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A another year is soon to pass into eternity. The summer is past. Autumn has faded into the chilly days of winter. My corn stalks have faded to a yellow. They still stand with wilted tassels to remind us of the days we ate from their delicious cobs. The potatoes have been dug up, and they are now securely placed in our cool pantry. The bright fires from my fireplace on chilly evenings bring thanksgiving from our hearts for the blessings of God—for a warm home, bountifully stocked with the stores of the harvest from my garden and the supermarket. How grateful we should be to our loving God and Saviour Jesus Christ for life, for health and for the knowledge of the truth!

By the time you read this editorial, Thanksgiving will have come and gone. Christmas, with its wreaths on our doors, and lights that decorate houses and trees, will again remind us that Jesus was born to live and die to save sinners like me—praise God!

Again the millions will invade the shopping malls and department stores to remind their loved ones—children, friends, mothers, fathers, and grandparents—of their love.

We know Jesus was not born on the 25th of December. It was a pagan holiday. But as we give gifts to those we love on this holiday season, let us give gifts of ourselves—our complete surrender, without compromise—to the preparation of our own souls for eternal life, and to the finishing of God’s work on earth, bringing peace and goodwill to all men, warning our neighbors, friends, and loved ones of His soon return.

By our lifestyle let us witness to the power of God working in our souls day by day, growing in grace, filled with the Spirit. How many more Christmases will pass before Jesus comes? It may be one or ten—only God knows.

However, this will be the last Christmas for millions of people who do not know Jesus and His conditions for their salvation. Remember, “Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. ‘With His stripes we are healed.’” Desire of Ages, 25.

As we celebrate Christmas let us give sacrificially of ourselves and our means. The Lord’s work needs large and small gifts to help complete the great gospel commission. God is holding the American economy together, waiting for His people to come into line. Soon His hand will be withdrawn and our money, homes, land and bank accounts will mean nothing. Now is the time to sacrifice!

Millions of precious souls are waiting to hear the good news of Jesus’ soon return.

Hope International wishes to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and prayers. By God’s grace we are printing Our Firm Foundation in eleven different languages, and we hope to add Russian and Chinese this next year. Thankfully, we also are reaching millions with our various outreach activities—with Earth’s Final Warning, Bible studies, magazines, tracts, books, cassettes, videos, and so forth. People from around this dark world are praising God for the glorious message of hope which we have brought to them. We praise the Lord for all that has been accomplished.

Ron Spear—Editor

How shall we use the few remaining days of this year?

"Another year has almost passed into eternity. . . . Let us review the record of the year that so soon will be past. What advancement have we made in Christian experience? Our work—have we so done it that it will bear the inspection of the Master, who has given to every man work according to his several ability? Will it be consumed as hay, wood, and stubble, unworthy of preservation? or will it stand the trial by fire? . . .

"Let the remnant of this year be improved in destroying every fiber of the root of bitterness, burying them in the grave with the old year. Begin the new year with more tender regard, with deeper love, for every member of the Lord’s family. Press together. ‘United, we stand; divided, we fall.’ Take a higher, nobler stand than you ever have before." Review and Herald, December 16, 1884.
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We are accepting article-length (1500-4000 words) manuscripts for possible publication in Our Firm Foundation. We cannot give consideration to longer submissions. Whenever possible, we ask that manuscripts be submitted either on 3½ or 5¼-inch floppy disk in IBM format or neatly typed and double-spaced. Address all correspondence to Editors, Our Firm Foundation, P.O. Box 940, Eatonville, WA 98328.

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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.—E. W. Bliss

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God has a plan of salvation and redemption for fallen man, while Satan has a plan to keep fallen man in his fallen state.

Satan’s entire program is built upon one thing, one premise—keeping self alive and letting self show through.

Satan does not care what avenue, what course of study, or what choice we make for our life’s work. He does not care whether it is in a full-time ministry, whether it is digging a ditch, or whether it is acting as the president of a large corporation. There is only one goal which Satan has—that is for us to let self be the dominant factor in our work, in our families, in our lives, and in any of our activities. He does not care if it is a religious or secular work that we pursue. If he can get us to let self show through as he often does, he has us!

When we begin to realize this fact, then texts such as Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God,” take on new meaning. We actually need to see that all of self is to be surrendered to such an extent that it is considered to be crucified, or put to death—always and continually. (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

Paul in Romans 6:11 says we are to reckon self to be dead. In Colossians 3:3 Paul emphatically states: “For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.” John the Baptist, of whom Christ said, “there hath not risen a greater,” sums it up well in John 3:30, “He must increase and I must decrease.” Jesus put it this way, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” In order to be “born again,” self must die; it must be “reckoned dead;” it must be “crucified;” it must “decrease”—to such a point that it is by grace through faith continually and constantly surrendered. But how is this done?—By entering into God’s program.

God’s program is built upon our continually recognizing our need of a Saviour and in a faith experience, constantly reaching out to Christ for help, life, strength, wisdom and guidance in our daily lives. This is to be done to such an extent that the promptings of the flesh are not only ignored, but reckoned dead. They are there. They may cry out for attention; they may demand supremacy; they may insist on having their own way, but the living Christian continually chooses another Master to “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1.

God’s entire program is to keep self out of sight—and to let Christ appear. That is why we read in Luke 9:23, “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take
up his cross daily, and follow me.” There are three clear steps that, if followed daily, moment by moment, will bring us into the “Not I, but Christ” experience.

Let us look at how simply and precisely Christ lays out the terms of discipleship. He says, “If any man. That is all inclusive. It means this applies to absolutely everyone; there are no exclusions. If you are to “come after me”—that is living His life, walking in His footsteps—then “let him deny himself.” You see, self is enemy #1, and unless this enemy is fully conquered, our warring against the outward enemies will amount to “no saving good.”

This outward warring is putting my focus on diet reforms, health reforms, dress reforms, educational reforms, lifestyle changes, defending cherished doctrines, our knowledge of prophecy, our defense of truth, the pointing out of error, standing against worldly corruption, oppressiveness and abuses. It is putting my focus on the coming of a one-world government and the mark of the beast. It is not that the reforms are not needed, or that doctrines are not essential, nor that we should not understand present-day events, and stand for truth, and point out error. But what “saving good” is it for me to war against the beast of Revelation 13, and to understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, when the beast in my own heart is still alive and ruling?

That is why Christ denounced the religious leaders of His day when He exclaimed, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within, they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” Matthew 23:25-26. Christ did not say that we should neglect the outward, but He did say to FIRST, and before anything else, take care of that which is within. In other words, self must be dethroned, and Christ must reign supreme.

However, many will not submit to this dethronement. They see it as being unreasonable or unnecessary, and they go about, without a fully surrendered heart, doing many wonderful works, prophesying in His name, and even casting out devils—all in the name of the Lord. Yet the Lord is not in them. They have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. We are told in Christ’s own words that He will say unto them, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity,” Matthew 7:23.

Why is this? How could Christ do such a thing?—Because we did it our way and not His way. It was still self showing through, grabbing the attention and praise. Christ was not the One—but rather I.

Some may think it sounds as though one were against sending Christianity to the world. However, the question is not whether Christianity is worth sending to the world, but Is my kind of Christianity worth sending to the world? The kind of Christianity I lived, when I was crossed last week, last night, today, even this morning—is this kind of Christianity worth sending to the world? Is this not a sobering thought? Is this not a hard question?

There is only one kind of Christianity that is worth sending to the world, and that is the kind of Christianity that Jesus lived. That is the only kind that will convert the world—a selfless life—a selfless Christianity.

If my Christianity still permits self to have some place in it, it is not worth sending to the world. If I have not entered into the practical gospel whereby a continuous faith experience in Christ, with my self “hid with Christ in God,” then I have not the kind of Christianity that will convert the world! Christ’s terms of discipleship are absolute. He says, “Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:33. That all is not only all that we have to be used as He may direct, but it is the all that we are—all of self, that we may be used only as He directs. Thousands upon thousands, if not millions, of people have entered into a form of partial Christianity in which some of self is yielded up—some of self denied to the point that it is acceptable to the majority of profession Christians. But this is NOT Biblical Christianity, for it leaves self to still have some place. Christ’s self was always sur-

rendered to the will of His Father. He always said, “Not as I will, but as thou wilt.” Matthew 26:39.

We have not been able to convert the world because we have not practically, and experientially, entered into the “Not I, but Christ” experience. Before Christianity can convert the world it must first be lived out in our own lives, in our own marriages, in our own families. That is why it is vitally important that we all enter into the terms of discipleship, the “Not I, but Christ” experience, that the world may know that the gospel can be lived, and that there is daily power to live above the pull of the flesh.

In the second step of our terms of discipleship, Christ said that if any man will come after Him, not only is he to “deny himself” but he is to “take up his cross daily.” Luke 9:23. The cross referred to is that which crosses our self on a daily basis. This cross will be with us until mortality puts an end to this corruptible body. See 1 Corinthians 15:53-54. That is why we are told, “The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle. Without continual effort and constant activity, there can be no advancement in the divine life…. The way of return can be gained only by hard fighting, inch by inch, hour by hour.”

“We cannot allow ourselves to act from impulse. We cannot be off guard for a moment. Beset with temptations without number, we must resist firmly or be conquered. …

“The life of the apostle Paul was a constant conflict with self. He said, ‘I die daily,’ 1 Corinthians 15:31. His will and his desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did God’s will, however crucifying to his nature.” Ministry of Healing, 452-453.

“It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of
self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed.” Ministry of Healing, 455. Do you not see that this continual renunciation of self is what Christ was referring to when He said we were to take up our cross daily and follow Him?

Yet that is utterly impossible to accomplish in the power of the flesh, for self cannot cast out self. Many of us have tried, but our efforts produce only out the error. No, no, this is not the solution! It is not that these matters are to be neglected either, but they are not the solution to the root problem. The solution is that a new life from above—the life of Christ—must take the place of the self-life. This solution alone will enable us to be “more than conquerors.” Romans 8:37.

The true solution is found in Jesus’ own words to His disciples, “If any man empty ourselves of self. We can only consent and cooperate with Christ as He accomplishes the work. See Christ’s Object Lessons, 159.

For example, I arose one morning and I accepted Jesus as my life, knowing that He promises to never leave me nor forsake me. See Hebrews 13:5. I gave Him permission to guide and instruct me throughout my entire day. He says, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.” Psalms 32:8. Do you believe He is that personal—that interested in your daily affairs? I do, but sad to say some do not. In fact, they fight it, perhaps because they want to manage themselves, or maybe they just do not understand how near and dear Christ can be to them.

As I went downstairs to eat I saw that my wife had prepared a wonderful meal. There were wild rice, corn, peas, and homemade rolls. Instead of using butter, I prefer to use home-canned tomatoes. In fact, it is better than butter. Just before I led out in prayer, I noticed that there were barely enough home-canned tomatoes for one person. Guess who else really likes home-canned tomatoes?—My oldest son, Matthew, and he was sitting right next to me. I also sensed that he noticed that there were only enough tomatoes for one person.

After I finished giving prayer, my instant response was to reach for the tomatoes. As I began to reach for them, my son was also reaching for them. It was then that God called for my heart.

“My son, give me thine heart.” Proverbs 23:26. That is the point at which the conflict and struggle occurs. My will, or God’s will? However, my self really wanted the last of those tomatoes. Does your self struggle for supremacy, demanding that you act contrary to God’s principles saying, Have it my way?

That is just what my flesh, or self, was saying. It wanted to be in control; it wanted to demand its own way. Suggesting that, “After all I paid for those tomatoes. Certainly I deserve them; I’m the head of the house; my needs should come first!” That is the voice of the flesh speaking to us! But there is also God’s Spirit speaking through our conscience, directing us to live above the pull of the flesh, asking us to “deny self” and to “take up our cross” and “follow Him.”

As I sensed the pull of the flesh, I said, “Lord I surrender my will in this matter. Grant me your grace to live above
the pull of my flesh.” Instantly, I withdrew my hand, and the victory was sweet. This is what it means to enter into the “Not I, but Christ” experience—always and only living for Him.

In all our daily experiences, the question is, Will we continuously respond to God, and by His grace surrender the temptation to have things “our way,” or will we move ahead and follow selfishness? This is always the decision it comes down to, whether it is in our thought life, our conversation, or in our actions. God gives us all the power of choice, and, if we continually choose to surrender the temptation, and put our full and continuous dependence in Him, He endows us with His life, and power to live above the flesh—above sin and self.

That morning I had made a commitment on my knees, that I was all His. I also agreed that I would incline my heart to live according to His will, always and continuously throughout the entire day. As God called for my heart, my decision only had to be reaffirmed that it would be, “Not I, but Christ.”

This is Christianity! This is the power of the gospel that so few are experiencing on a continuous basis. Will you choose to go the whole distance with God? Not just asking for the forgiveness of past sins, but for the power to live above sin and selfishness now? If you will, He can free you from whatever bondage you may be in. Whether that is despair or doubt, irritation or frustration, appetite or passion, your feelings or emotions, your inclinations or impulses, you can learn to say Yes to God and No to self. To simply ask for forgiveness for our past sins is not enough. We must resolve in our hearts to be decidedly under the control and direction of the Spirit of God.

When we give ourselves up to the real, living, acting, ruling power of God’s Spirit, we have come to the right position in which we can grow. It is in utterly breaking with the flesh, the giving up of self—entirely and continuously—that we will finally (daily) become free men and women in Christ Jesus. We can then say, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57.

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A n extraordinary phenomenon has rippled across Argentina, Canada, Britain, the United States, South Africa, and India. From churches throughout the world come reports describing people entering into a state of mind similar to drunkenness. This altered state is often accompanied by shaking with laughter, crying, slipping into a trance, and falling to the floor. Is this the final movement of God? Is this the manifestation of the latter rain of the Holy Spirit? Or is this the manifestation of a great counterfeit revival?

This phenomenal end-time revival broke out in force in 1992 in the Toronto Airport Church, pastored by Rodney Howard-Browne. The supernatural manifestations witnessed there have become known worldwide as the "Toronto Blessing." The most notable manifestation involves the believer being overcome by fits of uncontrollable laughter. During these meetings some are heard roaring like lions, hooting like owls, or making other bizarre, animal-like noises. Amidst this noisy confusion, some are seen writhing on the ground and hissing like snakes, while others lay on the ground motionless, apparently lost to the surrounding pandemonium. Common manifestations include shaking, trancelike states, inner voices, visions, mental confusion, energy rushes, and out-of-body experiences. Some people leave the meetings in such a "drunken" state, without full use of their limbs, that they must be driven home by others. One eyewitness described her experience at the Toronto Vineyard as follows:

"The silly, funny 'laughter in the Spirit'... took the form of cackling and hooting. They called it 'holy laughter.'... Their movements were manic. It reminded me of a film I'd seen of autistic children. This impression was reinforced when I saw others, seated at the back of the room, banging their heads repetitively against the wall right behind them."

One pastor visited the Toronto church and recounts his unexpected experience:

"One of the leaders then explained that he was going to call upon several people to share a testimony. ... The first person... was apparently a Baptist preacher from England. He went to the front, began to speak, and after a few sentences he fell to the floor roaring and screeching. The leader reassured us that everything was all right. 'This roaring,' he explained, 'was caused by the Holy Spirit. ... It is the roaring of the lion of Judah.' This was apparently a common occurrence in their meetings. The speaker concluded his message by telling us that the Holy Spirit was now moving in our midst and anyone who felt any shaking, trembling, or numbness was to understand that those feelings, or manifestations, were from the Holy Spirit and those who were experiencing those things should raise their hands and a member of their ministry would come and pray with them. Many people began experiencing this uncontrollable shaking of their bodies. Many fell on the floor roaring and screeching. Some were laughing hilariously."

The "Toronto Blessing" quickly spread across the world. One amazing facet of this movement is its ability to transcend denominational barriers. At the Holy Trinity Brompton Church in London, eyewitness Bill Randles describes how the movement has affected Anglican believers:

"Though pathetically tiny flocks of Londoners attend many Anglican services, Holy Trinity Brompton has a 'standing room only' turnout of 1,500.
Oblivious to the hot, airless sanctuary, the youthful throng buzzes with an anticipation more common at a rock concert or a rugby match. After the usual Scripture readings, prayers, and singing, the chairs are cleared away. Curate Nickey Gumbel prays that the Holy Spirit will come upon the congregation. Soon, a woman begins laughing. Others gradually join her with hearty belly laughs. A young worshiper falls to the floor, hands twitching. Another falls, then another and another. Within half an hour, there are bodies everywhere as supplicants sob, shake, roar like lions, and strangest of all, laugh uncontrollably.

Pandemonium in Pensacola

On Father’s Day, 1995, a stunning revival broke out in the Brownsville Assembly of God Church in Pensacola, Florida, that has captured the attention of the world. Pastors and lay people alike are flocking to Pensacola. They are coming from all over the world, and from many different denominations. They have come to catch the spirit of this revival and take it back to their churches. Associated Press reporter David Briggs, who noted that this is “one of the most spectacular revivals in modern times,” wrote that “hundreds of pastors visit each week in hopes of learning how they, too, might fill their churches. . . .” Nearly two million people have walked through the doors of the church since this revival broke out.

John Kilpatrick, pastor of Brownsville Assembly of God Church, declared, “There were signs and wonders that happened in the early church, and I want to tell you, friend, you better get used to signs and wonders taking place in the church again.”

Many churches are embracing this movement as being God’s hand upon America. Pat Robertson’s August-September 1996 Christian Broadcasting Network News Report lauded the revival, saying, “Thousands of pastors have visited the church and report that their own churches are being affected by the Pensacola outpouring.” The report continued by explaining how David Yonggi Cho, pastor of the world’s largest church in Seoul, South Korea, received a vision concerning this revival in 1991. Cho said that in this vision, God revealed that He was going to bring revival to America and that it would begin in Pensacola. Cho said, “As I prayed I felt the Lord prompt me to get a map of America, . . . [and I] found myself pointing to the city of Pensacola.” Cho said God told him, “I am going to send revival to Pensacola, and it will spread like a fire until all of America has been consumed by it.” Mainline charismatic magazines like Charisma and even Christianity Today, a popular Evangelical magazine, have also praised this revival. Charisma referred to this revival as the “Pensacola Outpouring,” and the March 3, 1996, issue of Christianity Today called this revival “the cutting edge of evangelistic outreach.”

In the April 27, 1997, issue of the Washington Post, staff writer Peter Carlson gave an eyewitness account of one of the revival meetings:

“It begins with a drummer laying down a slow beat that goes on for several minutes, a steady, inescapable, portentous heartbeat. The guitarist and the organist join in, along with a choir of several dozen singers. . . . From the first note, the people are up out of the pews and on their feet, clapping in time or dancing with eyes closed, hands raised. In front of the first row, teenagers pogo up and down, a sort of Pentecostal mosh pit. If it weren’t for the cross and the stained glass behind the altar, you might think you were at a rock-and-roll show.”

It is extremely revealing that pastor John Kilpatrick admitted that there was pandemonium at his church in Brownsville. In fact, he actually condemned such activity. “God sent pandemonium in the church,” he said, “I think it’s time that we have grand pandemonium in the Baptists, in the Lutheran, the Episcopal, the Assembly of God [churches]. God send pandemonium!” It is interesting to note that the word pandemonium was coined by John Milton in 1667 in his epic Paradise Lost. Pandemonium was the name of the capital of Hell, the “high capital of Satan and his peers.” The word literally means “place of all the demons.” Today, the word is generally defined as “any place of wild disorder, noise or confusion.”

One thing that surprised Kilpatrick was the large number of rebellious youth attending his church services. He described sexually active, drug addicted, wild, scantily clothed teenagers who would fall to the floor, shaking under the

“I think it’s time that we have grand pandemonium in the Baptists, in the Lutheran, the Episcopal, the Assembly of God [churches]. God send pandemonium!”

The Spiritualism Connection

In order to understand the recent events occurring in the religious world, one must understand the eastern occult practice of Kundalini. The practice of Kundalini originated in Asia and dates back at least one thousand years. It seeks to awaken the “spiritual power” within. There are seven Chakras or spots
Bwagwham Shree Rajneesh, the former Oregon occult guru, writes of an experience when he told one of his followers, "just be joyful. . . . God is not serious . . . this world cannot fit with a theological god. . . . So let this be your constant reminder—that you have to dance your way to God, to laugh your way to God." Often referred to as being "drunk on the divine," Rajneesh approached him. After a few minutes of priming the man by saying the words "HA-HA, bubble" to him, Browne said, "Let's go back to the prayer mode: HA-HA." Browne's laughter was not at all natural. The man repeated the words. After about five minutes, the man immediately stopped laughing and he went down with a look of shock on his face. A power had "slain him in the spirit."

Why did Browne prime the man with "HA-HAS"? It is intriguing that Browne encouraged the man to repeat the words "HA-HA," which is exactly how the various mantras are given to the followers of New Age gurus. Using a mantra helps to focus the mind on making contact with another power. Notice the significance of "HA":

"The fifth Chakra [Visudda in Kundalini Yoga] is located in the throat. It is the center for creativity and self-expression. The throat center influences the thyroid gland which affects the balance of the entire nervous system, metabolism, muscular control, and body heat production. This center is called the gateway to liberation because it leads beyond the physical/emotional planes and into astral space . . . . The symbolic form is chalice, . . . . and its sound vibration is the joyous delight expressed in the act of creation HA."13

"HA" is the sound vibration of the fifth Chakra that is the expression of joyous delight. Both Kundalini’s "HA" and Browne’s "HA" connect to the same power. (Could it be more than coincidence that the first god in the Babylonian trinity is named Jah-Bel-On? "Ha" and "Jah" are used interchangeably in the Chaldean language.)

Babylon Is Fallen

The long-awaited time has arrived for the great and glorious angel of Revelation 18 to announce the doom of Babylon:

"And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . . . Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:2-4.

With inspired insight Ellen White predicted that two revivals would take place in the world immediately preceding the return of Christ:
“Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His Word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord’s second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God’s special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.”

It Is Party Time!

The banquet hall was packed. The hall reverberated with the tunes of the best musicians in Babylon. The wine was flowing. There was laughter everywhere. It was the best of times. King Belshazzar knew there was a line that he should not cross. But it was party time! It was not a time to be concerned about lines. It was a time to be happy! It was celebration time! After all, who could prevent him, the leader of the Lion of the earth’s nations, from crossing the line? Brazenly, he called for the holy utensils of the temple of God. In bold defiance Belshazzar dared to profane the holy with his unholiness. In drunken glee he leaped across the unseen line. Suddenly the pandemonium was silenced by the appearance of the bloodless hand of God. Belshazzar’s knees began to knock, but it was not from the power of Kudalini! It was from raw fear of God. It was a fear that reached down into his soul. It was a fear arising from a sudden realization of impending doom. It was a fear that not only had his present life been lost, but that his eternal doom had been sealed. It was Babylon’s last night!

On Babylon’s last night, the Lord’s words, recorded by Jeremiah, were dramatically fulfilled:

“Here people all roar like young lions, they growl like lion cubs. But while they are aroused, I will set out a feast for them and make them drunk, so that they shout with laughter. . . . Come out of her, my people! Run for your lives! . . . The Lord will destroy Babylon; He will silence her noisy din.” Jeremiah 51:38-39, 45, 55, NIV.

The churches are packed. The hypnotic music reverberates through the sanctuaries. The “new wine” is flowing and people are drunk with intoxicating spirits. There is laughter everywhere. It is the best of times. The people know that God has a line called His Ten Commandments. But it is party time! It is not a time to be concerned about laws. It is a time to celebrate! So they are roaring like lions, partying in pandemonium, laughing in oblivion as they teeter along on the brink of eternity. The line is about to be crossed. Babylon is about to bring out God’s holy law from His temple and profane the Sabbath commandment. Who can stop Babylon? Who can keep her from desecrating the Sabbath? The sun has set on Babylon. Night has fallen. The hands of the clock are fast approaching midnight. Get ready! It is later than you think.

REFERENCES:
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
12. Ibid.

A Syllabus for Holy Living

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The True Object of Education

IN the education and training of youth, the great object should be the development of character. Every individual should be fitted rightly to discharge the duties of the present life, and to enter at last upon the future, immortal life. Moral, intellectual, and physical culture must be combined in order to have well-developed, well-balanced men and women.

Education in book knowledge alone prepares the way for superficial, shallow thoughts. The neglect of some parts of the living machinery, while other parts are put to the tax, and weary and overworked, makes many youth too weak to resist the temptation to evil practices. They have little power of self-control. The physical machinery being untaxed, the blood is called too liberally to the brain, and the nervous system is overworked. The brain is overworked, and Satan brings in his temptations to engage in forbidden pleasures, to “have a change,” to “let off steam.” Yielding to these temptations, they do wrong, injuring themselves, and doing mischief to others. This may be done only in sport, but someone must undo the mischief which they do under temptation. While studying authors and lesson books part of the time, students should study the human machinery with the same application, and at the same time use the physical organs in manual labor. Thus they answer the purpose of their Creator, and become useful, efficient men and women.

The student should place himself in school, if he can, and through his own exertions pay his way as he goes. He should study one year, and then work out for himself the problem of what constitutes true education. He should set himself to work. The learning heaped up by years of continued study is deleterious to spiritual interests. Let teachers be prepared to give good counsel to the student who enters school. Let them not advise him to give years exclusively to the study of books. Let the youth learn, and then impart to others the benefits he has received. If the student will humbly seek Him, the Lord of heaven will open his understanding. The student should take time to review what he has gained in book knowledge; he should critically examine the advancement he has made in the schoolroom, and he should combine physical exercise with study. Thus he will acquire an education that will enable him to come out with solid principles, an all-round man.

Had teachers been learning the lessons the Lord would have them learn, there would not be a class of students whose bills must be settled by someone else, or they must leave college with a heavy debt hanging over them. Educators are not doing their work faithfully when they know a young man to be devoting years of his time to the study of books, not seeking to earn means to pay his own way, and yet do nothing in the matter. Every case should be investigated; every youth should be kindly inquired after, and his financial situation ascertained.

Many would be glad of the privilege of spending a short time in school, where they could be brought up on some points of study. There are those who would consider it an inestimable privilege to
have the Bible opened to them in its pure, unadulterated simplicity; to be taught how to come close to hearts, and how, in simple, straightforward lines, to teach the truth so that it shall be clearly discerned.

One study to be put before the student as most valuable should be the exercise of his God-given reason in harmony with his physical powers. The right use of one’s self is the most valuable lesson that can be learned. We are not to do brain work, and stop there, or make physical exertion, and stop there; we are to make the best use of the various parts that compose the human machinery—brain, bone, muscle, head, and heart. No man is fit for the ministry who does not understand this.

The student who has neglected the training of the muscles proportionately with his mental powers should seek to obtain an all-round education. If he feels it beneath his dignity to take hold of the unlearned parts, and catch up the science of true education, he is unfitted to take hold of the work of educating youth. He need not think himself qualified to act as a teacher; for his very teaching will be superficial and one-sided. He does not understand that he lacks the very education that would make him a blessing, and would secure to him in the future, immortal life the benediction, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” Matthew 25:21.

Every student in our schools should begin his character-building upon the Word of God. He is to study for time and for eternity. Paul’s charge to Timothy was, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15. We cannot, in this day of peril, accept teachers merely because they have been in school two, three, four, or five years. The question is, With all their acquisition of knowledge, have they obtained a knowledge of what is truth? Have they searched for truth as for hidden treasure? or have they seized the surface rubbish in the place of pure truth, thoroughly winnowed? We cannot consent, at this period of time, to expose our youth to the chance of learning a mixture of truth and error. The youth who come from school without feeling the importance of making the Word of God the first study, the main study, are not qualified to become teachers.

That course of study which is not dictated by the Holy Spirit, which does not embrace the high, holy principles of God’s Word, will open before the student a course unmarked by the approval of Heaven. It will leave gaps, and mistakes, and misunderstandings all along the road he travels. Those who will not give themselves to a deep, earnest, prayerful study of the Scriptures will hold ideas contrary to the principles that should control the life.

Useful work is a valuable education. If either this practical education or the study of books must be neglected, let it be the study of books, and let the student take up the real, practical duties of life.

Will parents who believe the truth, and who realize the importance of knowing the truth that is to make us wise unto salvation, trust their children to schools where error is believed and taught? Who will expose these precious souls to a conflict of changes, and place them where their highest interests are not made the first consideration?

If the Lord’s will is done, students will not be encouraged to remain in schools continuously for years. This is the devising of man, not the plan of God. The student is not to feel that he must take a classical course before he can enter the ministry. A large number who have done this have disqualified themselves for the labor which it was essential for them to do. The long study of those books which should not be made study books, unfits the youth for the work to be done in this important period of the world’s history. These years of study cultivate habits and methods that cripple their usefulness. They have to unlearn many things which disqualify them for efficiency in any line of the work to be done for this time.

Students are to bear in mind that their life is a talent, to be highly appreciated and dedicated to the Lord. Those who attend school are to study the Book of books, and through prayer, and close, deep research, obtain a Bible education. They are to learn lessons in the school of Christ; they are to work in Christ’s lines.

The right use of one’s self includes the whole circle of obligations to one’s self, to the world, and to God. Then use the physical powers proportionately with their one-sided education. On the part of such, there is seldom a deep, earnest purpose that leads to deep, earnest work. They are not fit to train other minds, because their own has never been trained. They are fitful in their movements. They cannot reason from cause to effect. They will speak when it would be eloquence to keep silence, and will be silent on those themes on which they should speak—themes that should occupy the heart and mind and regulate the life.

The talents entrusted of God are a sacred treasure, and should be put to practical use. Useful work is a valuable education. If either this practical education or the study of books must be neglected, let it be the study of books, and let the student take up the real, practical duties of life. The youth who have been educated to consider the best plans for doing good at home will extend their work to the neighborhood, the church, and every line of missionary work.

God calls upon us all to render obedience to the principles He has revealed to us in the work appointed to Adam in Eden. There will be employment in Eden restored. Our dear young students who have not been trained at home by their parents, need to have an education that will counteract their home education. Until they learn the first principles of proper education, they cannot be trusted as teachers of the youth. They are to engage in a career that requires settled purposes, high principles, and holy aims. If they do not learn anew, they will bring into their religious life a superficial work which will disqualify them to teach the
Exercise should be taken, not in play and amusement merely to please self, but exercise that will teach the science of doing good.

The study of Latin and Greek is of far less consequence to ourselves, to the world, and to God than the thorough study and use of the whole human machinery. It is a sin to study books to the neglect of the various branches of usefulness in practical life. Never can one who is ignorant of the house we live in, have an all-round life.

Exercise should be taken, not in play and amusement merely to please self, but exercise that will teach the science of doing good. There is a science in the use of the hand. Students who think that education consists only in book study, must be exercised, and students can apply themselves to a much better purpose when a portion of their time is devoted to physical taxation, wearying the muscles. Nature will then give sweet repose.

Students, your life is God's property. He has entrusted it to you, that you may honor and glorify Him. You are the Lord's; for He created you. You are His by redemption; for He gave His life for you. The only begotten Son of God paid the ransom for your deliverance from Satan; and for His sake you should appreciate every power, every organ, every sinew and muscle. Preserve every portion of the living machinery, that you may use it for God. Preserve it for Him. Your health depends upon the right use of your physical organism. Do not misuse any portion of your God-given powers, physical, mental, or moral. All your habits are to be brought under the control of a mind that is itself under the control of God.

If young men and women would grow up to the full stature of Christ Jesus, they must treat themselves intelligently. Conscientiousness in methods of education is as essential as in the consideration of the doctrines of our faith. Unhealthful habits of every order—late hours at night, late hours in bed in the morning, rapid eating—are to be overcome. Masticate your food thoroughly. Let there be no hurried eating. Have your room well ventilated day and night, and perform useful physical labor. Tight lacing [clothing] is a sin, and will bring its sure results. The lungs, the liver, and the heart need all the room the Lord has provided for them. Your Creator understood how much room the heart and liver require in order to act their part in the human organism. Let not Satan tempt you to crowd the delicate organs, so that they shall be trammeled in their work. Do not, because the fashion of this degenerate world requires it, so crowd the life forces that they will have no freedom. Satan suggested all such fashions, that the human family might suffer the sure results of abusing God's handiwork.

All this must be a part of the education received in school; for we are God's property. The sacred temple of the body must be kept pure and uncontaminated, that God's Holy Spirit may dwell therein. We need to guard faithfully the Lord's property; for any abuse of our powers shortens the time that our lives could be used for the glory of God. Bear in mind that we must consecrate all—soul, body, and spirit—to God. All is His purchased possession, and must be used intelligently, to the end that we may preserve the talent of life. By properly using our powers to their fullest extent in the most useful employment, by keeping every organ in health, by so preserving every organ that mind, sinew, and muscle shall work harmoniously, we may do the most precious service for God.

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The Youth's Instructor, March 31 and April 7, 1898.
Disease and Its Causes

Part 15

The Care of Children

by Ellen G. White

In this age of degeneracy, children are born with enfeebled constitutions. Parents are amazed at the great mortality among infants and youth, and say, "It did not used to be so." Children were then more healthy and vigorous, with far less care than is now bestowed upon them. Yet with all the care they now receive, they are feeble, and wither and die. As the result of wrong habits in parents, disease and immi-
cility have been transmitted to their offspring.

After their birth, they are made very much worse by careless inattention to the laws of their being. Proper management would greatly improve their physical health. But parents seldom pursue a right course toward their infant children, considering the miserable inheritance already received from them. Their wrong course toward their children results in lessening their hold of life, and prepares them for premature death. These parents have no lack of love for their children, but this love is misapplied.

One great error with the mother in the treatment of her infant is that she allows it an insufficient supply of fresh air, that which it ought to have to make it strong. It is a practice of many mothers to cover their infants' heads while sleeping, and this, too, in a warm room, which is seldom ventilated as it should be. This alone is sufficient greatly to enfeeble the action of the heart and lungs, thereby affecting the whole system. While care may be needful to protect the infant from a draught of air, or from any sudden or too great change, especial care should be taken to have the child breathe a pure, invigorating atmosphere. No disagreeable odor should remain in the nursery, or about the child. Such things are more dangerous to the feeble infant than to grown persons.

Mothers have been in the practice of dressing their infants in reference to fashion instead of health. The infant wardrobe is generally prepared to look pretty, more for show than for convenience and comfort. Much time is spent in embroidering, and in unnecessary fancy work, to make the garments of the little stranger beautiful. The mother often performs this work at the expense of her own health and that of her offspring. When she should be enjoying pleasant exercise, she is often bent over work that severely taxes eyes and nerves. And it is often difficult to arouse the mother to her solemn obligations to cherish her own strength, for her own good as well as for the good of the child.

Show and fashion are the demon altar upon which many American women sacrifice their children. The mother places upon the little morsel of humanity the fashionable dresses which she had spent weeks in making, which are wholly unfit for its use, if health is to be regarded of any account. The garments are made extravagantly long, and in order to keep them upon the infant, its body is girted with tight bands, or waist, which hinder the free action of the heart and lungs. Infants are also compelled to bear a needless weight because of the length of their garments, and thus clothed, they do not have free use of their muscles and limbs.

Mothers have thought it necessary to compress the bodies of their infant children to keep them in shape, as if fearful that without tight bandages they would fall to pieces, or become deformed. Does the animal creation become deformed because nature is left to do her own work? Do the little lambs become deformed because they are not girted with bands to give them shape? They are delicately and beautifully formed. Human children are the most perfect, and yet the most helpless of all the Creator's handiwork; and, therefore, their mothers should be instructed in regard to physical laws, so as to be capable of rearing them with physical, mental, and moral health.

Mothers, nature has given your infants forms which need no girts nor bands to perfect them. God has supplied them with bones and muscles sufficient for their support, and to guard nature's fine machinery within, before committing it to your care.

The dress of the infant should be so arranged that its body will not be in the least compressed after taking a full meal. Dressing infants in a fashionable manner, to be introduced into company for visitors to admire, is very injurious to them. The clothing is ingeniously arranged to make the child miserably uncomfortable, and the child is frequently made still more uneasy by being passed from one to the other, being fondled by all.

But there is an evil greater than those already named. The infant is exposed to air vitiated [impaired in quality] by many breaths, some of which are very offensive and injurious to the strong lungs of older persons. The infant lungs suffer, and become diseased by inhaling the atmosphere of a room poisoned with the tobacco user's tainted breath. Many infants are poisoned beyond remedy by sleeping in beds with their tobacco-using fathers. By inhaling the poisonous tobacco effluvium [noxious exhalation], which is thrown from the lungs and pores of the skin, the system of the infant is filled with the poison. While it acts upon some as a slow poison, and affects the brain, heart, liver, and lungs, and the infant wastes away gradually; upon others it has a more direct influence, causing spasms, fits, paralysis, palsy, and sudden death.

The bereaved parents mourn the loss of their loved ones, and wonder at the mysterious providence of God which has so cruelly afflicted them, when Providence designed not the death of these infants. They died martyrs to the filthy lust of tobacco. Parents ignorantly, but nonetheless surely, killed their infant children by the disgusting poison. Every exhalation of the lungs of the tobacco slave poisons the air about him. Infants should be kept free from everything that would have an influence to excite the nervous system, and should, whether waking or sleeping, day and night, breathe a pure, cleanly, healthy atmosphere, free from every taint of poison.

Review and Herald, December 26, 1899.
On December 6, 1980, I was ordained to the gospel ministry. During that solemn service I took a vow before God which, in part, quoted 2 Timothy 4:3–4:

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Today, these words are being fulfilled before our eyes. The Christian churches, our own not excluded, are turning rapidly to fables. This is how Satan would have it.

These churches are exemplified by the cry, “Let us preach the love of Christ and cease our emphasis upon dry doctrine.” Those proposing this general rejection of our historic doctrines display little discernment. The greatest doctrine of all is the love of Christ, and every other Biblical doctrine displays Christ and His love at its center. Each is a depiction of His character, and each portrays the way of redemption. A Christian church devoid of doctrine is one devoid of faith—one that has lost the blessed hope.

It is little wonder that Paul in his admonition to young pastors stated:

“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.” 1 Timothy 4:6.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16.

“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” Titus 1:9.

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.” Titus 2:1.

“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.” Titus 2:7.

Our own church confirms Paul’s assertion that the preaching of unsound doctrine is the source of division and strife:

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereby cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.” 1 Timothy 6:3–5.

Paul goes further when he asserts that doctrine is a salvational matter. Eternal issues are determined by sincere belief in sound scriptural doctrine:

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” 1 Timothy 4:16.

Doctrine is a serious issue. No created being appreciates this fact more than the archenemy of souls. With a supernatural genius and subtlety, Satan has counterfeited every sound doctrine. This alone should arouse the most comatose Seventh-day Adventist to make a diligent search of God’s Word under the guidance of the Holy Ghost in order to discover genuine truth, for eternal destinies are at stake.

Satan uses a multitude of techniques in order to achieve his diabolical plan to deprive mankind of his God-ordained eternal heritage. Chief among these are doctrinal silence, ecumenical pressures, creeds, seminary education, doctrinalagnosticism, and pluralism.

**Doctrinal Silence**

As a lad and a young man faithfully attending devout churches in the 1930s...
and 1940s, I can remember listening to only one sermon preached on the subject of the human nature of Christ. It was preached, incidentally, not by a man trained in ministerial lines, but by the then Secretary-Treasurer of the North New South Wales Conference, Pastor H. J. Halliday. It grasped my attention as I discerned that Christ shared my hereditary weaknesses, and that His environment in Nazareth was certainly no better than mine. Yet His life was altogether superior to my own. I felt both shame and yet hope—hope that in the power of the Holy Spirit, I too could live a Christlike life, living up to all the light Christ had bestowed upon me.

During my studies at Avondale College, commencing in 1950, I do not remember hearing one single reference to the human nature of Christ. Further, I recall no reference being made to this important subject in any chapel, ves- pers, or divine service. That which had been studied so earnestly in numerous Sabbath School Quarterlies around the turn of the century, that which was considered to be of sufficient significance to become an item of our first statement of faith in 1872, had become a matter of doctrinal silence. Little wonder then that in 1956, when leading brethren met with Barnhouse and Martin, this almost forgotten truth was felt to be of so little importance that it could be altered with negligible likelihood that this change would disturb the general membership. Even among the ministry, Pastor M. L. Andreasen excepted, few noticed the alteration—even when it was spelled out in 1957 in Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine. There had also been little earlier reaction when a less direct alteration had been made in the second edition of Bible Readings for the Home Circle, which was published in 1949. Satan recognizes that it is unlikely that a church will preach a truth of God forcefully one Sabbath, and then adopt his counterfeits the next. A period of silence precedes such an alteration—a period in which a new generation arises oblivious to the truth. Thus, opposition to doctrinal alteration is limited to the few who remain to recall the old paths, and also who have the courage to speak up.

Presently, there appears to be perilously few sermons preached in our pulpits on the state of the dead. Of the six pillars of our faith which Sister White enunciated (see Counsels to Writers and Editors, 30), this one alone has yet to take a heavy battering from our scholars and religious teachers. In one small effort to stay that which has occurred to the fundamentals of the law of God, the Sabbath and the sanctuary message, my twin brother, Colin, and I recently prepared a Bible-based book on the subject Mission dated June 8, 1994, the following was stated:

"Recently I received a copy of the letter sent to you regarding Public Preaching in the Kainantu Area from Father Benson Basdada. There appears to be a lot of ill feeling due to some preachers tearing down other churches in public. We have heard their side of the story.

That which had been studied so earnestly... around the turn of the century, that which was considered to be of sufficient significance to become an item of our first statement of faith in 1872, had become a matter of doctrinal silence.

Ecumenical Pressures

Ecumenical pressures upon our church pastors abound today. A large number of these pastors, often with administrative encouragement, have joined ministerial associations or ministerial fraternals. Interchange of pulpits occurs, and an unexpressed atmosphere prevails, encouraging the muting of salient doctrines, which are either despised by the fallen churches of Babylon or are unflattering to their image. The obvious embarrassment of some well-known evangelist on Florida television in 1994 when he flatly denied that the pope was the antichrist of Bible prophecy, under questioning from a Southern Baptist preacher, is one better known and documented instance of this phenomenon within our church.

Instead of pleasing our Saviour, all too often we strive to please the ecclesiastical leaders of the fallen churches of Babylon.

One case in point illustrates this trend. Pastor Livingstone Kul, a pastor of the Eastern Highlands-Simbu Mission of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission, led lay preachers in the proclamation of the three angels' messages in the streets of the towns within the Mission. However, in a letter written by the Secretary of the

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spreading the three angels' messages with decided effect! My personal contact with converted ministers from the fallen churches of Babylon testify to God's blessing on this work.

**Creeds**

Creeds have ever been a source of ensuring doctrinal formality and the stultifying of growth in faith. Early in its history the Seventh-day Adventist Church, recognizing this fact, eschewed creeds. Thus, the General Conference in 1883 took an emphatic stand against the production of a Church manual. See *Review and Herald* November 20 and 27, 1883. It was discerned, with almost prophetic insight, that to develop a church manual would lead to the adoption of a creed other than the Scriptures, and to a discipline alien to Biblical principles.

The 27 Fundamentals, unfortunately, are now related to by many as the Seventh-day Adventist creed. Numerous examples could be cited of ministers and administrative officials of our church fervently protesting their faith and belief in the 27 Fundamentals. No matter how sincere the motives of those who promoted this new statement of faith, this concept has gone far beyond that which is proper for Seventh-day Adventists.

In November 1991 I attended a meeting in Singapore in which a highly placed church official stated that we cannot be found Seventh-day Adventists unless we adhere to the 27 Fundamentals. This was a sheer statement of counterfeit creed. It is true that Seventh-day Adventists do have a creed, but it is certainly not 27 carefully crafted expressions of doctrine. Our creed is every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God:

"And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knowest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live." Deuteronomy 8:3.

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4.

This is our genuine creed. It is a false claim to be a Seventh-day Adventist unless we believe every word of God contained between Genesis 1:1 and Revelation 22:21.

In December 1980, only a handful of months after the 27 Fundamentals were accepted by the General Conference in full session at Dallas, the then Field Secretary of the South Pacific Division (termed the Australasian Division at that time) spoke in a forum meeting at Avondale College. No doubt realizing the doctrinally liberal bent of most of his audience, he proclaimed:

"It is not now obligatory for Seventh-day Adventists to believe in a two-apartment heavenly sanctuary, for this is not specified in the 27 Fundamentals."

This was creedalism at its most transparent worst. Inspiration plainly states that there are two distinct apartments in the heavenly sanctuary (see Exodus 25:9; 26:30–35; Hebrews 8:2, 5; 9:1–6; Revelation 4:5; Revelation 11:19; *The Great Controversy*, 421), and it is most certainly obligatory that we believe this plain word of God.

I was personally present during that forum. Ever since I had been a delegate to the 1980 General Conference session, I had retained doubts about the 27 Fundamentals. Had I possessed a knowledge of their future use, and even had a better insight into their nature, I would have cast my vote against their acceptance. As it was, my early doubts were merely transformed into a rather weak failure to vote either in favor or against them.

The Field Secretary, cited above, did direct my thoughts to the perils of our 27 Fundamentals. With a less than sensible insight, I had initially read those fundamentals, seeking to discover if error was present. Rather, I should have searched to discern the absence of vital truths. Had the suggestion been adopted that the vote upon these fundamentals be postponed until the 1985 General Conference in New Orleans, it is more than likely that due consideration would have revealed the defects in these fundamentals, and also revealed the manner in which they are being utilized as a creed.

The problem with the 27 Fundamentals is not so much what they assert, but what they do not include. Of course, it must be agreed that it is impossible in a summary statement of faith to cover the entire body of Biblical doctrines. Only the full body of Scriptures accomplishes that task. However, it is important that in areas where Bible truth is hotly disputed and the Bible is unequivocal in its verification of that truth, such matters be not deliberately or carelessly omitted.

Thus, as in the case cited above, it was well-known that the proponents of the error of what is now termed the New Theology (in reality it is old error), loudly deny the plain Bible confirmation of a two-apartment sanctuary in heaven. Therefore, it was mandatory that any 1980 statement of faith include this matter in its fundamental confirmation of belief concerning the sanctuary. The failure to do so, permits Seventh-day Adventists to assert that both truth and error have equal validity within our church. This is being done. In a pure church, without spot and blemish, truth and error do not coexist:

"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:27.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:14.

Other glaring errors, prominently promoted among scholars and theologians by 1980, were not addressed. These included the denial of the fact, testified to on more than thirty occasions in the Spirit of Prophecy, and deduced from Biblical chronology, that the earth was created about 6,000 years ago. Since many of our scientists, and even more of our theologians, deny this fact, it would have been prudent to have addressed it.
in the 27 Fundamentals, since this is frequently the first step toward doubt in the doctrine of Creation—just as the denial of the two-apartment heavenly sanctuary has proven to be a fertile commencement point leading to the denial of the sanctuary message.

The human nature of Christ has been a lively issue within the church ever since Elder M. L. Andreasen challenged the Question on Doctrines proposal that Christ came to this earth in possession of an unfallen human nature. This view directly contradicted every word of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy in respect to this significant doctrine. The formulators of the 27 Fundamentals, by their silence, chose to let both truth and error concerning this doctrine have equal currency.

The 27 Fundamentals were swiftly harnessed in my own home Division when, in order to combat perceptions prevailing among us—even among many of our lay people—the Australasian (now South Pacific) Record published a series of statements by Conference presidents and other highly placed pastors, stating that they “affirmed” the 27 Fundamentals. The word “affirm,” in a number of cases replaced “believe.” While affirm means to make a formal declaration, the word does not demand a personal belief.

It became popular in Australia for some leading pastors to affirm the 27 Fundamentals, “having regard to the preamble.” The preamble to the 27 Fundamentals stated in effect that the doctrines presented were not set in concrete, and that future General Conferences in full session may modify the statement of belief. Speaking personally to one such pastor, I confirmed that his affirmation, thus qualified, simply meant that he did not believe some of the fundamentals, but that he hoped that in the future a General Conference session would modify the statement in order to agree with his (faulty) doctrinal view.

Thus, the statement of belief, as more and more people affirm it, has become a shield behind which those proclaiming erroneous doctrines hide, while making a pretense of being faithful Seventh-day Adventists. In this way, error is passed on in the guise of truth by unfaithful pastors and theology professors.

To be continued.
The third angel’s message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance. The law and the gospel going hand in hand.” 

Ibid., 172.

It seems as if we were preaching the commandments of God with a mighty voice while we were preaching the faith of Jesus with an almost inaudible whisper. However, to warn against our people taking the message of Christ our righteousness beyond its limits and falling into the trap of antinomianism, Sister White made it plain that the presentation of the law of God and the faith of Jesus are to have equal authority. Indeed, one should never be presented without the other.

“The soul-saving message, the third angel’s message, is the message to be given to the world. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are both important, immensely important, and must be given with equal force and power.” 

Ibid., 184.

However, Seventh-day Adventists face a real problem. In the Western World there is little evidence of old-fashioned legalism, but antinomianism is sweeping Western Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and certain other parts of the world. On the other hand, even in these areas, there are some remnants of legalism, but legalism is more evident among believers in less developed countries.

In a very emphatic way, Elder Folkenberg stated that he truly understood there is no conflict between the “gospel” and “doctrine.” With that I heartily agree. How can you truly preach the second coming of Jesus without preaching of the One who is coming in power and great glory? How can you preach the sanctuary message without preaching the centrality of the One who is our Sacrifice, our Heavenly High Priest, our Judge, our Advocate, our Mediator, our Intercessor? How can you preach the investigative judgment unless you preach the One who will stand up for His people in the judgment? How can you preach the state of the dead without preaching of the One who is the resurrection and the life? How can you preach on baptism except you preach on the One who died, was buried and was raised for our salvation? How can you preach on the Sabbath without preaching of the One who

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is our Creator, and is the Lord of the Sabbath? How can you preach on the Ten Commandments except that you preach on the One of whom the Ten Commandments is the very transcript of His character? How can you preach on righteousness by faith unless you preach on Christ our righteousness? And that principle is true of every doctrine.

The great call today must be for all preachers and teachers to acknowledge that doctrine is powerless unless the Christ of the doctrine is central to our preaching. How earnestly each of us must put this message before our people. But nevertheless there were disturbing elements in Elder Folkenberg’s presentation. It seemed clear to me that he does not understand the positions of the evangelicals. Had he not traced the history of the Evangelical movement from Augustinian Catholicism through Luther, the Augustinian monk, to Calvin and into the Evangelical and Reformed Churches of Protestantism?

A call for Seventh-day Adventists to identify themselves as Evangelical Adventists is a grave and dangerous call. We are not Evangelical Adventists; we are Seventh-day Adventists. Therefore, on this issue we must resolutely disagree with the General Conference President, and declare that we are not Evangelical Adventists, neither indeed can we be, and neither can any other faithful Seventh-day Adventists.

Yes, I am an evangelistic Seventh-day Adventist in that by the grace of God and in His strength, I am conducting crusades, often with my brother Russell, all over the world, preaching the great everlasting gospel.

The theological connotations associated with Evangelical Adventist and Seventh-day Adventist are the antithesis of each other. We recognize today that a number of churches are designating themselves as Evangelical Adventist Churches. Those who have any knowledge of this situation recognize that those churches that have declared themselves to be Evangelical Adventist Churches are those who have moved away from the mighty pillars of our faith and have accepted, at least in part, the faulted theology of the fallen churches of Christendom.

I cannot take the label “Evangelical,” for I reject the multitudinous Calvinistic and Augustinian errors of the Evangelicals—including predestination, once saved always saved, original sin, the unfallen nature of Christ, carnal security, atonement completed at the cross, infant baptism, immediate life after death, justification-alone salvation, Sunday sacredness, and so forth.

The theological connotations associated with Evangelical Adventist and Seventh-day Adventist are the antithesis of each other.

Thus the call of the General Conference President was a most dangerous call. No doubt those members of our church who have abdicated their loyalty to the true message that God has entrusted to this people will be rejoicing. Many others who are ignorant of the real treachery of the Evangelical doctrines, will become less alert to their deadly danger as those who are proclaiming some of these Evangelical doctrines will claim the endorsement of the General Conference President.

Tragically, the influence of the article by our General Conference President, is well understood by Evangelicals. One evangelical and former Seventh-day Adventist, Bill Thompson, has used Elder Folkenberg’s Adventist Review article to urge Seventh-day Adventists into the evangelical trap. Here are Thompson’s words:

“My words and those of D. M. Canright most likely carry no weight with you. Will you listen to the words of the president of the General Conference of SDAs? In the April, 1997 issue of Adventist Review, Elder Robert S. Folkenberg wrote an article entitled ‘Will the Real Evangelical Adventist Please Stand Up.’ Here are some quotes from that article:

Thus thousands—maybe even millions—of our members don’t understand this most basic truth of Christianity. As a result, without even realizing it, many are trapped in a deadly legalistic religion that can only lead to discouragement, despair, and loss of hope.

Too many Seventh-day Adventists don’t understand or haven’t experienced the great news that Christ is our substitute and surety, who guarantees our salvation.

“Again, those are the words of your own General Conference President. I have no animosity toward Seventh-day Adventists, quite the opposite. I love you in Christ and only desire to have the truth of God’s Word come shining brightly into the lives of all SDAs. After coming to understand the Good News, if people want to stay in the SDA church and observe the Sabbath, that is fine with me. I have no desire to destroy the SDA church, there are many fine people in that church. We ALL need to trust in Christ alone and in His FINISHED work on our behalf on the cross, rather than trusting in our own works or in membership in any particular denomination. Nothing but the blood of Jesus can save us. May God richly bless you as you seek to serve Him.”

1 Bill Thompson, “A Message to SDAs,” http://www.airmail.net/billtod
This call to be Evangelical Adventists is in sharp contrast to the call made by the then retiring General Conference President, Elder Robert Pierson, on October 16, 1978, when he said with our leaders, colleges and universities to stand firm to the pillars of our faith. Here is Pierson’s timeless appeal:

“Already, brethren and sisters, there are subtle forces that are beginning to stir. Regrettably there are those in the

called to be Evangelical Adventists, but who belittle the inspiration of the total Bible; who scorn the first eleven chapters of Genesis; who question the Spirit of Prophecy’s short chronology of the age of the earth; and who subtly, and not so subtly, attack the Spirit of Prophecy. There are some who point to the Reformers and contemporary theologians as a source and the norm for Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. These are those who are tired of the allegedly hackneyed phrases of Adventism. There are those who wish to forget the standards of the church we love. There are those who covet and would court the favor of the Evangelicals; who would throw off the mantle of a peculiar people; and those who would go the way of the secular, materialistic world. . . Fellow leaders, beloved brethren and sisters, do not let it happen! I appeal to you as earnestly as I know how this morning. Do not let it happen! I appeal to Andrews University, to the seminary, to Loma Linda University. Do not let it happen! We are not Seventh-day Anglicans, not Seventh-day Lutherans. We are Seventh-day Adventists! This is God’s last church with God’s last message. . . In the fourth generation, there is much machinery. The number of administrators increase, while the number of workers at the grass-roots level become proportionately less. Great church councils are held to define doctrine. More schools, universities, and seminaries are established. These go to the world for accreditation and tend to become secularized. There is a reexam-

nation of positions and a modernizing of methods. Attention is given to contemporary culture, with an interest in the arts, music, architecture, and literature. The movement seeks to become relevant to contemporary society by becoming involved in popular causes. Services become formal. The groups enjoy complete acceptance by the world. The sect has become a church.” Adventist Review, October 26, 1978.

Elder Folkenberg made this call, “I wish everyone in the church were an evangelical Adventist, because inherent in the word ‘Adventist’ should be the concept of ‘evangelical.’ ” Oh, how I wish he had said “evangelistic”!

When in 1950 I was baptized into Jesus Christ, I was also welcomed into the fellowship of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—not into the Evangelical Adventist Church. When in 1954 I was ordained a deacon, I was ordained a deacon of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—not of the Evangelical Adventist Church. When I was ordained an elder in 1961, I was ordained an elder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—not of the Evangelical Adventist Church. When in 1971 I was ordained a minister, I was ordained a minister of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church—not of the Evangelical Adventist Church. I am still a member, deacon, elder, and minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church!

Some will recall that there have been American soldiers who have been called to join the United Nations army. Some under deep conviction have refused to wear the uniform of the United Nations army because they swore allegiance to the United States. In somewhat a similar way, I have sworn allegiance to God and to His Seventh-day Adventist Church. I would see it as treason to stand up and declare myself to be an Evangelical Adventist. By God’s grace my loyalty is to the Seventh-day Adventist Church—not to any so-called Evangelical Adventist Church.

Elder Folkenberg made this call, “I wish everyone in the church were an evangelical Adventist, because inherent in the word ‘Adventist’ should be the concept of ‘evangelical.’ ” Oh, how I wish he had said “evangelistic”!

This Seventh-day Adventist Church was raised up by God to continue the Reformation and to clearly separate itself from the many errors of Evangelical Protestantism. Those of us who take seriously our commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist Church do not in any way want to play down the true gospel of salvation. We are convinced and proclaim that the only basis of our salvation is the life, ministry, death, resurrection and High Priestly service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are saved by grace through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus. No works—not even good works—can save one soul. However, we also teach from the Word of God, that we are created unto good works. The whole gospel in a nutshell is presented by Paul in Ephesians chapter 2.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10.

We are not saved by good works, but we are saved with good works. Sister White put it this way:

“While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works.” Selected Messages, book 1, 377.

The law and the gospel must be bound up together. They must be given with equal force and power. We must distance ourselves from the beliefs and practices of the faulted teachings of the Evangelicals. They proclaim “sola Scriptura,” but in a very obvious way they are following “sola dogma” theologians. Only the Seventh-day Adventist faith is truly built upon “sola Scriptura,” and I pray that each one of us will understand that we are Seventh-day Adventists—because that name is a witness to the world and is the name that the Lord has given to us. □

REFERENCE:

1 Some time ago I wrote an article in Our Firm Foundation ("Justification/Sanctification, Am I a Legalist?", January 1996) in which I stated my position concerning legalism and antinomianism in more detail.

22 Our Firm Foundation December 1997
O NLY one lease of life is granted us; and the inquiry with every one should be, "How can I invest my powers so that they may yield the greatest profit? How can I do most for the glory of God and the benefit of my fellow men?" For life is valuable only as it is used for the attainment of these ends.

Self-Development a Duty

Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable. Hence that time is spent to good account which is used in the establishment and preservation of physical and mental health. We cannot afford to dwarf or cripple any function of body or mind. As surely as we do this, we must suffer the consequences.

Every man has the opportunity, to a great extent, of making himself whatever he chooses to be. The blessings of this life, and also of the immortal state, are within his reach. He may build up a character of solid worth, gaining new strength at every step. He may advance daily in knowledge and wisdom, conscious of new delights as he progresses, adding virtue to virtue, grace to grace. His faculties will improve by use; the more wisdom he gains, the greater will be his capacity for acquiring. His intelligence, knowledge, and virtue will thus develop into greater strength and more perfect symmetry.

On the other hand, he may allow his powers to rust out, for want of use, or to be perverted through evil habits, lack of self-control or moral and religious stamina. His course then tends downward; he is disobedient to the law of God and to the laws of health. Appetite conquers him; inclination carries him away. It is easier for him to allow the powers of evil, which are always active, to drag him backward, than to struggle against them, and go forward. Dissipation, disease, and death follow. This is the history of many lives that might have been useful in the cause of God and humanity.

Temptation Through Appetite

One of the strongest temptations that man has to meet is upon the point of appetite. In the beginning the Lord made man upright. He was created with a perfectly balanced mind, the size and strength of all his organs being fully and harmoniously developed. But, through the seductions of the wily foe, the prohibition of God was disregarded, and the laws of nature wrought out their full penalty.

Adam and Eve were permitted to eat of all the trees in their Eden home, save one. The Lord said to the holy pair, In the day that ye eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, ye shall surely die. See Genesis 2:16-17. Eve was beguiled by the serpent and made to believe that God would not do as He had said. She ate, and, thinking she felt the sensation of a new and more exalted life, she bore the fruit to her husband. The serpent had said that she should not die, and she felt no ill effects from eating the fruit, nothing which could be interpreted to mean death, but, instead, a pleasurable sensation, which she imagined was as the angels felt. Her experience stood arrayed against the positive command of Jehovah, yet Adam permitted himself to be seduced by it.

Thus we often find it, even in the religious world. God's expressed commands are transgressed; and "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Ecclesiastes 8:11. In the face of the most positive commands of God, men and women will follow their own inclinations, and then dare to pray over the matter, to prevail upon God to allow them to go contrary to His expressed will. Satan comes to the side of such persons, as he did to Eve in Eden, and impresses them. They have an exercise of mind, and this they relate as a most wonderful experience which the Lord has given them. But true experience will be in harmony with natural and divine law; false experience arrays itself against the laws of life and the precepts of Jehovah.

Appetite Ruled Antediluvians

Since the first surrender to appetite, mankind have been growing more and more self-indulgent, until health has been sacrificed on the altar of appetite. The inhabitants of the antediluvian world were intemperate in eating and drinking. They would have flesh meats, although God had at that time given man no permission to eat animal food. They ate and drank till the indulgence of their depraved appetite knew no bounds, and they became so corrupt that God could bear with them no longer. Their cup of iniquity was full, and He cleansed the earth of its moral pollution by a flood.
Intemperance After the Flood

As men multiplied upon the earth after the Flood, they again forgot God and corrupted their ways before Him. Intemperance in every form increased, until almost the whole world was given up to its sway. Entire cities have been swept from the face of the earth because of the debasing crimes and revolting iniquity that made them a blot upon the fair field of God's created works. The gratification of unnatural appetite led to the sins that caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. God ascribes the fall of Babylon to her gluttony and drunk-and water from the flinty rock. With this they were not satisfied. They loathed the food given them and wished themselves back in Egypt, where they could sit by the fleshpots. They preferred to endure slavery, and even death, rather than to be deprived of flesh. God granted their desire, giving them flesh, and leaving them to eat till their gluttony produced a plague, from which many of them died.

Example after example might be cited to show the effects of yielding to appetite. It seemed a small matter to our first parents to transgress the command of God in that one act—the eating from a tree that was so beautiful to the sight and so pleasant to the taste—but it broke their allegiance to God and opened the gates to a flood of guilt and woe that has deluged the world.

Intemperance and Crime

Crime and disease have increased with every succeeding generation. Intemperance in eating and drinking, and the indulgence of the baser passions, have numbed the nobler faculties of man. Reason, instead of being the ruler, has come to be the slave of appetite to an alarming extent. An increasing desire for rich food has been indulged, until it has become the fashion to crowd all the delicacies possible into the stomach. Especially at parties of pleasure is the appetite indulged with but little restraint. Rich dinners and late suppers are served, consisting of highly seasoned meats, with rich sauces, cakes, pies, ices, tea, coffee, and so forth. No wonder that with such a diet people have sallow complexions and suffer untold agonies from dyspepsia.

Against every transgression of the laws of life, nature will utter her protest. She bears abuse as long as she can; but finally the retribution comes, and it falls upon the mental as well as the physical powers. Nor does it end with the transgressor; the effects of his indulgence are seen in his offspring, and thus the evil is passed down from generation to generation.

Our Youth Lack Self-Control

The youth of today are a sure index to the future of society; and as we view them, what can we hope for that future? The majority are fond of amusement, and averse to work. They lack moral courage to deny self and to respond to the claims of duty. They have but little self-control, and become excited and angry on the slightest occasion. Very many in every age and station of life are without principle or conscience; and with their idle, spendthrift habits they are rushing into vice, and are corrupting society, until our world is becoming a second Sodom. If the appetites and passions were under the control of reason and religion, society would present a widely different aspect. God never designed that the present woeful condition of things should exist; it has been brought about through the gross violation of nature's laws.

The character is formed, to a great extent, in early years. The habits then established have more influence than any natural endowment, in making them either giants or dwarfs in intellect; for the very best talents may, through wrong habits, become warped and enfeebled. The earlier in life one contracts hurtful habits, the more firmly will they hold their victim in slavery, and the more certainly will they lower his standard of spirituality. On the other hand, if correct and virtuous habits are formed in youth, they will generally mark the course of the possessor through life. In most cases, it will be found that those who in later life reverence God and honor the right, learned that lesson before there was time for the world to stamp its image of sin upon the soul. Those of mature age are generally as insensible to new impressions as is the hardened rock; but youth is impressionable. Youth is the time to acquire knowledge for daily practice through life; a right character may then be easily formed. It is the time to establish good habits, to gain and to hold the power of self-control. Youth is the sowing time, and the seed sown determines the harvest, both for this life and the life to come.
Responsibility of Parents

Parents should make it their first object to become intelligent in regard to the proper manner of dealing with their children, that they may secure to them sound minds in sound bodies. The principles of temperance should be carried out in all the details of home life. Self-denial should be taught to children and enforced upon them, so far as is consistent, from babyhood. Teach the little ones that they should eat to live, not live to eat; that appetite must be held in abeyance to the will; and that the will must be governed by calm, intelligent reason.

If parents have transmitted to their children tendencies which will make more difficult the work of educating them to be strictly temperate, and of cultivating pure and virtuous habits, what a solemn responsibility rests upon the parents to counteract that influence by every means in their power! How diligently and earnestly should they strive to do their duty by their unfortunate offspring! To parents is committed the sacred trust of guarding the physical and moral constitution of their children. Those who indulge a child’s appetite and do not teach him to control his passions may afterward see, in the tobacco-loving, liquor-drinking slave, whose senses are bemused, and whose lips utter falsehood and profanity, the terrible mistake they have made.

It is impossible for those who give the reins to appetite to attain to Christian perfection. The moral sensibilities of your children cannot be easily aroused unless you are careful in the selection of their food. Many a mother sets a table that is a snare to her family. Flesh meats, butter, cheese, rich pastry, spiced foods, and condiments are freely partaken of by both old and young. These things do their work in deranging the stomach, exciting the nerves, and enfeebling the intellect. The blood-making organs cannot convert such things into good blood. The grease cooked in the food renders it difficult of digestion. The effect of cheese is deleterious. Fine-flour bread does not impart to the system the nourishment that is to be found in unbolted wheat bread. Its common use will not keep the system in the best condition. Spices at first irritate the tender coating of the stomach, but finally destroy the natural sensitiveness of this delicate membrane. The blood becomes fevered, the animal propensities are aroused, while the moral and intellectual powers are weakened and become servants to the baser passions.

The mother should study to set a simple yet nutritious diet before her family. God has furnished man with abundant means for the gratification of an unperverted appetite. He has spread before him the products of the earth—a bountiful variety of food that is palatable to the taste and nutritious to the system. Of these our benevolent heavenly Father says we may freely eat. Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease of all kinds, make, with milk or cream, the most healthful diet. They impart nourishment to the body and give a power of endurance and vigor of intellect that are not produced by a stimulating diet.

Counsels on Health, 107-115

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Immortality of the Soul and Spiritualism
by Jacob Teske

"Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome." The Great Controversy, 588.

Much of the Christian world today believes that man has an immortal soul, and that when he dies his soul goes to heaven. This belief was handed down to us from paganism, and, as with most heathen beliefs, there is no truth in it.

Theologians are thus accepting the philosophy of a heathen religion that was handed down by tradition instead of accepting the truths of the Bible.

While the belief in the immortality of the soul seems to be an innocent philosophy, it lays the foundation for a whole false religion—spiritualism. It opens an unobstructed line of communication through which Satan, with his confederate evil angels, can communicate soul-destroying errors to the unsuspecting living.

Immortality of the Soul and Spiritualism is an excellent tool to open the eyes of your friends and relatives to see the dangers of this hellish belief and how we can avoid being deceived by the modern inroads of this false religion. The book contains 31 pages and has a full-color cover.

Please See Page 3 for Shipping and Sales Tax information.
O UR church is currently in turmoil over many issues. One of these is the issue of questioning those who criticize or rebuke the church. Many church members are discontent with the church organization. Some write and speak against these areas of discontent. Others say this is wrong and that we should not speak against the church.

Our church is the “apple of God’s eye” and the chosen depository for God’s truth. This is true. However, His messenger also says that it is “weak and faulty.” Does the Lord wish for it to stay this way? Will He not strive to dress and prune His vineyard?

“There are errors in the church, and the Lord points them out by His own ordained agencies, not always through the Testimonies.” Selected Messages, book 2, 81. Notice here that it is not just the Spirit of Prophecy that is used by God for reproof, but He also raises up other people to deliver His messages, just as He did with A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner.

“And when men standing in the position of leaders and teachers work under the power of spiritualistic ideas and sophistries, shall we keep silent for fear of injuring their influence, while souls are being beguiled? Satan will use every advantage that he can obtain to cause souls to become beclouded and perplexed in regard to the work of the church, in regard to the Word of God, and in regard to the words of warning which He has given through the Testimonies of His Spirit, to guard His little flock from the subtleties of the enemy.” Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, 9. Spiritualism in the form of pantheism, which is the historical context of the last quotation, may not seem to be the problem in our church today that it once was, but other problems do exist which need to be addressed.

“Just as long as God has a church, He will have those who will cry aloud and spare not, who will be His instruments to reprove selfishness and sins, and will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear. I saw that individuals would rise up against the plain Testimonies. It does not suit their natural feelings. They would choose to have smooth things spoken unto them, and have peace cried in their ears. I view the church in a more dangerous condition than they ever have been. Experimental religion is known but by a few. The shaking must soon take place to purify the church.” Spiritual Gifts, vol. 2, 284.

“The Lord will not leave His church without reproofs and warnings. Sins have become fashionable; but they are nonetheless aggravating in the sight of God. . . . The right hand of fellowship is given to the very men who are bringing in false theories and false sentiments, confusing the minds of the people of God, deadening their sensibilities as to what constitutes right principles.” Selected Messages, book 2, 151.

“The trumpet note of warning must be sounded. We are living in a fearfully wicked age. The worship of God will become corrupted unless there are wide-awake men at every post of duty.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 517.

Speaking out against sin is not an easy task, and is one that is much neglected. Many people who take up this burden suffer for it. Sometimes people suffer because they are wrong; others suffer because people do not like to be reproved for their sins. But reproof is nonetheless essential in God’s church.

“The church is in a great degree responsible for the sins of her members. She gives countenance to evil if she fails to lift her voice against it.” Prophets and Kings, 651.

“The forerunner of Christ lost his life by his plain speaking. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the displeasure of those who were living in sin? So men who should be standing as faithful guardians of God’s law have argued, till policy has taken the place of faithfulness, and sin is allowed to go unreproved. When will the voice of faithful rebuke be heard once more in the church?” Prophets and Kings, 141.

Some say the church should not be criticized. If by this they refer to destructive criticism, then they are right; no one
should be criticized in that manner. The Lord condemns it. But rebuke and reproof is another matter. The Lord’s messenger says that God’s church people will receive reproof and rebuke until the end. See Testimonies, vol. 4, 180. What is the difference?

Let us first look at destructive criticism. God’s messenger uses these words concerning it: cold, unfeeling, ungenerous, unkind, unsympathetic, bitter, destructive, selfish, narrow and sharp. “Those who live upon the husks of others’ failings and deficiencies, and who gather to themselves the unhonorable miasma of their neighbors’ neglects and shortcomings, making themselves church scavengers, are no advantage to the society of which they form a part, but are an actual burden to the community upon which they inflict themselves.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 194.

“Some minds are ever seeking to reshape the character of others according to their own ideas and measure. ... Self will ever cherish a high estimate of self. As men lose their first love, they do not keep the commandments of God, and then they begin to criticize one another. This spirit will constantly be striving for the mastery to the close of time. Satan is seeking to foster it in order that brethren in their ignorance may seek to devour one another. God is not glorified but greatly dishonored; the Spirit of God is grieved. Satan exults, because he knows that if he can set brother to watch brother in the church and in the ministry some will be so disheartened and discouraged as to leave their posts of duty.” Testimonies to Ministers, 189.

“When the truth abides in the heart, there is no place for criticism of God’s servants, or for picking flaws with the message He sends. That which is in the heart will flow from the lips.” Testimonies to Ministers, 88.

“When men arise, claiming to have a message from God, but instead of warring against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, they form a hollow square, and turn the weapons of warfare against the church militant, be afraid of them. They do not bear the divine credentials. God has not given them any such burden of labor. They would tear down that which God would restore by the Laodicean message. He wounds only that He may heal, not cause to perish. The Lord lays upon no man a message that will discourage and dishearten the church. He reproves, He rebukes, He chastens; but it is only that He may restore and approve at last.” Testimonies to Ministers, 22–23.

This last quote was given concerning some people who were calling the church Babylon and were calling members to come out of her. The critics were fanatical; their doctrine was wrong. In Selected Messages, book 2, 79, people are crying out against the church. Here they are mentioned as teaching falsehood, having erratic ideas, heresy, and dishonesty. These are some identification marks of critics who are not called of God to rebuke the church, but who are running at their own will.

Reproof is another way of pointing out a persons errors, but it is done in a completely different spirit: love, concern, tears, kindness and yet firmness.

Reproof is another way of pointing out a persons errors, but it is done in a completely different spirit: love, concern, tears, kindness and yet firmness.

“In the work of reform to be carried forward today, there is need of men who, like Ezra and Nehemiah, will not palliate or excuse sin, nor shrink from vindicating the honor of God. Those upon whom rests the burden of this work will not hold their peace when wrong is done, neither will they cover evil with a cloak of false charity. They will remember that God is no respecter of persons, and that severity to a few may prove mercy to many. They will remember also that in the one who rebukes evil the spirit of Christ should ever be revealed.” Prophets and Kings, 675.

“Always the words of rebuke that God finds it necessary to send are spoken in tender love and with the promise of peace to every penitent believer.” The Acts of the Apostles, 857.

“As you go to the one you suppose to be in error, see that you speak in a meek and lowly spirit; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. The erring can be restored in no other way than in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tender love. Be careful in your manner. Avoid anything in look or gesture, word or tone, that savor of pride or self-sufficiency. Guard yourself against a word or look that would exalt yourself, or place your goodness and righteousness in contrast with their failings. Beware of the most distant approach to disdain, overbearing, or con-

tempt. With care avoid every appearance of anger; and though you use plainness of speech, let there be no reproach, no railing accusation, no token of warmth but that of earnest love. Above all, let there be no shadow of hate or ill will, no bitterness or sourness of expression. Nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow from a heart of love. Yet all these precious fruits need not hinder you from speaking in the most serious, solemn manner, as though angels were directing their eyes upon you, and you were acting in reference to the coming judgment. Bear in mind that the success of

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Work Out Your Own Salvation

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:12–13.

The salvation of the soul requires the blending of divine and human strength. God does not propose to do the work that man can do to meet the standard of righteousness. Man has a part to act. Humanity must unite and cooperate with Divinity. Grace and sufficiency have been abundantly provided for every soul. But in order to receive this, man must unite with his Divine Helper. Unless of his own accord man consents to renounce his sinful practices, Christ cannot take away his sin. Man must heartily cooperate with God, willingly obeying His laws, showing that he appreciates the great gift of grace. Feeling his dependence upon God, having faith in Christ as his personal Saviour, expecting efficiency and success only as he keeps the Lord ever before him—it is thus that man complies with the injunction, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

But human effort is not sufficient. It avails nothing without divine power. Of himself man has not strength to wrestle with the powers of darkness. Therefore Christ clothed His Divinity with humanity, and came to this earth that He might cooperate with man. To those who will receive Him and trust in His power to save, He imparts the virtue of His righteousness. He gives them power to become the sons of God. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth. . . . And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” John 1:14,16.

The human agent must remember that he has in himself no merits to present to God. Christ is the Fountain of Life, the Source of immortality. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The great, grand work of perfecting character cannot be accomplished without the help that He is always ready to supply.

He who desires to grow in physical, mental, and spiritual power must feel every moment his dependence upon the One who provides efficiency for service. In the work of developing and strengthening the faculties of body and mind, men must constantly receive power from on high. The Lord is watching with earnest interest to see how man will conduct himself in the life which has been given him. Be not careless and indifferent in regard to the work to be done by God and man. On your part you are to believe, receive the grace of God, and honor Christ in the life. On His part, He dwells in your heart, supplying you with divine strength, working in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Parents are to cooperate with God by bringing their children up in His love and fear. They cannot displease Him more than by neglecting to train their children aright. God has given them these children as a sacred trust, to educate for Him. In a sense they stand in the place of God to their children. They are to work out the salvation of those who are too young to understand the difference between good and evil. They are in no case to think that good will naturally predominate in the hearts of their children. They are to guard carefully the words and actions of their little ones, lest the enemy shall gain an influence over them. This he is intensely desirous of doing, that he may counterwork the purpose of God. Kindly, earnestly, tenderly, parents are to work for their children, cultivating every good trait and repressing every evil trait which develops in the character.

Parents should be constant learners in the school of Christ. They need fresh-
ness and power, that with the simplicity of Christ they may teach the younger members of God’s family the knowledge of His will. Line upon line, precept upon precept, they are to reiterate His lessons. They are to be diligent students of the Bible, that they may be apt in the tillage of the garden of the heart. With persevering effort they are to cultivate the hearts of the children placed in their care; and God will help them in every faithful, patient effort.

In the earliest years of the child’s life the soil of the heart is to be carefully prepared for the showers of God’s grace. Then the seeds of truth are to be carefully sown and diligently tended. And God, who rewards every effort made in His name, will put life into the seed sown. There will appear first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

Too often, because of the wicked neglect of parents, Satan sows his seeds in the hearts of children, and a harvest of shame and sorrow is borne. The world today is destitute of true goodness because parents have failed to gather their children to themselves in the home. They have not kept them from association with the careless and reckless. Therefore the children have gone forth into the world to sow the seeds of death.

In the cultivation of the garden of the heart, the efforts of parents must be unceasing, or unsightly weeds will spring up and choke the good seed. The weeds which spring up, the natural imperfections which appear, must be removed. Day by day parents are to watch vigilantly and correct wisely, insisting upon prompt obedience.

Parents, give your time to your children. Teach them to form careful habits. Some parents allow their children to be destructive, to use as playthings things which they have no right to touch. Children should be taught that they must not handle the property of other people. For the comfort and happiness of the family, they must learn to observe the rules of propriety. Children are no happier when they are allowed to handle everything they see. If they are not educated to be caretaking, they will grow up with unlovely, destructive traits of character.

Parents do their children great wrong when they allow them to scream and cry. They should not be allowed to be careless and boisterous. If these objectionable traits of character are not checked in their early years, the children will take them with them, strengthened and developed, into religious and business life. Children will be just as happy if they are taught to be quiet in the house.

Fathers and mothers, be sensible. Teach your children that they must be subordinate to law. Do not allow them to think that because they are children, it is their privilege to make all the noise they wish in the house. Wise rules and regulations must be made and enforced that the beauty of the home life may not be spoiled.

If, when parents had first begun to live upon the earth, there had been a firm adherence to the laws of God, the world would now be filled with well-ordered families. From age to age right habits and customs would have been handed down from parents to children, and God would have been loved and honored.

The wickedness which exists in the world today may be traced to the neglect of parents rightly to discipline themselves and their children. Thousands and thousands of Satan’s victims are what they are because of the injudicious way in which they were managed during childhood. The stern rebuke of God is upon this mismanagement. The records of heaven show the awful history of the men and women who as children were left to follow their own way.

Upon parents rests the responsibility of developing in their children those capabilities which will enable them to do good service for God. To do this work acceptably, parents must exercise self-control. They must choose the good and refuse the evil. There are many parents who themselves need to be converted. Their untrained characters unfit them for the great work of training their children. When a child reveals the wrong traits which it has inherited from its parents, shall they storm over this reproduction of their own defects?—No, no! Let parents keep a careful watch over themselves, guarding against all coarseness and roughness, lest these defects be seen once more in their children.

The mother is especially the educator of her children. “The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.” God sees all the possibilities in that mite of humanity. He sees that with proper training the child will become a power for good in the world. He watches with anxious interest to see whether the parents will carry out His plan, or whether by mistaken kindness they will destroy His purpose, indulging the child to its present and eternal ruin. To transform this helpless and apparently insignificant being into a blessing to the world and an honor to God, is a great and grand work. Parents should allow nothing to come between them and the obligation they owe to their children.

The training of children constitutes an important part of God’s plan for demonstrating the power of Christianity. A solemn responsibility rests upon parents so to train their children that when they go forth into the world, they will do good and not evil to those with whom they associate. Our children are to be educated line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. From boyhood the character of the child is to be molded and fashioned in accordance with the divine plan. Virtues are to be instilled into its opening mind.

In the management of their children, parents are to be in perfect harmony with the divine plan. The rules and regulations of the home life must be in strict accordance with a “Thus saith the Lord.” The rules God has given for the government of His church are the rules parents are to follow in the church and in the home. It is God’s design that there shall be perfect order in the families on earth, preparatory to their union with the family in heaven. Upon the discipline and training received in the home depends the usefulness of men and women in the church and in the world.

The Lord calls upon parents to study and obey His Word. He asks them so to guide and educate their children, that these will rise up and call them blessed. I recommend to parents a study of God’s will and way. I urge them to put on the whole armor of God and gird themselves for the battle. They will be aided and encouraged in every movement they make in the right direction.

Without human effort, divine effort is in vain. God will work with power when in trustful dependence upon Him, parents will awake to the sacred responsibility resting upon them, and seek to train their children aright. He will cooperate with those parents who carefully and prayerfully educate their children, working out their own and their children’s salvation. He will work in them, to will and to do of His own good pleasure.

Signs of the Times, September 25, 1901.
Letters to the Editor

I am a Methodist and totally unsatisfied with the doctrines of my church. The doctrines of men have crept in and a lot of my brothers and sisters who do not see and know what is going on are swept by the tide of the multitude, and are lost because they do not turn to the Lord Jesus Christ's teaching in the Scriptures and test all things by basing everything in the Holy Bible. After reading some of your books and confirming everything in the Scriptures, of the most Holy Bible, I have confirmed fully the fears in me, in the last couple of years, about the fourth commandment, and my mind, body, and soul now truly believe that the true Sabbath has been observed by the Seventh-day Adventists. Although it hurts me inside to have broken a commandment of God Almighty, I know I have been forgiven and look forward to the outpouring of His blessing, because I now keep the true Sabbath. I would like your help in making myself ready through the Holy Bible and through some of your earlier reformers' books, which I have heard a lot about, and that I know will help me stand up in my own church at home, and disclose the truth to those who are being mislead by the doctrines of the evil one, which is leading this world through the Catholic Church.

I am at this moment serving in Egypt in a [U.N.] peacekeeping contingent. I will be returning to Fiji next year and ask if you could send me all the books of E.G. White and The Great Controversy, and a Biblical and Spirit of Prophecy compilation entitled What I Must Do To Be Saved, by Margaret Davis.

I do not earn much but would be willing to send a small monthly donation, which is all I can afford at the moment.

I would like to have those books so I can teach my lost brothers and sisters in the area where I live back in Fiji. I want to contact Seventh-day Adventists in Fiji and invite them to where I stay, to share the gospel, because where I live there are only Methodists and Catholics.

I hope and pray that we will work together binding our brothers and sisters, all over the world, to our Glorious God Almighty, through His Beloved Son Jesus Christ our Eternal Saviour. May God bless you all.

My wife and I deeply appreciate the clear presentation of truth in Our Firm Foundation. What amazes us is the spirit of opposition manifested in many of our friends, and even our family, to the truth. Surely it must be a sign that Jesus is coming soon. May God continue to bless this ministry.

DL, Tennessee

I wish to express my heart felt thanks to your organization, for the wonderful books, as well as the Bible you sent me.

The books have been helping me to understand the Bible better. As a result I have now been studying the Bible with some of my friends who are Presbyterians. Because they are already Christians their problem was with the Sabbath, and with your book, Bible Questions and Answers, I have been able to answer all their questions, so they have decided to become Seventh-day Adventists.

It is my humble prayer that God will bless your organization so that you can continue helping others. As a student this will encourage me to share the message with a lot more of my friends. Your brother in Christ.

AO, Africa

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I praise the Holy Name of God for what He is doing with His faithful people in the end of time. Also I pray He will strengthen you with power and vigour to continue working for the Master Jesus Christ.

I am a favoured dealer ["favored gospel worker"] of Hope International. I thank the Lord for instituting such a program. In fact, for us here in Africa, it will favour us a lot. I pray that you will keep the flag flying.

For the first time I received a shipment of your publications on September 1, 1997, including quantities of the following items: The Lord's Day, Truth for Today, and Health for Today. I am using this media to thank you for making me a part of the program.

Immediately at arrival, I was able to conduct a Spirit of Prophecy seminar, and eight souls came to the church through Baptism. My people love those publications seriously and they bought them with ease.

I also request more publications, as you promised to help me more in my ministry. Please include some copies of Our Firm Foundation and a copy of Waymarks of Adventism.

Thank you for your co-operation and help.

EM Nigeria

Thank you for the evangelistic literature I received two months ago. I hope that, as a recipient of this literature, I will understand my duty as a servant of God. Yours faithfully.

SM, Zimbabwe

Thank you so very much for your magazine. It has been so encouraging to know that the faithful, whole truth is still being preached while we are surrounded by so many who refuse to even consider that they are being deceived by all the new ideas.

Keep up the good work!

CM, Oregon

October 15 is a great day in my life, because that is the day when I received a gift from Hope International. It is great in the sense that I have never received such a gift in my life. Secondly it is great because it will prepare me for heaven. This gift has opened up my eyes, and I have started to distinguish what is truth and what is Satan's deceit.

Perhaps one of the most interesting things about this parcel is that I received it 8 days after losing my job. I was in a state of shock and great disappointment, thinking about how I will survive. I was working as a sales representative. But God, who knows how to comfort His children, sent me this gift through Hope International. And I tell you, I am very glad indeed. May God help and bless you all at Hope.

I now understand better the nature of Christ and His plan of redemption. Do not relax, fight the battle and remain faithful to Christ, until you all receive the crown of life. Christ is near and the devil has gone with all manner of lies, but we have victory over sin in the blood of Jesus Christ.

MH, Zambia
Dirk Anderson
“Satan Is Playing a Game,” January
“As It Was, So Shall It Be,” June
“The Silent Loud Cry,” September
“Gideon, Arise!” October
“Great Signs and Wonders,” November
“The Party Has Begun,” December

M.L. Andreasen
“The Patience of the Saints,” August

Taylor Bunch
“The Retreat Toward Egypt,” March
“Under Divine Rebuke,” May
“The Test of Faith Repeated,” June
“The Idolatry of Worldliness,” July
“The Idolatry of Immorality,” August
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“Victory of Righteousness by Faith,” October
“The Promised Land,” November

Fernando Chaji
“The Sifting, the Shaking and the Straight Testimony,” February

John O. Corliss
“Final Restoration of the Seed,” September

Roswell F. Cottrell
“Truth,” July

Paul Felt
“The Impossible Partnership,” Parts 1-2, October- November

General Conference Annual Council
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Patrick Hogan
“The Very Last Deception,” February

Jim Hohnberger
“Not I, But Christ,” December

A.T. Jones
“Kept by the Word,” June

David Lin
“The Spirit and Power of Elijah,” February

J. N. Loughborough
“Testing the Prophet,” February

Rob McClintock
“The Deeds of the Final Church,” May
“Phytochemicals,” October

Preston Monterrey
“Braised Reeds and Smoking Flax,” March
“The Wholeness of Man,” May
“The Bible and Vegetarianism,” Parts 1-2, June-July

J. O’Keefe
“Rome’s Arrangement of Sabbath-Breakers,” July

Kevin Paulson
“More than a Shade of Difference,” January
“What Does It Prove?” June

Leola Rosenvold
“Ellen White and the Message of 1888,” October

Lowell Scarbrough
“A Strike Against the Authority of God,” April

Vernon Shafer
“Competition in the Church,” Parts 1-2, January, March

Ron Spear
“Know Your Enemy,” January
“To the Law and to the Testimony,” February
“Today’s Baal-Peor,” March
“Let It Rain,” April

Colin & Russell Standish
“The New Theology and the Spirit of Prophecy,” February

Colin D. Standish
“Is Creation Science a Pseudo-Science?” September
“Capitulation to the Ecumenical Movement,” November
“Evangelical Adventist or Seventh-day Adventist?” December

Russell R. Standish
“The Loud Cry: Who Will Give It?” March
“The Seal of the Living God,” November
“Sound Doctrine and Pluralism,” Part 1 December

Suzanne Sutton
“Mad Cow Disease,” April

E. J. Waggoner
“God Manifest in the Flesh,” July

Jeff Wehr
“Preparation for the Last Days,” Part 2, January
“Sunday’s Coming!” March
“The Mary of Scripture,” April
“Religious Persecution in America?” May

Ellen G. White
“The Great Controversy,” January
“Nothing Is Hidden,” January
“The Influence of the Testimonies,” February
“The Last Crisis,” February
“Effectual Prayer,” March
“Preparing for Heaven,” April
“Hold Fast, and Repent,” April
“Training Children for God,” May
“To Every Man His Work,” May
“A Call to Laodicea,” May
“Religious Liberty,” May
“The Christian Life,” June
“Love Among Brethren,” June
“Lesson in Humility and Love,” July
“Be Zealous and Repent,” August
“Our Besetting Sins,” August
“The Open Door,” September
“Words of Warning,” Parts 1-3, September-November
“Be of One Mind,” September
“Whom Will Christ Welcome?” October
“Exposing the Brethren’s Mistakes,” October
“Our Present Duty and the Coming Crisis,” November
“The True Object in Education,” December
“Work Out Your Own Salvation,” December

James White
“Bible Sanctification,” April
“Lovest Thou Me?” August

Donata Wrate
“The Blessings of Trials,” Parts 1-3, June-August
“Rebuke and Criticism,” December
Perhaps one of the best resolutions you can make as you begin 1998 is to take more time to meditate upon God's Word and the precious truths that the Lord has given us through His last-day prophet. Here is a selection of some of the best devotional books available—especially for those times when you can take just a few moments for an inspiring thought.

- **God's Amazing Grace** $10.95
- **My Life Today** $8.95
- **The Faith I Live By** $8.95
- **In Heavenly Places** $10.95
- **Our High Calling** $8.95
- **This Day With God** $10.95
- **Lift Him Up** $10.95
- **Reflecting Christ** $10.95
- **Ye Shall Receive Power** $10.95
- **Maranatha** $10.95
- **Sons and Daughters of God** $8.95

Please see page 3 for shipping and tax information.