reform dress in September 1865, and she began wearing only that style in January 1867. She clarified that the dress reform was a minor part of the health reform message, and that it, “as Health Reform should lead the way, (and) finally be adopted by our people....

“It was the design of God that at the right time, on proper occasions, the proper persons should set forth its benefits as a blessing, and recommend uniformity, and union of action.” Review and Herald, October 8, 1867.

duty, it became a grievous yoke. Still others, who were apparently the most zealous reformers, manifested a sad lack of order and neatness in their dress. It was not made according to the approved pattern. Some would have a variety suit—dress of one material, sack of another, and pants of still another. Others wore the skirt very long, so that only about an inch of the pants could be seen, thus making the dress ill-proportioned and out of taste. These grotesque and unduly costumes disgusted many who would have been pleased with the reform dress proper.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 636-637.

“While many of our sisters accepted this reform from principle, others opposed the simple, healthful style of dress which it advocated. It required much labor to introduce this reform among our people. It was not enough to present before our sisters the advantages of such a dress and to convince them that it would meet the approval of God. Fashion had so strong a hold upon them that they were slow to break away from its control, even to obey the dictates of reason and conscience. And many who professed to accept the reform made no change in their wrong habits of dress, except in shortening the skirts and clothing the limbs.” Ibid., 635-636.

Because of the stubbornness of our hearts, in 1881 God removed the call for the adoption of what became known as the “short reform dress,” but He replaced it with a “less objectionable” style. The
clothing of the substitute style was to be loose fitting. The dress was to be longer, but short enough to avoid the mud and filth. The limbs were still to be clothed with the same attention as with the short dress. There was to be uniformity in its simplicity, in its modest length, and in its proper covering of the limbs.

"If all our sisters would adopt a simple, unadorned dress of modest length, the clothing of the substitute style was to be loose fitting. The dress was to be longer, but short enough to avoid the mud and filth. The limbs were still to be clothed with the same attention as with the short dress. There was to be uniformity in its simplicity, in its modest length, and in its proper covering of the limbs.

"In some countries the custom of leaving bare the shoulders and limbs of little children still prevails. This custom can not be too severely condemned." The Ministry of Healing, 582.

Another divinely condemned, yet fashionable, dress for girls was that of covering the trunk and arms well but leaving the lower limbs with only one to two layers of clothing:

"Mothers who dress their children in accordance with fashion, endanger their health and life. Fashion leaves the limbs of children unclad, save with one covering, or, at most, two... Over the heart, where is the greatest amount of vitality, there are from four to eight coverings... While traveling, it is customary to see little girls dressed fashionably, but not healthfully. The upper portions of the body are abundantly clothed with warm cloaks, and over these are furs, while the limbs are scarcely covered." Healthful Living, 148-149.

The wearing of hoops was also identified as unhealthful:

"Parents are accountable in a great degree, for the physical health of their children. Those children who survive the abuses of their infancy, are not out of danger in their childhood... Their limbs, as well as their arms, are left almost naked. Those who value fashion above health, place hoops upon their children. Hoops are not convenient, modest or healthful." Selected Messages, book 2, 469-470.

To the unhealthful hoops, the adult women added the unhealthful, constraining corsets and waist-supported, heavy skirts:

"The lungs may be compressed by tight-fitting bands, waists, or corsets, which hinder the free flow of blood through the system." Health Reformer, February 1877.

"Many females drag down the bowels and hips by hanging heavy skirts upon them." Selected Messages, book 2, 473.

Inspiration condemned the squeezing of the feet as well as the compression of the waist:

"We would protest against people's squeezing their feet to make them look small, and compressing the waist, making it impossible for them to fill the lungs with pure air. If we give the lungs and feet ample room to do the work God designed they should, we shall be rewarded with better health and a clearer conscience." Health Reformer, April 1871.

Compression of any part of the body interferes with the blood circulation and through that area and tends to displace the local organs and prevents their normal functions:

"Tight corsets... compress the lungs, the stomach, and other internal organs, and induce curvature of the spine and an almost countless train of diseases." Testimonies, vol. 4, 635.

"To say nothing of the suicidal practice of compressing the waist, so as to suppress natural respiration, inducing the habit of breathing only from the top of the lungs." Health Reformer, August 1868.

"The mother of the pale-faced child seemed anxious in regard to her, fearing she would take cold and 'have one of those dreadful coughing spells.' I said to the infidel, pointing to the children, These are indeed creatures of circumstance. No doubt the mother is lamenting the providence of God in thus afflicting her precious child, but does not dream that [she] herself is at fault for the poor health of her children. She is controlled by fashion; and as the result, her children are sufferers. Look at the tight-fitting waists of the dresses of these children. It is impossible for their lungs to have full action. The heart and liver cannot do their work, thus compressed. These children cannot take a full inspiration of air." Ibid., November 1870.

"The corsets which are again being generally worn to compress the waist is one of the most serious features in woman's dress. Health and life are being sacrificed to carry out a fashion that is devoid of real beauty and comfort. The compression of the waist weakens the muscles of the respiratory organs. It hinders the process of digestion. The heart, liver, lungs, spleen, and stomach, are crowded into a small compass, not allowing room for the healthful action of these organs." Review and Herald, October 31, 1871.

"The lungs may be compressed by tight-fitting bands, waists, or corsets, which hinder the free flow of blood
through the system. It is essential to health that the chest should have room to fully expand, so that the lungs may be enabled to take full inspirations of air. Many who have died of consumption [pulmonary tuberculosis] might have lived their allotted term of life had they dressed in accordance with the laws of their being. The strength of the system is, in a great degree, dependent upon the amount of pure fresh air breathed. If the lungs are restricted, the quantity of oxygen received into them is also limited, the blood becomes vitiated, and disease follows." Health Reformer, February 1877.

Possibly an even more pervasive cause of disease in women is that of having the limbs less covered than the trunk. The chilled blood from the relatively unclad extremities tends to affect the general health. A perhaps even greater problem is that less blood is in the cold extremities which results in excess blood with sluggish circulation in the internal organs.

"The air, bathing the arms and limbs, and circulating about the armpits, chills these sensitive portions of the body, so near the vitals, and hinders the healthy circulation of the blood, and induces disease, especially of the lungs and brain." Selected Messages, book 2, 467.

"Mothers who dress their children in accordance with fashion, endanger their health and life. Fashion leaves the limbs of children unclad, save with one covering, or, at most, two. If they are exposed to the chill autumn, spring, or winter weather, their limbs are bathed in a current of cold air. Over the heart, where is the greatest amount of vitality, there are from four to eight coverings. These unclad limbs and feet become habitually cold." Healthful Living, 148-149.

"Look at the tight-fitting waists of the dresses of these children. It is impossible for their lungs to have full action. The heart and liver cannot do their work, thus compressed. . . . Look at their limbs, unclad except by the slight covering of cotton stockings. . . . The air chills the limbs; the life current is driven back from its natural course, and the limbs are robbed of their proportion of blood. The blood, which should be induced to the extremities by their being properly clad, is thrown back upon the internal organs. There is too much blood in the head. The lungs are congested or the liver is burdened; by interrupting the circulation of the blood, the entire system is deranged." Ibid., 184-185.

"When the extremities, which are remote from the vital organs, are not properly clad, the blood is driven to the head, causing headache or nosebleed; or there is a sense of fullness about the chest, producing cough or palpitation of the heart, on account of too much blood in that locality; or the stomach has too much blood, causing indigestion." Testimonies, vol. 2, 531.

The air, bathing the arms and limbs, and circulating about the armpits, chills these sensitive portions of the body, so near the vitals, and hinders the healthy circulation of the blood, and induces disease, especially of the lungs and brain.

Hoops were unhealthy because they held the clothing away from the relatively unclad limbs, allowing them to be chilled, resulting in derangement of healthful circulation in the entire body:

"Their garments being kept from the body by hoops, it is impossible for them to receive sufficient warmth from their clothing, and their limbs are continually bathed in cold air. The extremities are chilled, and the heart has thrown upon it double labor, to force the blood into these chilled extremities, and when the blood has performed its circuit through the body, and returned to the heart, it is not the same vigorous warm current which left it. It has been chilled in its passage through the limbs. The heart, weakened by too great labor, and poor circulation of poor blood, is then compelled to still greater exertion, to throw the blood to the extremities which are never as healthfully warm as other parts of the body. The heart fails in its efforts, and the limbs become habitually cold; and the blood, which is chilled away from the extremities, is thrown back upon the lungs and brain, and inflammation and congestion of the lungs or the brain is the result." Selected Messages, book 2, 470.

1 Some women and girls have solved the problem of cold legs by wearing under their dresses or skirts multiple layers of pants, leg warmers (knitted coverings for the leg, resembling a stocking but without a foot), leggings, heavy socks, tights, or pantyhose.

This article and the two following in this series have been excerpted from a soon-to-be published book entitled When God Asked Women to Wear Pants.

The (New, Illustrated) Great Controversy

THIS BOOK is the regular version of The Great Controversy with the standard page numbering familiar to most Adventists, but it has one very attractive addition—192 pages of full-color photos by the late artist and photographer Jim Arraito. It was Arraito's desire that he might be able to document to the world that the seventh day was, until recent centuries, recognized in many countries as the true Sabbath.

The photos, arranged under several subjects, include: The Destruction of Jerusalem; Paganism Enters the Church; The Church in the Wilderness; The Jesuit Order; and The Protestant Reformation.

This is the second time we have been able to offer this book for the special price of $12.95 each. Order yours now; they will move quickly at this low price! See page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
PERSECUTION will come. It is inevitable. The Bible tells us that persecution will come to God's people, especially in the last days. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12.

"Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is that the church has conformed to the world's standard and therefore awakens no opposition. . . . Let there be a revival of the faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled." The Great Controversy, 48.

In the sermon given on the Mount of Blessing by Christ to His disciples and the multitudes, Jesus began with several blessings. These are called "the Beatitudes," or you might think of them as attitudes of being. Ellen White tells us that, "Throughout the Beatitudes there is an advancing line of Christian experience." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 13.

The poor in Spirit are those who recognize their spiritual need and are thus open to the Holy Spirit working in their lives. They mourn over their sinfulness and are open to repentance. As Christ enters their lives, self is replaced by a meekness in recognition of the fact that there is no good of their own in them. Therefore, they hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ.

As Christ fills their lives, the harshness toward others disappears, and they show forth mercy. Their thoughts become more pure, and they are driven to seek God in all things. Peace fills their hearts, and they touch others with thoughts of peace. They truly are the children of God.

But it is at this point, just when the Christian's life seems to be coming together, that we have two blessings in a row which deal with persecution: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Matthew 5:10; and "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Verses 11-12.

Why does the Lord allow persecution to come to the Christian at the seeming height of his Christian experience, and how should he relate to such persecution? The answers come through the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy:

"Through trial and persecution the glory—the character—of God is revealed in His chosen ones." Acts of the Apostles, 576. So, even though we, as Christians seem to be growing, it takes the refining fires of persecution to remove the rough edges from our characters, that we may truly be fit to walk the streets of heaven.

"Through the reproach and persecution of His children the name of Christ is magnified and souls are saved." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 34. God is interested in all men and seeks to bring all men to repentance. Often, it is only through the witness of a Christian boldly standing for Christ in the face of torture and death that some hearts can be touched with the gospel message. It was only as Saul saw the look of Heaven on Stephen's face that his own spirit was touched and later opened to the moving of Christ in his life.


The big question in my heart is, Will I be able to stand when persecution does come? Will you? I know that the thoughts of imprisonment, torture, or death are not easy thoughts to bear. I must look to the Bible, the Spirit of Prophecy, and history for my answer. How were others before me able to stand?

In Acts, chapter 7, we have the story of Stephen. As he spoke to the Jewish people,
including their leadership, he reiterated their past history of unfaithfulness in their dealings with God, and he rebuked them sternly, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." Acts 7:51-53.

And what was the result of Stephen’s testimony? "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Verses 57-60.

This, of course, was the entering wedge in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. But how was Stephen able to stand? The answer is in verses 55 and 56. "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Stephen stood because Jesus was there to give him the strength to stand. He could see Jesus only.

And the result: "The light of Heaven that glorified his face, the divine compassion breathed in his dying prayer, were as a sharp arrow of conviction to the bigotized Sanhedrist who stood by, and Saul, the persecuting Pharisee became a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ before Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 33-34.

Paul himself suffered many experiences of persecution. In chapter 16 of the book of Acts we are told, "A vision appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Verse 9. And Paul went from where he was "to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia." Verse 12.

While in that city Paul freed a slave woman from an evil spirit of divination, thereby destroying her income-producing ability which was through divination. "When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers." Verse 19. Paul and Silas were beaten with "many stripes" (verse 23), and thrown into prison. And in the midst of a darkened dungeon, while in great pain, "Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God." Verse 25.

Not only do we see the conversion of the Philippian jailer and his family that night, but many prisoners had their hearts moved upon. In later years, when Paul cruelest persecutions. Examples of this include Christ’s disciples, the early apostolic church, the Waldenses, the Huguenots, and the reformers, some even singing praisest to God while burning at the stake.

"In a loathsome dungeon crowded with profugates and felons, John Bunyan breathed the very atmosphere of Heaven, and there he wrote his wonderful allegory of the pilgrim’s journey from the land of destruction to the celestial city. For two

Wicked men may torture and kill the body, but they cannot touch the life that is hid with Christ in God.

was a prisoner in Rome, he wrote a beautiful letter to the Philippian Church. He speaks to "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi" and says, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Verses 1, 3-6.

Ellen White tells us that the slave woman, "dispossessed of the evil spirit and restored to her right mind, . . . chose to become a follower of Christ." "Acts of the Apostles, 213. Between her, the Philippian jailer and his family, and whatever prisoners might have been converted, the foundation of this strong church in Philippi was laid. What a testimony for the outflow of persecution!

How were Paul and Silas able to sing and pray in the face of the severe circumstances they endured in that Philippian jail? "Christ was beside them there, and the light of His presence irradiated the gloom with the glory of the courts above." Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 35.

Jesus promises, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Isaiah 43:2. "Wicked men may torture and kill the body, but they cannot touch the life that is hid with Christ in God." Acts of Apostles, 576.

Down through the ages Christ’s people have stood amid the perils of Satan’s hundred years that voice from (the) Bedford jail has spoken with thrilling power to the hearts of men. Bunyan’s Pilgrim Progress and Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, have guided many feet into the path of life." Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, 174.

What does John Bunyan himself say of that time? "For before I went down to the justice, I begged of God that if I might do more good by being at liberty than in prison, that I might be set at liberty, but if not, His will be done; for I was not altogether without hope but that my imprisonment might be an awakening to the saints in the country. Therefore I could not tell which to choose; only I in that manner did commit the thing to God. And verily, at my return I did meet my God sweetly in the prison again, comforting me, and satisfying of me that it was His will and mind that I should be there." Pilgrim’s Progress, 31.

"In the gloom of his dungeon, John Huss had foreseen the triumph of the true faith. Returning, in his dreams, to the humble parish where he had preached the gospel, he saw the pope and his bishops effacing the pictures of Christ which he had painted on the walls of his chapel. The sight caused him great distress; but the next day he was filled with joy as he beheld many artists busily engaged in replacing the figures in greater numbers and brighter colors. When their work was completed, the painters exclaimed to the

Continued on 15
What Shall We Read?

The question of what we read is not agitated much today, even among reformers. Why? Probably because ours is a generation that spends little time reading. Many would rather spend their time watching a video or listening to tapes or the radio. We urge the reader to consider applying the principles that the Lord laid out for evaluating what is fit to read as we also consider what audio and video programs are wholesome and worthy of our precious time.—The EDITORS

EDUCATION is but a preparation of the physical, intellectual, and spiritual powers for the best performance of all the duties of life. The powers of endurance, and the strength and activity of the brain, are lessened or increased by the way in which they are employed. The mind should be so disciplined that all its powers will be symmetrically developed.

Many youth are eager for books. They desire to read everything that they can obtain. Let them take heed what they read as well as what they hear. I have been instructed that they are in the greatest danger of being corrupted by improper reading. Satan has a thousand ways of unsettling the minds of youth. They can not safely be off guard for a moment. They must set a watch upon their minds, that they may not be allured by the enemy's temptations.

Satan knows that to a great degree the mind is affected by that upon which it feeds. He is seeking to lead both the youth and those of mature age to read storybooks, tales, and other literature. The readers of such literature become unfitted for the duties lying before them. They live an unreal life, and have no desire to search the Scriptures, to feed upon the heavenly manna. The mind that needs strengthening is enfeebled, and loses its power to study the great truths that relate to the mission and work of Christ—truths that would fortify the mind, awaken the imagination, and kindle a strong, earnest desire to overcome as Christ overcame.

Could a large share of the books published be consumed, a plague would be stayed that is doing a fearful work upon mind and heart. Love stories, frivolous and exciting tales, and even that class of books called religious novels—books in which the author attaches to his story a moral lesson—are a curse to the readers. Religious sentiments may be woven all through a storybook, but, in most cases, Satan is but clothed in angel robes, the more effectively to deceive and allure. None are so confirmed in right principles, none so secure from temptation, that they are safe in reading these stories.

The readers of fiction are indulging an evil that destroys spirituality, eclipsing the beauty of the sacred page. It creates an unhealthy excitement, fevers the imagination, unfitting the mind for usefulness, weans the soul from prayer, and disqualifies it for any spiritual exercise.

God has endowed many of our youth with superior capabilities; but too often they have enervated their powers, confused and enfeebled their minds, so that for years they have made no growth in grace or in a knowledge of the reasons of our faith, because of their unwise choice of reading. Those who are looking for the Lord soon to come, looking for that wondrous change, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption," should in this probationary time be standing upon a higher plane of action.

My dear young friends, question your own experience as to the influence of exciting stories. Can you, after such reading, open the Bible and read with interest the words of life? Do you not find the Book of God uninteresting? The charm of that love story is upon the mind, destroying its healthy tone, and making it impossible for you to fix the attention upon the important, solemn truths that concern your eternal welfare.
The nature of one's religious experience is revealed by the character of the books he chooses to read in his leisure moments. In order to have a healthy tone of mind and sound religious principles, the youth must live in communion with God through His Word. Pointing out the way of salvation through Christ, the Bible is our Guide to a higher, better life. It contains the most interesting and the most instructive history and biography that were ever written. Those whose imagination has not become perverted by the reading of fiction will find the Bible the most interesting of books.

Resolutely discard all trashy reading. It will not strengthen your spirituality, but will introduce into the mind sentiments that pervert the imagination, causing you to think less of Jesus and to dwell less upon His precious lessons. Keep the mind free from everything that would lead it in a wrong direction. Do not encumber it with trashy stories, which impart no strength to the mental powers. The thoughts are of the same character as the food provided for the mind.

The Bible is the Book of books. If you love the Word of God, searching it as you have opportunity, that you may come into possession of its rich treasures, and be thoroughly furnished unto all good works, then you may be assured that Jesus is drawing you to Himself. But to read the Scripture in a casual way, without seeking to comprehend Christ’s lesson that you may comply with His requirements, is not enough. There are treasures in the Word of God that can be discovered only by sinking the shaft deep into the Mine of

grateful to the heart as the fragrance of flowers is to the senses.

Let all who have cultivated a love for light reading, now turn their attention to the Sure Word of Prophecy. Take your Bibles, and begin to study with fresh interest the Sacred Records of the Old and New Testaments. The oftener and more diligently you study the Bible, the more beautiful will it appear, and the less relish you have for light reading. Bind this Precious Volume to your hearts. It will be to you a Friend and Guide. □

The Youth’s Instructor, October 9, 1902.

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All Who Live Godly
Continued from 13
immense crowd surrounding them, ‘Now let the popes and bishops come! They shall never efface them more!’ Said the Reformer, as he related his dream, ‘I am certain that the image spread abroad.’ Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 33.

‘Jesus reads the future of His disciples. He saw one brought to the scaffold, one to the cross, one to exile among the lonely rocks of the sea, others to persecution and death. He encouraged them with the promise that in every trial He would be with them. That promise has lost none of its force. The Lord knows all about His faithful servants who for His sake are lying in prison or who are banished to lonely islands. He comforts them with His own presence.’ Desire of Ages, 669.

Again the question may be asked, when persecution comes, will you be able to stand firm for Christ? Will I? We must rely in faith upon the promises of God and be strengthened by the experiences of those Christians who have passed on before us. I know that in my own strength, it would be impossible for me to endure, but in God’s strength, it will be impossible for me, or you, to fail! ‘Circumstances may separate us from every earthly friend; but no circumstance, no distance, can separate us from the heavenly Comforter. Wherever we are, wherever we may go, He is always at our right hand to support, sustain, uphold, and cheer.’ Ibid., 669–670.

‘If you are called to go through the fiery furnace for His sake, Jesus will be by your side even as He was with the faithful three in Babylon. Those who love their Redeemer will rejoice at every opportunity of sharing with Him humiliation and reproach. The love they bear their Lord makes suffering for His sake sweet.’ Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 30.

May each of us stand firm when persecution comes! □

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The question may be asked, when persecution comes, will you be able to stand firm for Christ? Will I?
Organization and Finances

Exodus Movement

The Exodus movement was thoroughly organized. “And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.” “But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.” Exodus 12:17; 13:18. “By five in a rank.” —Margin.

“Thus were the journeyings of the children of Israel according to their armies, when they set forward.” Numbers 10:28. “According to their armies.” They were organized after the pattern of an army, the most thorough of all human organizations. Moses had been the commander-in-chief of the armies of Egypt and was therefore well trained for organizing and handling large bodies of people. There were doubtless between two and four million of men, women and children who left Egypt, besides their vast herds of domestic animals, and it would have been impossible to lead them on such a journey without the discipline and organization of an army.

Further Organization

The organization of the movement was further perfected as the needs required.

“And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses’ father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God: when they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses’ father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.” Exodus 18:13–26.

Who was Jethro who gave this counsel?

“And Jethro, Moses’ father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God.” Exodus 18:12.

He was a priest of God. The Israelites had seven groups of rulers or leaders over as many divisions. Moses was the general human leader of the entire movement, which was divided into the twelve tribal divisions with their respective leaders or princes. These were subdivided into bodies of thousands, hundreds, fifties, tens and fives, with their respective leaders. The organization was so complete that when Balaam saw the camp of Israel in such perfect order, “according to their tribes,” that the “spirit of the Lord came upon him” and he blessed those he had come to curse. See Numbers 24:2. Without this perfect organization the Exodus movement would have utterly failed of its purpose and would have been helpless against its many enemies. Organization saved the movement.
from going to pieces when the different apostasies and offshoots tried to wreck it or lead it back to Egypt.

“The government of Israel was characterized by the most thorough organization, wonderful alike for its completeness and its simplicity. The order so strikingly displayed in the perfection and arrangement of all God’s created works was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government, the sovereign of Israel. Moses stood as their visible leader, by God’s appointment, to administer the laws in His name. From the elders of the tribes a council of seventy was afterward chosen to assist Moses in the general affairs of the nation. Next came the priests, who consulted the Lord in the sanctuary. Chiefs, or princes, ruled over the tribes. Under these were ‘captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens,’ and, lastly, officers who might be employed for special duties. Deuteronomy 1:15.” Patriarchs and Prophets, 374.

Advent Movement

In 1 Corinthians 12 the church is symbolized by the human body with the head representing Christ, its Leader, and the various members symbolizing the divisions of the church into working bodies. The human body is the most perfect symbol of organization known, even exceeding that of an army. It represents the most perfect unity and cooperation down to the smallest and humblest members which are said to be “necessary.” One of the spiritual gifts enumerated in verse 28 is “governments” or “directors.” “Powers of organization.”—Weymouth. “Capacity to govern.”—20th Century New Testament. “Administrators.”—Moffatt. In Romans 12:8, “he that ruleth” is rendered “the President” in the Twentieth Century New Testament. In Ephesians 2:19–23 the church is represented as a building “fitly framed together.” No one part of a building can stand alone. Although there are pillars and timbers holding more important positions than others, all are necessary to make a complete building.

Similar to Israel

The organization of the Advent movement is strikingly similar to that of the Exodus movement and there has been no effort to imitate it either. The President of the General Conference corresponds to the position of Moses, the princes of the twelve tribal divisions to the president of the division conferences of which there are twelve [at the time of this writing], the captains over thousands to the presidents of union conferences, the captains over hundreds to the presidents of local conferences, the captains over fifties to the pastors of churches, the captains over tens to the leaders of departments in the church, and the groups “five in a rank” to the band organizations in the church and the classes in the Sabbath School.

Order is said to be heaven’s first law. The universe is well organized. Among the stars there is perfect order, system, and organization. The angels are formed into companies with leaders. Christ is “the Great Prince” and “the Captain of the Lord’s Host.” He declared that “legions of angels” were under His command. “God is a God of order. Everything connected with heaven is in perfect order: subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. Success can only attend order and harmonious action. God requires order and system in His work now no less than in the days of Israel.” Patriarchs and Prophets, 376.

While Satan would like to see God’s work disorganized, and uses his agents to attempt to accomplish this purpose, he believes in a thorough organization for his own forces and government.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Ephesians 6:12.

“Oh, how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this people and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings and to refute claims not endorsed by the Word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of organization and order that has been built up by wise, careful labor.” Testimonies, vol. 9, 257–258.

Of course organization is a power for evil if not under the control of God. “Organizations, institutions, unless kept by the power of God, will work under Satan’s dictation to bring men under the control of men; and fraud and guile will bear the semblance of zeal for truth, and for the advancement of the kingdom of God.” Testimonies to Ministers, 494.

Financial System

Organization calls for a financial system to operate it. The chief source of revenue for the church is the tithe. The tithing system largely financed the Exodus movement:

“And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s: it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.” Leviticus 27:30–32.

The tithe is on the same basis as the Sabbath. Both are “holy unto the Lord.” The Creator reserves one seventh of our time and one tenth of our income. The first is a recognition that He is the Creator of all things, and the second that He is the Owner of all things.

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Psalm 24:1.

The purpose of the tithe is given in Numbers 18:21–26:

“And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die. But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the
children of Israel they have no inheritance. But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithes."

Because of the principle involved in tithe paying, the priests paid tithe on the tithe they received.

"And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, unto the treasure house." Nehemiah 10:38.

The tithe had to be paid into the recognized treasury to be distributed by the appointed treasurers.

"And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries. And I made treasurers over the treasuries... for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren." Nehemiah 13:10–13.

No person was permitted to make his own decision as to where the tithe should be paid and how it should be used. If it was wrongly used by the priests they had to bear the responsibility and not those who paid it. It belongs to the Lord and must go into His treasury.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:8–10.

Not a New System

The tithing system was not new, as it was God’s plan in the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God... And he gave him tithes of all." Genesis 14:18–20.

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and shall protect me on the way that I go, and shall give me life, and shall show unto me mercy, and shall give me the blessing of the Lord my God, then I shall set up an emernal pillar... And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:1–2, 8.

And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord’s offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the Lord." Chapter 35:21–22.

And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much." Chapter 36:5–7.

In ancient Israel there were also many different freewill offerings for various purposes. It is estimated that the Israelites gave from one fifth to one fourth of their income in tithes and offerings.

during the sojourn of Israel in Egypt. A recognition that God is the Owner as well as the Creator must be a part of every reformation. The tithe is numbered among the first-fruits and if it is faithfully paid it will be followed by a fruitful harvest.

"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Proverbs 3:9–10; see also Malachi 3:8–12.

Both temporal and spiritual blessings are promised. Unfaithfulness brings a withering curse because it is declared to be robbery. It is that form of robbery known as embezzlement because it is a breach of trust.

Many Offerings

In ancient Israel there were also many different freewill offerings for various purposes. The tithe is not an offering because it belongs to God. It is estimated that the Israelites gave from one fifth to one fourth of their income in tithes and offerings. The first-fruits of everything were given to the Lord. Every special spiritual, temporal, or physical blessing was celebrated with a thank-offering. Since the plan of salvation was laid in sacrifice there is a very close relation between giving and spirituality. Prosperity in health and the temporal blessings of life depend more than we realize upon soul prosperity. See 3 John 2.

In Deuteronomy 16:16–17 we are given the true basis of giving:

Liberal People

Israel was the most liberal of all ancient peoples. Their liberality in freewill offerings for the building of the sanctuary is a good demonstration of their spirit.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering... And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:1–2, 8.

"And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord’s offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the Lord." Chapter 35:21–22.

"And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much." Chapter 36:5–7.
The offerings must be made "willingly" and be love-gifts from the heart. The Lord refuses to accept gifts grudgingly made. Since they had been a race of slaves, where did they get their wealth?

"And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Genesis 15:13-14.

They came out of Egypt "with great substance." The Exodus movement was a tremendous undertaking. A nation of several millions of people must be rooted up, led through a barren country, and transplanted in a new territory after destroying thirty nations each stronger than they. It looked like a superhuman task, and it was.

But God was the leader and nothing is impossible with Him.

Wealth of Egyptians

"Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man it was the duty of the Egyptians to give. "Demand"—Fenton. It was their duty as they owed their very lives to Israelites. Joseph had saved the nation from ruin. The wealth of the Egyptians not only belonged to the Lord but they had gotten rich through the slave labor of the Israelites. "The Egyptians had made slaves of the children of Israel, when they were not slaves, and the Egyptians were not entitled to their labor.

They had only allowed the children of Israel a sustenance, and had enriched themselves with the labor which they had exported from them." Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3

It is plain that the gold and silver articles and the raiment, were free-will gifts, which the Egyptians never expected to see again, and which the Hebrews asked and took, but in no sense 'borrowed.' Hengstenberg and Kurtz have shown clearly that the primary meaning of the words translated 'borrowed' and 'lent' is 'asked' and 'granted,' and that the sense of 'borrowing' and 'lending' is only to be assigned to them when it is required by the context."—George Rawlinson in Pulpit Commentary. Because of their misconception of the meaning of these texts the sight of the Egyptians," and their gifts were willing and liberal. Most of the wealth was in jewels and vessels of gold and silver, and in raiment. Much of this was put to a wrong use especially by the "mixed multitude." They used them for adornment and from the jewels the golden calf was made at Mount Sinai.

"And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf." Exodus 32:2-4.

The offerings for the building of the sanctuary were mostly jewels and vessels of gold and silver solicited from the Egyptians.

The Advent Movement

The worldwide work of modern Israel is supported largely by the tithing system.

"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I Corinthians 9:13-14.

"Even so" indicates the same means or system. The Lord instituted the tithing and it therefore cannot be improved upon by human inventions. Christ placed His approval upon tithing and named it as one of the Christian duties. See Matthew 23:23.

It is just as necessary to recognize God as the Owner now as in the days of ancient Israel. The Melchizedek priesthood was supported by the tithe and that priesthood is unchangeable.

"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. But this man, because he continued ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Hebrews 7:1-3, 24.

The priesthood of Christ is after the same order. All Christians are children of

Continued on 22
The True Remedies
No. 3—Abstemiousness
(Continued from last month)

"Intemperate eating is often the cause of sickness, and what nature most needs is to be relieved of the undue burden that has been placed upon her. In many cases of sickness, the very best remedy is for the patient to fast for a meal or two, that the overworked organs of digestion may have an opportunity to rest. A fruit diet for a few days has often brought great relief to brain workers. Many times a short period of entire abstinence from food, followed by simple, moderate eating, has led to recovery through nature's own recuperative effort. An abstemious diet for a month or two would convince many sufferers that the path of self-denial is the path to health." The Ministry of Healing, 235.

"Abstemiousness in diet is rewarded with mental and moral vigor; it also aids in the control of the passions. Overeating is especially harmful to those who are sluggish in temperament; these should eat sparingly and take plenty of physical exercise. There are men and women of excellent natural ability who do not accomplish half what they might if they would exercise self-control in the denial of appetite." Ibid., 308-309.

"It is impossible for those who give the reins to appetite to attain to Christian perfection." Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 47.

"The Redeemer of the world knew that the indulgence of appetite would bring physical debility, and so deaden the perceptive organs that sacred and eternal things would not be discerned. Christ knew that the world was given up to gluttony and that this indulgence would pervert the moral powers. If the indulgence of appetite was so strong upon the race that, in order to break its power, the divine Son of God, in behalf of man, was required to fast nearly six weeks, what a work is before the Christian in order that he may overcome even as Christ overcame! The strength of the temptation to indulge perverted appetite can be measured only by the inexpressible anguish of Christ in that long fast in the wilderness." Testimonies, vol. 3, 486.

"Through appetite, Satan controls the mind and the whole being. Thousands who might have lived, have passed into the grave, physical, mental, and moral wrecks, because they sacrificed all their powers to the indulgence of appetite. The necessity for the men of this generation to call to their aid the power of the will, strengthened by the grace of God, in order to withstand the temptations of Satan, and resist the least indulgence of perverted appetite, is far greater than it was several generations ago. The present generation have less power of self-control than had those who lived then. Those who indulged in these stimulants transmitted their depraved appetites and passions to their children, and greater moral power is now required to resist intemperance in all its forms. The only perfectly safe course is to stand firm, observing strict temperance in all things, and never venturing into the path of danger." Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 37.

"The great end for which Christ endured that long fast in the wilderness was to teach us the necessity of self-denial and temperance. This work should commence at our tables and should be strictly carried out in all the concerns of life. The Redeemer of the world came from heaven to help man in his weakness, that, in the power which Jesus came to bring him, he might become strong to overcome appetite and passion, and might be victor on every point." Testimonies, vol. 3, 488.

"In order rightly to understand the subject of temperance, we must consider it from a Bible standpoint; and nowhere can we find a more comprehensive and forcible illustration of true temperance and its attendant blessings, than is afforded by the history of the prophet Daniel and his Hebrew associates in the court of Babylon." Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 25-26.

"God always honors the right. The most promising youth from all the lands subdued by the great conqueror had been gathered at Babylon, yet amid them all, the Hebrew captives were without a rival. The erect form, the firm, elastic step, the fair countenance, the undimmed senses, the untainted breath—all were so many certificates of good habits—insignia of the nobility with which nature honors those who are obedient to her laws." Ibid., 27.

"The history of Daniel and his companions has been recorded on the pages of the Inspired Word, for the benefit of the youth of all succeeding ages. What men have done, men may do. Did those youthful Hebrews stand firm amid great temptations, and bear a noble testimony in favor of true temperance?—the youth of today may bear a similar testimony." Ibid.

"About the time of Christ's first advent the angel Gabriel came to Zacharias with a message similar to that given to Manoah. The aged priest was told that his wife should bear a son, whose name should be called John. "And," said the angel, "thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost." This child of promise was to be brought up with strictly temperate habits. An important work of reform was to be committed to him, to prepare the way for Christ." Counsels on Diet and Food, 225.

"Intemperance in every form existed among the people. Indulgence in wine and luxurious food was lessening physical strength, and debasing the morals to such an extent that the most revolting crimes did not appear sinful. The voice of John was to sound forth from the wilderness in stern rebuke for the sinful indulgences of the people, and his own abstemious habits were also to be a reproof of the excesses of his time." Ibid.

"The distinction between prevention and cure has not been made sufficiently important. Teach the people that it is better to know how to keep well than how to cure disease. Our physicians should be wise educators, warning all against self-indulgence, showing that abstinence from the things that God has prohibited is the only way to prevent ruin of body and mind." Medical Ministry, 221.
"In our medical institutions clear instruction should be given in regard to temperance. The patients should be shown the evil of intoxicating liquor, and the blessing of total abstinence. They should be asked to discard the things that have ruined their health, and the place of these things should be supplied with an abundance of fruit. Oranges, lemons, prunes, peaches, and many other varieties can be obtained; for the Lord's world is productive, if painstaking effort is put forth." Counsels on Diet and Foods, 311.

"Press home the temperance question with all the force of the Holy Spirit's influence. Show the need of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquor. Show the terrible harm that is wrought in the human system by the use of tobacco and alcohol. Explain your methods of giving treatment. Let the talks given be such as will enlighten your hearers. God has mercy on the unrighteous. This service will be an opportunity to tell what health reform really is." Evangelism, 534.

"Thousands in positions of trust and honor are indulging habits that mean ruin to soul and body. Ministers of the gospel, statesmen, authors, men of wealth and talent, men of vast business capacity and power for usefulness, are in deadly peril because they do not see the necessity of self-control in all things. They need to have their attention called to the principles of temperance, not in a narrow or arbitrary way, but in the light of God's great purpose for humanity. Could the principles of true temperance thus be brought before them, there are very many of the higher classes who would recognize their value and give them a hearty acceptance." The Ministry of Healing, 211.

"We should show these persons the result of harmful indulgences in lessening physical, mental, and moral power. Help them to realize their responsibility as stewards of God's gifts. Show them the good they could do with the money they now spend for that which does them only harm. Present the total abstinence pledge, asking that the money they would otherwise spend for liquor, tobacco, or like indulgences be devoted to the relief of the sick poor, or for the training of children and youth for usefulness in the world. To such an appeal not many would refuse to listen." Ibid.

"What cure would you advise for a person who thus indulges a habit that is rebuked even by the beasts of the field? The Word of God has denounced it: no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of God. What would you recommend to cure such an appetite? You would not say, 'You may use strong drink moderately. Continue within bounds, but never indulge to excess.' You would rather say, 'There is no such thing as helping you unless you cooperate fully with my efforts, and sign the pledge of total abstinence. You have by indulgence made your habit second nature, and it cannot be controlled unless the moral power shall be aroused, and you look unto Jesus, trusting in the grace he shall give to overcome this unnatural craving.' You would say, 'You have lost your self-control. Your self-indulgence is not only a moral sin, but it has become a physical disease. You are not your own; you are God's property. He has purchased you with an infinite price, and every faculty is to be employed in His service. Keep your body in a healthy condition to do His will; keep your intellect clear and active to think candidly and critically, and to control all your powers.' " Healthful Living, 114–115.

"The prosperity of a nation is dependent upon the virtue and intelligence of its citizens. To secure these blessings, habits of strict temperance are indispensable. The history of ancient kingdoms is replete with lessons of warning for us. Luxury, self-indulgence, and dissipation prepared the way for their downfall. It remains to be seen whether our own republic will be admonished by their example, and avoid their fate." Gospel Workers, 388.

"Some are indulging lustful appetite which wars against the soul and is a constant hindrance to their spiritual advancement. They constantly bear an accusing conscience, and if straight truths are talked they are prepared to be offended. They are self-condemned and feel that subjects have been purposely selected to touch their case. They feel grieved and injured, and with-

draw themselves from the assemblies of the saints. They forsake the assembling of themselves together, for then their consciences are not so disturbed. They soon lose their interest in the meetings and their love for the truth, and, unless they entirely reform, will go back and take their position with the rebel host who stand under the black banner of Satan. If these will crucify fleshly lusts which war against the soul, they will get out of the way, where the arrows of truth will pass harmlessly by them. But while they indulge lustful appetite, and thus cherish their idols, they make themselves a mark for the arrows of truth to hit, and if truth is spoken at all, they must be wounded. Some think that they cannot reform, that health would be sacrificed should they attempt to leave the use of tea, tobacco, and flesh meats. This is the suggestion of Satan. It is these hurtful stimulants that are surely undermining the constitution and preparing the system for acute diseases by impairing Nature's fine machinery and battering down her fortifications erected against disease and premature decay." Testimonies, vol. 1, 548.

"Abstinence from all hurtful food and drink is the fruit of true religion. He who is thoroughly converted will abandon every injurious habit and appetite. By total abstinence he will overcome his desire for health-destroying indulgences." Ibid., vol. 9, 113.

"Our danger is not from scarcity, but from abundance. We are constantly tempted to excess. Those who would preserve their powers unimpaired for the service of God, must observe strict temperance in the use of his bounties, as well as to abstain from every injurious or debasing indulgence." Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 27.

Sunshine at Home

Here is a one-of-a-kind book for the whole family. As the title page says, this is a book of "sparkling pages for the child, the youth, the parent. A family portfolio of natural history, biography, and Bible scenes." Sunshine at Home is a rare collection of some 186 stories and poems for all ages. It also contains 190 wood-cut illustrations. The laminated cover, heavy pages, and ring binding are designed for frequent use. This facsimile reproduction is a true treasure from the past to entertain and inspire the families of the present. Special price: $19.95 each. Please see page 3 for shipping and sales tax information.
Organization and Finances

Continued from 19

Abraham and will therefore “do the works of Abraham.” See Galatians 3:29; John 8:39.

One of the works of Abraham was to pay tithe to support the Melchizedek priesthood which is continued in the priesthood of Christ. This is not a new system but a return to what was lost when the church went into Babylon where it was supplanted by many foolish and man-made substitutes. Tithe paying is a part of the reformation that prepares a people for the second advent of Christ.

One of the works of Abraham was to pay tithe to support the Melchizedek priesthood which is continued in the priesthood of Christ. . . . Tithe paying is a part of the reformation that prepares a people for the second advent of Christ.

Many Offerings

Besides the tithe, it requires many annual, monthly and weekly freewill offerings to finance the great undertaking of a world movement. Only the offerings that are made freely and cheerfully are acceptable to the Lord.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:6-7.

No gift should ever be made grudgingly or because of pressure. Force or high pressure methods are out of place in God’s work, and begging and undue urging should never be permitted. "There may sometimes have been too much urging for means. But when the light and love of Jesus illuminates the hearts of His followers, there will be no occasion for urging or begging their money or their service. . . . They will with cheerful heart and unwavering fidelity render to God the things that are His. The Lord will not accept an offering that is made unwillingly, grudgingly." Testimonies, vol. 5, 285.

Seventh-day Adventists have the reputation of being the most liberal people in the world. The tithe and offerings per capita for home and foreign work exceeds that of other religious bodies. "If the Methodist Episcopal Church had given as much per capita for all church expenses as the Seventh-day Adventists gave, she would have paid $163,175,261 in a single year instead of $47,074,301, or enough to take care of all her church expenses and $116,100,960 to apply on her Centenary subscription, thus paying in a single year the whole five year quota." —"World Survey" of the "Interchurch World Movement," Foreign Volume, 184. This is a sample of many such comparisons.

No Cause for Boasting

"The work of God, which should be going forward with tenfold its present strength and efficiency, is kept back, like a spring season held by the chilling blast of winter, because some of God’s professed people are appropriating to themselves the means that should be dedicated to His service. Because Christ’s self-sacrificing love is not interwoven into the life practices, the church is weak where it should be strong. By its own course it has put out its light, and robbed millions of the gospel of Christ." Review and Herald, October 13, 1896.

"The True Witness declares: ‘I know thy works’. . . . They profess to believe that Jesus is coming; but their works deny their faith. Every person will live out all the faith he has. Falsehearted professor, Jesus knows thy works. He hates thy stinted offerings, your lame sacrifices." Testimonies, vol. 1, 195.

Covenant by Sacrifice

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Psalm 50:3-5.

We do not yet know much about real sacrifice. "I looked to see who of those who professed to be looking for Christ’s coming possessed a willingness to sacrifice offerings to God of their abundance. I could see a few humble poor ones who, like the poor widow, were stining themselves, and casting in their mite. Every such offering is accounted to God as precious treasure. But those who are acquiring means, and adding to their possessions, are far behind. They do comparatively nothing to what they might. They are withholding, and robbing God, for they are fearful they shall come to want. They dare not trust God. This is one of the reasons that, as a people, we are so sickly and so many are falling into their graves." Testimonies, vol. 2, 198-199.

Wealth of Gentiles:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. . . . The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." Isaiah 60:1-15.

This will happen during the latter rain after the church has been awakened by the Laodicean message and is clothed in the glory of Christ’s righteousness. "God has an abundance in our world, and He has placed His goods in the hands of all, both the obedient and the disobedient. He is ready to move upon the hearts of worldly men, even idolaters, to give of their abundance for the support of His work; and He will do this as soon as His people learn to approach these men wisely and to call their attention to that which it is their privilege to do. If the needs of the Lord’s work were set forth in a proper light before those who have means and influence, these men might do much to advance the cause of present truth." Southern Watchman, March 15, 1904. But the Lord will never bring to us the wealth of the Gentiles until we learn to sacrifice to the limit of our ability.
Under the Latter Rain

The promised gift of the Holy Spirit "brings all other blessings in its train." Under the early rain the believers gave all their possessions, and there was no lack of means. Joseph and Nicodemus and other wealthy men gave all their wealth. There was no necessity for urging or campaigning for means to support the work nor will there be under the latter rain. "God is not straitened for men or means." Testimonies, vol. 5, 224. He is not restricted, for the wealth of the world is His, and He can get it when He wants it. He can multiply means as Christ multiplied the loaves and fishes in the feeding of the multitude. "The means in our possession may not seem to be sufficient for the work; but if we will move forward in faith, believing in the all-sufficient power of God, abundant resources will open before us. If the work be of God, He Himself will provide the means for its accomplishment." The Desire of Ages, 371.

Lessons From Past Experiences

The testimonies of early church members and pioneers often present encouragement and timely lessons for God's people who are living over 150 years after the Advent movement began. One such member was George O. States, author of a book entitled My Lodge Experience: Secret Order and Why I Left It. States also wrote a series of short accounts entitled "Lessons From Past Experiences," some of which were firsthand experiences with the White family. This series was published in the Review and Herald from 1906 to 1908.

No. 1

In the summer of 1853, some meetings were held in a new barn in Sylvan for the believers in Jackson County, Michigan. This meeting was conducted by Brother and Sister White, and most of the Michigan ministers were present. My mother had but recently begun to keep the Sabbath, and, I think, was baptized at this meeting.

On this occasion Sister White was taken off in vision, and was shown some things relating to the work in Michigan. She had a personal testimony for H. S. Case, which he rejected. In those early days of the message we had no organization, and anyone who felt he had a call to give the message would simply get some minister in good standing to give him a written statement to recommend him to our people. In this way there came in among us some poor representatives of the truth they were preaching. In this vision Sister White was shown that some of the ministers were using tobacco, and they were reproved for so doing. One minister got up and argued in favor of tobacco, saying it was a help to him, that some had declared how good one of his sermons was; but the fact was that when he preached he had a piece of tobacco in his mouth that had been soaked in brandy overnight. Brother White remarked that he must have preached under the inspiration of tobacco and brandy instead of the Spirit of God.

My mother explained to me about Sister White's vision, that she was for some time without breathing while her eyes were open, the same as were the prophets in Bible times. Although I was only a child, these things made impressions which are still very vivid upon my mind. As a result of that testimony, it was decided that the use of tobacco was not in keeping with the message which was to prepare a people to "stand without fault before the throne," and that hereafter no one would be recommended to preach who used it. Those who cared more for their tobacco than for the truth left us when this test of loyalty to God was brought to bear upon them.

No. 2

Soon after that meeting in Sylvan a meeting was called by H. S. Case to learn how many were disposed to stand by him in his work of opposing the visions of Sister White. When the test came, about one half of the believers took their stand with him. They all declared how firmly they believed the Sabbath and other parts of the message, that every part was right except the visions, and that they would always keep the Sabbath and firmly stand for the truth.

They soon started a paper called the Messenger of Truth, which was filled with misrepresentations of our work, and set forth the great things they expected to accomplish when those who were led by a woman had gone down. This was indeed a trying time for the believers, as we were ridiculed for standing by the Testimonies.

For a time it looked very discouraging, and the time of our loyal ministers was occupied in exposing the falsehoods which were uttered by the Messenger Party. As fast as one falsehood was exposed, another was invented, and we thought surely that must be exposed. About this time Sister White was shown that if we would keep at our work, preaching the truth regardless of any such people as the Messenger Party, they would yet go to war among themselves, and soon our numbers would be doubled. Following this instruction from the Lord, our work advanced as never before, and the leaders in the opposition began quarreling among themselves. The leader, H. S. Case, soon gave up the Sabbath, and for years lived in Northern Michigan, working at fishing. He became a very profane man, and died in that condition.

When his paper ceased, his followers either gave up the Sabbath or took their stand for the whole message. Thus ended the first open opposition, proving the truthfulness of 2 Chronicles 20:20: "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." In following later oppositions we shall see that they have all been of the same character as the first.
PROVE all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1 Thessalonians 5:21. As the remnant people of God approach the final days of the great controversy they are confronted with every wind of doctrine. The devil is coming down with great wrath on those who want to be faithful, loyal, and obedient to all truth. He knows that his time is very short. He is not concerned with those who remain in the Laodicean condition, for if they continue to sleep he knows God will spew them out. But, to those who are struggling to bring their life into harmony with all truth, who are longing to see Jesus, Satan brings strong delusions. If possible, he would have them believe a lie. “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:9–12.

Fanaticism is a mighty weapon in the hands of demons. Fanaticism is overemphasizing one side of truth to the neglect of the other side, creating an imbalance. Satan uses just enough truth to make the facts sound right. But he destroys truth by mixing error with truth. Only those who are careful students of the Word and the Spirit of Prophecy will be led by the Spirit of truth.

Our prophet makes this inspired statement: “The track of truth lies close beside the track of error, and both tracks may seem to be one to minds which are not worked by the Holy Spirit, and which, therefore, are not quick to discern the difference between truth and error.” Selected Messages, book 1, 202.

As we face these momentous hours of the world and church history, faithful laity and workers must understand that there is now a tremendous shaking being experienced by God’s people in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Satan will bring in every phase of fanaticism and erroneous theory that he can to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

“There is a time of trouble coming to the people of God, but we are not to keep that constantly before the people, and rein them up to have a time of trouble beforehand. There is to be a shaking among God’s people; but this is not the present truth to carry to the churches. It will be the result of refusing the truth presented.

“The ministers should not feel that they have some wonderful advanced ideas, and unless all receive these, they will be shaken out, and a people will arise to go forward and upward to the victory. Satan’s object is accomplished just as surely when men run ahead of Christ and do the work He has never entrusted to their hands, as when they remain in the Laodicean state, lukewarm, feeling rich and increased with goods, and in need of nothing. The two classes are equally stumbling blocks.

“Some zealous ones who are aiming and straining every energy for originality have made a grave mistake in trying to get something startling, wonderful, enticing, before the people, something that they think others do not comprehend; but often they do not themselves know what they are talking about. They speculate upon God’s Word, advancing ideas that are not a whit of help to themselves or to the churches. For the time being, they may excite the imagination; but there is a reaction, and these very ideas become a hindrance. Faith is confounded with fancy, and their views may bias the mind in the wrong direction. Let the plain, simple statements of the Word of God be food for the mind; this speculating upon ideas that are not clearly presented there, is dangerous business.

“The danger that threatens our churches is that new and strange things
will be brought in, things that confuse the minds of the people, and give them no strength, at the very time when they most need strength in spiritual things. Clear discernment is needed that things new and strange shall not be laid alongside of truth as a part of the burden of the message to be given at this time. The very messages we have been giving to the world are to be made prominent.

"Every phase of fanaticism and erroneous theories, claiming to be truth, will be brought in among the remnant people of God. These will fill minds with erroneous sentiments which have no part in the truth for this time. Any man who supposes that in the strength of his own devised resolutions, in his intellectual might united with science or supposed knowledge, he can start a work which will conquer the world, will find himself lying among the ruins of his own speculations, and will plainly understand why he is there...

"From the light given me of the Lord, men will arise speaking perverse things. Yea, already they have been working and speaking things which God has never revealed, bringing sacred truth upon a level with common things. Issues have been and will continue to be made of men's conceited fallacies, not of truth. The devising of men's minds will invent tests that are no tests at all, that when the true test shall be made prominent, it shall be considered on a par with the man-made tests that have no value. We may expect that everything will be brought in and mingled with sound doctrine, but by clear, spiritual discernment, by the heavenly anointing, we must distinguish the sacred from the common which is being brought in to confuse faith and sound judgment, and demerit the great, grand, testing truth for this time.

"Never, never was there a time when the truth suffered from being misrepresented, belittled, demented through the perverse disputings of men than in these last days. Men have brought themselves in with their heterogeneous mass of heresies which they represent as oracles for the people. The people are charmed with some strange new thing, and not wise in experience to discern the character of ideas that men may frame up as something. But to call it something of great consequence and tie it to the oracles of God, does not make truth. Oh, how this rebukes the low standard of piety in the churches!

"Men who want to present something original will conjure up things new and strange, and without consideration will step forward on these unstable theories, that have been woven together as a precious theory, and present it as a life and death question...

"Fanaticism will appear in the very midst of us. Deceptions will come, and of such a character that if it were possible they would mislead the very elect. If marked inconsistencies and untruthful utterances were apparent in the manifestations, the words from the lips of the Great Teacher would not be needed. It is be-

Our only hope of survival in this shaking time is to search deeply into the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy
Remarks addressed to the ministers assembled in General Conference, November 11, 1883.

I would not miss being present at these early morning meetings; for here I meet my Saviour, and am strengthened and refreshed. Since I first took my seat in the cars to come on this journey East, I have enjoyed sweet peace in God. My soul has feasted on the love of Christ. While on the cars, I have been almost constantly sending up silent prayers to God, and my communion with Him has been sweet. As I have read the Holy Scriptures, the gems of truth have shone with such lustre, and the beauty and harmony of truth has so impressed me, that I could not forbear praising God. At times, in contemplating heavenly things, my heart has been filled with a rapturous joy and love that is very precious, but that no words can describe. I love Jesus; I love His law; I want to be like Jesus, that I may reflect His image perfectly. I want to lie low at the foot of the cross, that I may be nothing, and Christ may be all in all.

I want to see far more done in the way of presenting the truth than has hitherto been accomplished. Let us lay hold of the Arm of power. God has promised, and He will verify His Word. He will work with us, and make our labor fruitful, when we seek Him with the whole heart.

Dear brethren, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.” 2 Corinthians 13:5. Many present may immediately respond, “Why, yes; I am in the faith, I believe every point of the truth.” But do you practice what you believe? Are you at peace with God and with your brethren? Can you pray with sincerity, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors?” (Matthew 6:12), or are you estranged from your brother, because you suppose he has injured you? Are there no heartburnings among you? Is there no bitterness in your hearts, no envying, no jealousy, no evil surmising, no misjudging of your brethren? Is there no emulation, no desire for special favor and honors, no wish to have the supremacy? These feelings do exist to a greater or lesser degree among brethren.

Some of you seem to be earnestly struggling for forgiveness of sins, for freedom in God. Do you deserve the pardon that you are seeking? No, you do not; nevertheless, it is given you. And do you withhold from your brethren the forgiveness and affection of which you do not think them worthy? Would you have God deal thus with you? Deal with your brethren as you wish God to deal with you. If we expect our prayers for forgiveness to be heard, we must offer them in a forgiving spirit. We must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent that we ourselves hope to be forgiven. The hardheartedness that professed Christians manifest toward one another is not Christlike, but savors of the satanic. We must every one of us open our hearts wide to the love of Jesus, and encourage pity and affection for our brethren.

Many are filled with self-importance, and esteem themselves above their brethren. Such should let self die; let the carnal mind be crucified. If you have enmity, suspicion, envy, and jealousy in your hearts, you have a work to do to make these things right. Confess your sins; come into harmony with your brethren. Speak well of them. Throw out no unfavorable hints, no suggestions that will awaken distrust in the minds of others. Guard their reputation as sacredly as you would have them guard yours; love them as you would be loved of Jesus. Work for their interest, instead of seeking to tear them down that you may build yourself upon their ruins. It is Satan’s work to injure the brethren, and he loves to have you help him in it. But disappoint him; do not let him triumph over you.

Some pride themselves on being outspoken, blunt, and rough, and they call this frankness; but it is not rightly named, it is selfishness of the deepest dye. These persons may have virtues; they may be liberal, and have kind impulses; but their discourteous manners render them almost insupportable. They criticize; they wound; they say disagreeable things. Will the character they are cultivating recommend them to Jesus? Will it fit them for the society of heaven? We do well to examine ourselves to see what manner of spirit we are cherishing. Let us learn to speak gently, quietly, even under circumstances the most trying. Let us control not only our words, but our thoughts and imaginations. Let us be kind, be courteous in our words and deportment. There is a great neglect in this respect. We do not adorn the doctrines we profess. We are not what we might be nor what God would have us be. Those who hope to be the companions of holy angels, should possess refined manners. If the principles of the Christian religion are carried out in the daily life, there will be a kind thoughtfulness for others; for this was characteristic of Christ. Then, although a man may be poor, he will have true dignity; for he is God’s nobleman.
Christianity will make a man a gentleman. We are the purchase of Christ's blood; and we are to represent Him, to pattern after Him. And He was courteous, even to His persecutors. The true follower of Jesus manifests the same mild, self-sacrificing spirit that marked the life of His Master. Look at Paul when brought before rulers. His speech before Agrippa is a model of dignified courtesy as well as persuasive eloquence. I would not encourage the formal politeness current with the world, which is destitute of the true spirit of courtesy, but the politeness that springs from real kindness of feeling.

We profess a great and holy faith; and our characters must be in accordance with that faith, and with God's great moral standard. Let us shun every mean action, all dishonesty, all overreaching; and if anyone is guilty of wrong in this respect, let him make restitution to the one he has wronged, and in addition bring a trespass offering to God, that when the times of refreshing shall come, his sins may be blotted out, and his name retained in the book of life.

Let us examine our hearts in the light of the great principles of the law of God as defined by Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "thy neighbour as thyself." Matthew 22:37, 39. Here the conditions of eternal life are specified. The promise is, "This do, and thou shalt live." Luke 10:28. Are you, my brethren, carrying out these principles in your every day lives? Are there not reasons why you do not come to the light, why you have no freedom in Christ, why you do not find that rest He has promised to all who come unto Him with their burdens?

Jesus invites, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:28-29. "Take my yoke," says Christ; "learn of me." In doing this, you will find rest to your souls. You will be learning in the school of Christ to be meek and lowly in spirit, and to wear His yoke with cheerfulness. Have you found this rest? If not, there is something for you to do. Come to Jesus with brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit, praying for His grace. The melting power of God can do wonders in subduing the heart, and making it tender and impressions. The Lord is gracious; and when you have done all that is required on your part, you will find His words true. "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. He never fails. You may come to Him with full assurance of faith, and He will fill your heart with rest, and peace, and love.

W e are the purchase of Christ's blood; and we are to represent Him, to pattern after Him. . . . The true follower of Jesus manifests the same mild, self-sacrificing spirit that marked the life of his Master.

The religion of some is cold and formal, and is not carried into the everyday life. Such professors have earnest work before them to bring themselves into harmony with the mind and will of God. If in sincerity you offer the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10), the answer is returned, "A new individually stand fast in the faith, and have the favor of God, the church will have a power that she does not now possess. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Proverbs 4:23.

Review and Herald, April 29, 1884.

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Child Age & Education

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THE Saviour’s words, “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14), point to the fact that He has committed to His followers a worldwide mission. As the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. If the church of Christ were fulfilling the purpose of our Lord, light would be shed upon all that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death; instead of congregating together and shunning responsibility and cross-bearing, the members of the church would scatter into all lands letting the light of Christ shine out from them, working as He did for the salvation of souls, and this “gospel of the kingdom” would speedily be carried to all the world.

From all countries the Macedonian call is sounding, “Come over . . . and help us.” Acts 16:9. God has opened fields before us. Heavenly beings have been cooperating with men. Providence is going before us, and divine power is working with human effort. Blind indeed must be the eyes that do not see the working of the Lord, and deaf the ears that do not hear the call of the true Shepherd to His sheep. Some have heard the call of God, and have responded. Let every sanctified heart now respond, by seeking to proclaim the life-giving message. If men and women in humility and faithfulness will take up their God-given, appointed work, divine power will be revealed in the conversion of many to the truth. Wonderful will be the results of their efforts.

The Lord is bidding His people in every place to sow beside all waters. It means much to obey His command. It means a continual imparting of the gifts we have received from Heaven. The cause of God needs consecrated workers, and it needs money. Shall we continue to spend our means for things that are unessential, while a neglected work remains undone? Shall we not rather repent of our indifference toward this work, and pray for spiritual discernment to see and understand, as we should, its urgent needs?

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. Christ’s self-sacrificing love is revealed upon the cross. That man might be saved, He gave all that He had, and then gave Himself. The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The spirit here illustrated is to give, give. This carried out in actual benevolence and good works, is the true fruit of the Christian life.

The work of God needs men and women who have learned of Christ. The moment God’s workmen see Him as He is, that moment they will see themselves as they are, and will ask Him to make them what they ought to be. Selfishness makes men hindrances instead of helps. In God’s light we can see our defects; and in His strength we can remedy them.

At the final day, when the earth shall perish he who has laid up treasures in heaven will behold that which his life has gained. If we have given heed to the words of Christ, then, as we gather round the great white throne, we shall see souls who have been saved through our agency, and shall know that one has saved others, and these still others—a large company brought into the haven of rest as the result of our faithful labors, there to lay their crowns at Jesus’ feet, and praise Him through the ceaseless ages of eternity. With what joy will the worker for Christ behold these redeemed ones, who share the glory of the Redeemer! How precious will heaven be to those who have been faithful in the work of saving souls!

The nearer we come to the close of this earth’s history, the more delusive will be the snares of the enemy. As time passes, his attacks will grow fiercer and more frequent. Satan’s supreme effort is made to ensnare and deceive if possible the very elect—the church and the ministers of Christ. With all their ingenuity he and his agencies are working to deceive if possi-
ble the very elect. If he can dull them to indifference to their high calling, his triumph is certain. What is needed at this time is thorough conversion and wholehearted consecration. He who is closely connected with Christ will be strengthened to withstand the enemy’s devices. Our safety lies in practicing heartily the truths of the Bible. By humbling ourselves before God, we invite His saving power.

A great work is to be done in foreign fields; and just as verily a great work is to be done in the home field; for it is by consecrated, faithful effort in the home field that workers are to be won for God who will go forth to proclaim the truth in foreign fields. At this time, when the enemy is working as never before to engross the minds of men and women, we should be laboring with increasing activity. Diligently, disinterestedly, we are to proclaim the last message of mercy in the cities—in the highways and byways. All classes are to be reached. As we labor, we shall meet with different nationalities. None are to be passed by unwarmed. The Lord Jesus was the Gift of God to the entire world—not to the higher classes alone, and not to one nationality, to the exclusion of others. His saving grace en-circles the world. Whosoever will, may drink of the Water of Life. A world is waiting to hear the message of present truth. And while the servants of God are aroused to give the light, all nationalities are represented as pressing into service as instrumentalities of divine choosing.

There are many who long for special talent with which to do some wonderful work, while the duties lying close at hand, the performance of which would make the life fragrant, are lost sight of. Let such ones go to work, taking up the work lying directly in their pathway. Success depends not so much on talent as on sanctified energy and willingness. It is not the possession of splendid talents that will enable us to overcome and to serve, but the conscientious performance of daily duties, the lowly spirit, the contented disposition, the unaffected, sincere interest in the welfare of others. If the love of Christ fills the heart this love will be manifested in the life.

If you have a fitness for a special line of service, this will be seen as you do your best in the work nearest to you. Be faithful and thorough in all that you do. Do not be discouraged if the beginning you make seems small, but set your mark high, and put forth earnest efforts to reach it. Do not allow obstacles to dishearten you. Concentrate your efforts on the surmounting of these obstacles. Persevere, and you will succeed.

Right where you are, and right where the people are, let earnest efforts be put forth. The Word of God has, as it were, been hidden under a bushel. That Word must be explained to those who are now ignorant of its requirements. Search the Scriptures with those who are willing to be taught. This work may be small in its beginning, but others will unite to carry it forward; and as, in faith and dependence on God, labor is given for the instruction and enlightenment of the people, those

fraught with meaning. We may cry to the Lord, “It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.” But this is not enough. The reapers must act their part. God’s people must arouse from their indifference and selfishness, and reveal a desire to be used as the Lord’s helping hand.

My brethren and sisters, arise; shine! The time has come when we should make every possible effort in giving this last message to the world. I call upon all who possibly can to connect with the work, and to do it now. Do not be indifferent to

We may cry to the Lord, “It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.” But this is not enough. The reapers must act their part. God’s people must arouse from their indifference and selfishness.
The kingdom of grace is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the sovereignty of His love. But the full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place till the second coming of Christ to this world. "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" is to "be given to the people of the saints of the most High." Daniel 7:27. They shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. And Christ will take to Himself His great power, and reign.

The heavenly gates are again to be lifted up, and with ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of holy ones, our Saviour will come forth as "King of kings, and Lord of lords." 1 Timothy 6:15. Jehovah Immanuel shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one." Zechariah 14:9. "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, . . . and be their God." Revelation 21:3.

But before that coming, Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Matthew 24:14. His kingdom will not come until the good tidings of His grace shall have been carried to all the earth. Hence, as we give ourselves to God, and win other souls to Him, we hasten the coming of His kingdom. Only those who devote themselves to His service, saying, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8), to open blind eyes, to turn men "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God" (Acts 26:18)—they alone pray in sincerity, "Thy kingdom come." Matthew 6:10.

Review and Herald, November 14, 1912.

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**Prove All Things**

Continued from 25

they will grow and become snares to the inexperienced. . ..

"We need to search the Scripture daily, that we may know the way of the Lord, and that we be not deceived by religious fallacies. The world is full of false theories and seductive spiritualistic ideas, which tend to destroy clear spiritual perception, and to lead away from truth and holiness. Especially at this time do we need to heed the warning, 'Let no man deceive you with vain words.' Ephesians 5:6.

"We must be careful lest we misinterpret the Scriptures. The plain teachings of the Word of God are not to be so spiritualized that the reality is lost sight of. Do not overstrain the meaning of sentences in the Bible in an effort to bring forth something odd in order to please the fancy. Take the Scriptures as they read. Avoid idle speculation." Upward Look, 316.

"'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' Romans 10:17. The Scriptures are the great agency in the transformation of character. Christ prayed, 'Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.' John 17:17. If studied and obeyed, the Word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute. The Holy Spirit comes to convict of sin, and the faith that springs up in the heart, works by love to Christ, conforming us in body, soul, and spirit to His own image. Then God can use us to do His will. The power given us works from within outwardly, leading us to communicate to others the truth that has been communicated to us." Christ's Object Lessons, 100.

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7:17.

Yes, every kind of doctrine is now blowing through our churches. Many are confused; some of our preachers are presenting an Evangelical gospel mixed with humanism. The Larry Wilsons and Charles Wheelings are attempting to rewrite the doctrines so well established by our pioneers and our prophet Ellen White. They have come to believe that they can interpret Scriptures better than the prophets.

Jack Sequeira attempted to rewrite the theology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in his books entitled Hebrews, The Sanctuary, Laodicea, and Beyond Belief. Tragically, he is being promoted in camp meetings and workers meetings around the world. His theology is the same as Desmond Ford's, cloaked in a more careful language. He claims to believe in the three angels' messages and the sanctuary message, but then he gives his interpretations which are full of contradictions to truth. Sequeira is a very dangerous man to the doctrines of Adventism and must be exposed for what he is. Men like this have been raised up by the powers of darkness to confuse God's people in this terrible shaking time. Some agents of Satan have supported their stand by using statements from Ellen White about new light promised to the church. But let us never forget that this new light will never contradict the old light given, believed, and preached by our prophet and the pioneers.

Those who are praying and studying faithfully to know truth will not be misled. They will rise early in the morning to approach the throne of God to plead for His Holy Spirit to lead them to truth and to hold them there. They will compare line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, in the desperate search to know the will of God. "But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken." Isaiah 28:13.

The church now faces the Omega of apostasy, which was prophesied to be of a most startling nature. See Selected Messages, book 1, 197–208. Startling is the fact that so few are now able to distinguish between truth and error. Even among those who claim to be true Seventh-day Adventists there is much vacillation. Among those who support the so-called independent ministries, some will listen to one speaker and claim he speaks the truth. The next week, as they listen to another speaker preaching exactly an opposite message, they believe that is also truth. Because we are not studying the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy for ourselves, we just listen to men. We are not proving all things in order that we might hold fast that which is truth.

May God help us now to turn off the television, to get up early for prayer, and to study to show ourselves approved unto God in this final hour of our probation. Let us now become Bereans, not Thessalonians, because "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11. This is my sincere prayer for our beloved church.
I am sending you a check for thirteen dollars, the balance I owe on my subscription. I am so happy with the articles in June's issue. The article by Colin Standish, "A Divided Church," is excellent information and much needed and appreciated at this time.

Thanks again; I hope I never have to be without this journal.  

NT, Canada

I am sending a donation to you this month to be used in the ministry of spreading the true gospel. May God lead and bless you in your work for Him.

TS, Kentucky

I received Our Firm Foundation in July as usual, but it has disappeared. The first article after Ron Spear—M.L. Andreasen—contained jewels of truth. Also described my future to which God has called me. He described it as the last days. I gave Him my life 39 years ago.

Enclosed is $10 for a donation and to pay for sending me another copy of the July 1995 issue.

LK, Indiana

I do want to renew my subscription for the magazine. I pass it around after I read it. I cannot pay all right now, but will pay on it later if this is O.K.

I really love the Testimonies, our blueprint for the time of the end. We do not hear them preached in the churches anymore. Sad. Thank you for a wonderful magazine.

LB, Tennessee

Your messages are a blessing in Firm Foundation and the videos I ordered. Keep on 'til our Lord returns. It must be soon.

TK, Texas

Responses From Overseas

Thank you very much for the books which you sent to me. I am really pleased. I am reading The Great Controversy and The Desire of Ages. The book entitled National Sunday Law is very interesting and amazing, and it is very necessary for every Adventist member and people who are out of the church. I will read Issues Clarified after I finish the other two.

I am amazed by your newspaper Earth's Final Warning. I read it, and it is unexpected to me because I never thought about the pope and the Catholic Church (beast) before. But now I understand that the coming beast and 666 is the Catholic Church. I was confused about 666, but now it is clear to me.

If you have a Bible correspondence course, I need it. Thank you very much for your educational materials.  
KA, Ethiopia

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the precious Bible, books, and Our Firm Foundation, which we received recently. Especially the Study Bible which will continue as a great source of comfort and encouragement to our family and the entire church in this area.

The blessing I have reaped through the materials you have sent to me are insurmountable. I find it to be very uplifting and informative to God's church.

RK, Zambia

Thank you for the earnest efforts you have and the great love shown toward us here in Africa by sending us your materials. As we receive your materials, our hearts are filled again with new light, especially the Our Firm Foundation. They have proved as a great blessing to our Historical Adventist group.

Last week we had a special prayer meeting for you and your mission. We have seen the fruits that have been borne as a result of passing them the magazines of Our Firm Foundation. We asked the Lord to continue enriching you with His divine knowledge and energetic zeal so that you may be constrained to reach many souls still in the darkness of the devil.

We are very much aware that we don't have anything to offer (donate) for your mission which actually is run by a lot of expenses. Nevertheless, our requests ascend to the Lord of heaven to pour out His precious blessings. We don't want to forget to thank all who give themselves to full support that mission you are carrying out.

We are four brothers who work entirely on the Lord's service spreading the three angels' messages. Continue to pray for us. We believe that the Lord will open the hearts of the people and they will give their wealth to support the Lord's sacred mission as the last trumpet sounds. Even the Lord knows that we need thousands of Bibles and E. G. White's books.

BN, Kenya

We hope that these letters will be an encouragement to many of our readers who have donated funds marked "Overseas Literature." There is an endless need in this area, and we solicit your ongoing support for this aspect of Hope's ministry. —EDITORS

Responses From Earth's Final Warning and the Bible Correspondence Course

I am an inmate at Correctional Center. I was raised in the Adventist faith; however, I have allowed myself to become separated from my faith and God over the years.

I am trying to find my way back to God. Please send your Truth For Today Bible Correspondence Course.

Oklahoma

I am doing well these days as I have learned so much by doing these Bible studies. May God enrich your life always with His precious blessings.

CH, Louisiana

Please admit me as a student in your Bible school. You see from where this world is marching forward we need a school which can let us know where we are now so that the Bible we always study can be understood. I speak German, Spanish, and English which is my major language. Thank you.

WA, Ghana

September 1995 Our Firm Foundation 31
The common problem shared by the ten virgins was that they were all asleep. We are all asleep. We are told, "God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat." Testimonies, vol. 5, 707.

Over the past thirty years, we have been sifted by the teachings of Robert Brinsmead and Desmond Ford. Presently, we are being shaken by new teachings spearheaded by Jack Sequeira, author of a book appropriately entitled Beyond Belief. Unfortunately, too many readers, even leaders, think the book's theology is believable.

To anyone previously exposed to the theology of Jack Sequeira as presented in his books, such as Beyond Belief, Hebrews, and The Sanctuary, or on tapes of his sermons, this new book by Kevin Paulson should be considered must reading. We believe that the prayerful and diligent student of the Bible and Ellen G. White's writings will be compelled to reject Sequeira's theology after reading this enlightening book.

Those Who Do Not Remember the Past provides important and vital information worthy of consideration. If inspired writings are the criteria, Sequeira's books are merely a collection of incredible human theories interspersed with truth. Countless texts and inspired references strongly contradict much of the theology presented by Sequeira. We urge you to carefully study this book before discarding any established truths.

Principal author: Kevin Paulson; other contributors: G. Irving Logan, Ralph Larson, Colin Standish, and Ron Spear. It contains 157 information-packed pages.

Order your copy today from Hope International. Only $8.50 each. See page 3 for tax and shipping information.

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