



Our Firm **Foundation**

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

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Out of the Cities!

The Early and Latter Rain

My greatest privilege each month is to read the letters to the editor in this magazine. I always turn to the back page and read how *Our Firm Foundation* has changed many people's lives. Each month our dear readers look forward to the encouragement that God's magazine brings them. I exclaim, "This is our pay, our blessing, our encouragement!" Our faithful staff at Hope International—who diligently work to make each issue better than the one before—are grateful to God for the part we play in making God's magazine a blessing to His faithful people.

This month I would like to encourage you to read—or reread—the books *Steps to Christ*, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, and *The Sanctified Life*. These inspired books are the key to understanding God's conditions for our salvation. As you read, I urge you to meditate upon a particular question: How can my human will be merged with the will of God?

The latter rain will soon prepare and empower God's faithful people to give the loud cry to the world. However, to receive the latter rain, we must first have the early rain.¹ To receive this vital experience of the early rain, we must be willing to be made willing to believe and live present truth—without a single compromise. Each day we must surrender our will to Christ. Victory over every temptation is ours—as long as our will is with Christ:

"We cannot overcome the mighty foe who holds us in his thrall. God alone can give us the victory. He desires us to have the mastery over ourselves, our own will and ways. But He cannot work in us without

our consent and cooperation. The divine Spirit works through the faculties and powers given to man. Our energies are required to cooperate with God.

"The victory is not won without much earnest prayer, without the humbling of self at every step. Our will is not to be forced into cooperation with divine agencies, but it must be voluntarily submitted. Were it possible to force upon you with a hundredfold greater intensity the influence of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian—a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken. The will must be placed on the side of God's will. You are not able, of yourself, to bring your purposes and desires and inclinations into submission to the will of God; but if you are 'willing to be made willing,' God will accomplish the work for you, even 'casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' 2 Corinthians 10:5. Then you will '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 warfare which we are to wage is the 'good fight of faith.' 1 Timothy 6:12. 'I also labour,' said the apostle Paul, 'striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.' Colossians 1:29."²

The early rain experience is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives each day. As we seek each day for a greater experience than we had the day before, constantly pressing toward the mark—the high calling in Jesus—His victory will be ours.

See Jeremiah 29:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; John 5:39; Acts 17:11.

"It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it."³

The latter rain will come. The loud cry will be given by God's faithful, obedient, spirit-filled Seventh-day Adventists, who have diligently prepared their souls in the early rain experience.

Daily seek for the early rain experience by the full surrender of your will to the Lord. If you are faithful, the latter rain will soon be your experience, and heaven will be your home forever. God bless you as you prepare. ✨

Ron Spear, Executive Editor

References:

- ¹ See *Testimonies to Ministers*, 506–509.
- ² *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 142–144.
- ³ *Testimonies to Ministers*, 507.

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

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Jesus, Or Something Else?

Jim Hohnberger

It amazes me how many years I spent studying God's Word every day without finding Jesus! Oh, I found truth, but I did not find Jesus. We may have found everything else, or something else, but we have not found Jesus.

Jesus

John 14:6 says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus is the only Way. When we have a problem with even a little thing, He is the only Way. There is no salvation in any other — none whatsoever.

"Not only am I the way, but I am the truth," Jesus says. We have held onto *a* truth, but we have not found *the* Truth. We can have a lot of truths, but He is the Truth to which all the other truths point. Sometimes we satisfy ourselves with the individual truths rather than with *the* Truth.

He also says in John 10:9: "I am the door" — you must come through Me. When we try to come into the Kingdom through other ways, it doesn't work. He is the Door. He is the only Way. Every day I must

enter in through that Door. That's the Gospel.

In John 6:51, Jesus says: "I am the living bread." Only He can sustain us. We can be sustained with nothing else. He is the vitality of life. He is the Gospel.

"I am the light of the world." John 8:12. So often we content ourselves with merely the rays of light piercing through the clouds, but Jesus is the Sun of righteousness. He is the Source of all those rays.

"I am the true vine." John 15:1. We are to be grafted into Him, for He is the Source of the life and the power. He is the Enabler who makes it all work: "For without me ye can do [absolutely] nothing." Verse 5.

Jesus is the living expression of true love. 1 John 4:8 tells us: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." The children of the world find it easy to talk about love, but only the indwelling Christ can enable us to love others as Christ loves us.

Why do I share these texts? — Because we have made the gospel

something other than a daily, hourly, living experience in Jesus Christ. That is why we are in the condition that we are in today. We must take a look at what we have made the gospel — the something else, those rays of light — rather than the Source of the sun.

Something Else

The gospel isn't your church attendance. It isn't your church membership. I'm not speaking against church attendance or church membership, but these are not the gospel.

Some people have made their diet reforms the gospel. Do you know what I used to do when I met somebody for the first time? — Somewhere in the conversation I would slip in that I was a vegetarian. Is vegetarianism going to save anybody? Does it help to make the mind clear? — Yes! Is it going to save anybody? — No.

Some people's gospel is their dress reform. Should we be dressed modestly? — Of course. I have met some people who will wear only

natural fibers. But is that going to save us? Is it good to have natural fibers?—I think so. But that is not the gospel, is it? That's the something else. We just read in those verses what the gospel is.

What about educational reform? If I get the purest curriculum in the world for my home-schooling children, is that going to save them?—No. Should I have a pure curriculum?—Yes.

What about living in the country? Some people have made the gospel their country lifestyle. Yet if you went to Africa, you would find that a lot of heathens live in the wilderness, too. Are they saved? Is the gospel just living in a remote location?—No, not in the least.

Some people make the gospel their understanding of the truth. They come together and argue about their concept of this or that matter. Is that the gospel?—I don't think so. If I mentally ascent to the 27 fundamental beliefs of the church, do I necessarily have the gospel?—I'm afraid not.

Neither is our faithfulness in giving Bible studies, nor our understanding of last-day events the gospel. Many of us feel secure because we understand what is going to happen in these last days. We go out, and we share what we know with other people. Yet many of us do not even know Jesus. That's not the gospel!

What about our knowledge of prophecy? Or the fact that we are the chosen ones, the remnant? That's not the gospel either. Neither is our defense of the truth. I have some friends who feel that because they are out there defending the truth and pointing out error, they have the gospel. They may have rays of light, but they don't have the Source of the light—the Sun of Righteousness. There is a very big difference!

All of these things, which are right in and of themselves, can and do become a substitute for the indwelling Christ. That's why this movement is still here, and we haven't gone to heaven. We have all of these things, but still we do not

possess Jesus Christ. They all amount to no saving good. I didn't say no good, no value. They have no *saving* good—no *saving* value. Most of us have become so married to our truths, our customs, our forms, our church—whatever we want to put in there—that we do not know the truth as it is in a daily, living experience in Jesus Christ.

Thieves and Robbers

The Jewish nation, its leaders and its people, had all the externals.

The Jews' knowledge of the Scripture became a substitute for a living connection with God Himself. That is idolatry.

They made that their gospel. What did they have?—Nothing. What did they do?—They murdered the Son of God.

We are told in John 14:6 that the Truth is a Person. The Way is a Person. The Life is a Person—Jesus Christ. *The Desire of Ages*, 477–478, says it this way: “Christ is the Door to the fold of God. Through this Door all His children, from the earliest times, have found entrance. . . . Many have come presenting other objects for the faith of the world; ceremonies and systems have been devised by which men hope to receive justification and peace with God, and thus find entrance to His fold. But the only Door is Christ, and all who have interposed something to take the place of Christ, all who have tried to enter the fold in some other way, are thieves and robbers.”

Search the Scriptures

Have we interposed something in the place of Christ?—I believe we have. The Jews' knowledge of the Scripture became a substitute for a living connection with God Himself. That is idolatry.

Jesus Himself said to the Jews: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life.”

John 5:39. Were they searching the Scriptures for a living experience in Christ?—No. They were searching the Scriptures for a knowledge, a debate, a discussion—but not a living experience. They were satisfied with only the rays of light—rather than seeking for the Sun itself. What was the result? Jesus declared: “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” Verse 40.

What is Christ saying to us?—You may have something; you may have found some truths; you may

have found some reforms; you may be involved in outreach; however, if you do not have Me, you do not have life. You are dead.

The Power

Christ is the Power to live out the life to which the Scriptures point us. The Jews tried to live the life without a vital connection with the Power. Their religion was made up of their reforms, their knowledge, their doctrines, their church membership. Yet it all amounted to no saving good.

2 Timothy 3:5 says it this way: “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” We have to honestly ask ourselves if this is true of us. The Power is found in a daily, hourly, moment-by-moment abiding experience in Jesus Christ.

Truth a Curse?

The Desire of Ages, 310, says: “Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly-minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a curse to the world.” The very truths that I hold can actually become a curse to me and to the world. They can make me haughty and self-confident. At best, they can make me a foolish virgin.

When I first fell in love with these Scriptures, about 17 years ago, they were like a lamp unto my feet. I read them every day. I soaked in the truths. I said, "Why didn't anybody ever share this with me?" Then I went to my mother, a very devout Roman Catholic, and said, "Mother, did you know that we are worshipping on the wrong day? Did you know that we shouldn't baptize infants? Did you know that we shouldn't eat unclean meats? Did you know that we don't need to confess our sins to a priest? Did you know . . . ?"

teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." Romans 2:17-24. To preach the truth and say

that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost." Ezekiel 34:4.

If we in our own homes have not found how to live the gospel, what do we have to share with our neighbors?—Absolutely nothing. What do we have to share with the world?—Nothing. If I cannot get along with my own spouse, if fighting and bickering and arguing is the weekly routine, what do I have to share with others that will change them?

For example, one family that was counseling with me said, "We are conducting twelve Bible studies."

"Praise God!" I exclaimed. Then I looked at the husband and asked, "How do you treat your wife at home?" The husband hung his head.

I turned to the wife, "How does he treat you at home?"

"Well," she said, "not very good."

Then I asked, "What are you giving to those twelve Bible study contacts? Are you giving them the gospel? Or are you giving them something else?"

We need to start asking ourselves those serious questions. What do I have to share with others that will change them? If my own children don't mind, if they argue and fight constantly, if they don't know how to surrender their wills or go to Jesus to keep them, then does my religion have any saving value to offer anyone?—No, not at all.

A leader in one of the movements in Adventism came to stay at my home, along with his unruly grandchild. This leader was traveling the world, teaching others the theory of the gospel. The grandchild was not rebellious, but he would not surrender his will. The leader looked at me helpless, as if to say, "I don't know what to do." He did not understand how to teach the child to surrender his heart to Christ.

I asked, "May we have permission to work with your grandchild?" "Yes, please do," he replied.

If you haven't taken care of the beast in your own heart through the grace of Jesus Christ, quit telling everyone about the beast on the seven hills across the ocean.

Did my mother say, "Praise God! My son has found the truth!"?—No! Did I win her to the truth?—No. I had found the truth, but I was wielding it in the flesh.

So it is today. We have precious and present truth, but we preach it in the flesh—rather than in the spirit. Romans 1:18 says it so well: We "hold the truth in unrighteousness." That is what happened to me. I was Bible-thumping my family on their heads. I didn't have a living experience in Jesus. I didn't know why they wouldn't accept the truth. I went back to my church family and said, "I am being persecuted for the truth's sake." Was I really?—I don't think so.

This kind of religion will never finish the work. It will *do* a work, but it will never *finish* the work.

Import, Then Export

"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a

that I possess the truth and then not live it is blasphemy. Woe is me!

If your Christianity doesn't work at home, don't export it. Stop exporting and start importing. Bring it in. If you haven't taken care of the beast in your own heart through the grace of Jesus Christ, quit telling everyone about the beast on the seven hills across the ocean. By the grace of God, clean up the beast within first.

But if your religion works, then what?—Take it to the world! Revelation 14:6 says to take the everlasting gospel "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people"—if it works.

There are scores of wounded in our own camps—in all divisions and factions. Our marriages and families are being broken up almost as fast as the world's. We have driven our youth away from us because of our hypocrisy. The majority in our ranks are hurting—wounded, and floundering. Yet we have not learned to bring them to the Shepherd that they might be healed.

We are all guilty of criminal neglect: "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed

Thankfully, in just a few minutes the child came into a surrendered walk with Jesus Christ. What was that leader preaching in his travels around the world?—Something else.

Practical Religion

We are told in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, 235: “Our religion will be of but little worth to our fellow men if it is only theoretical and not practical.” Practical means that it works; it changes my life. It means that when irritations arise in my life, when frustrations come in, when appetite or passion clamors, or inclination or impulse wants to grab hold of me, it works. It means that I turn to Jesus and say: “Lord, save me,” and I surrender the craving to Him; I depend upon Him; I work with Him. It means that feelings and emotions do not rule me any longer. Irritations and passions don’t rule me; appetite doesn’t rule me. It means that it works if it is practical.

We are told in Luke 14:33: “Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” It is a willingness to let God have me every moment of every hour of every day. I now consult with Jesus on absolutely everything. It means that when a simple piece of equipment doesn’t work right, the first thing I do is pray!

All that is required on our part is a complete surrender of our thoughts, our purposes, and our will—all that we have and are—to God to be used as He may direct. That is true Christianity! Everything else is ordinary religion. Complete, continuous surrender, absolute dependency, entire subordination—that is the gospel and nothing less.

Scrub the Potatoes

The day I wrote this message, I awakened early and spent time with God in prayer and study. About two o’clock on that cold winter afternoon I walked into the back of our kitchen and saw my oldest son, Matthew, scrubbing very dirty garden potatoes for lunch. I walked past him to the wood cook stove to warm myself.

The impression came to me, “Jim, help your son scrub the potatoes.”

“What?” I thought, “Scrub the potatoes! You’ve got to be kidding me, Lord. I don’t want to scrub the potatoes.”

In this situation, what is the difference between ordinary religion and true Christianity? I stubbornly wrestled in my mind for several minutes. Finally the thought came to me, “Jim, what is your decision?”

What is your decision, brothers and sisters? Will you scrub the potatoes? Galatians 5:24 says: “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Just because I am Christ’s does not mean that my flesh doesn’t clamor for the control anymore. It means that I have the Power outside of myself that can subdue that flesh, if I allow Him to do so.

I pleaded, “But why, Lord? Why is it necessary for Jim Hohnberger, a preacher in the pulpit, to scrub the potatoes? Isn’t that demeaning?”

A text flashed into my mind, “Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Matthew 20:27–28. The true sign of someone who has found an abiding experience in Jesus Christ is that he is in the world to serve God and man. True Christianity is daily, hourly, entering into the death of self. It is surrendering all to the will of God; it is living to do God’s will—however crucifying it is to my will, my way, and my thoughts.

Give All

Paul said it so very well in Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Though Christ was equal with God, He laid down all that He might ransom us. He gave all; we are to give all. He emptied Himself, taking the form of a Servant. He came here to serve God, His father, and to serve man. “He humbled himself.” Verse 8. That is entire subordination. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” Verse 9. Where did the

exaltation come from?—The total emptying of self.

We lose nothing by giving all to God—nothing but sin and selfishness. The gospel then is not merely the possession of pure doctrines, church membership, reforms, and outreach, but it is a living, daily experience in the Person Jesus Christ, in which we have the mind of Christ and are emptied of self. We live to serve God and man—always doing God’s will—however crucifying to self.

Finding this living experience in Christ is to be our primary focus; everything else is to be secondary. ✨



*Christ:
All
and
in All*

Jim Hohnberger

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Out of the Cities!

Ellen G. White

Considering the terrorist attacks on cities in the United States, as well as other ongoing problems in the cities, we present some of the counsels of Ellen G. White in a "question and answer" format.

The Editors

What has the Lord revealed concerning the future of the cities of the world?

"Light has been given me that the cities will be filled with confusion, violence, and crime, and that these things will increase till the end of this earth's history."¹

"The record of crime and iniquity in the large cities of the land is appalling. The wickedness of the wicked is almost beyond comprehension. Many cities are becoming a very Sodom in the sight of Heaven. The increasing wickedness is such that multitudes are rapidly approaching a point in their personal experience beyond which it will be exceedingly difficult to reach them with a saving knowledge of the third angel's message. The enemy of souls is working in a masterful manner to gain full control of the human mind; and what God's servants do to warn and prepare men for the day of judgment, must be done quickly."²

Besides an increase in crime and moral corruption, what else has the Lord revealed regarding the cities?

"The time is near when large cities will be swept away, and all should be warned of these coming judgments."³

"I am bidden to declare the message that cities full of transgression, and sinful in the extreme, will be destroyed by earthquakes, by fire, by flood. All the world will be warned that there is a God who will display His authority as God. His unseen agencies will cause destruction, devastation, and death. All the accumulated riches will be as nothingness."⁴

What effect will these conditions have upon my family if I am living in the city?

"The world over, cities are becoming hotbeds of vice. On every hand are the sights and sounds of evil. Everywhere are enticements to sensuality and dissipation. The tide of corruption and crime is continually swelling. Every day brings the record of violence—robberies, murders, suicides, and crimes unnamable.

"Life in the cities is false and artificial. The intense passion for money getting, the whirl of excite-

ment and pleasure seeking, the thirst for display, the luxury and extravagance, all are forces that, with the great masses of mankind, are turning the mind from life's true purpose. They are opening the door to a thousand evils. Upon the youth they have almost irresistible power.

"One of the most subtle and dangerous temptations that assail the children and youth in the cities is the love of pleasure. Holidays are numerous; games and horse racing draw thousands, and the whirl of excitement and pleasure attracts them away from the sober duties of life. Money that should have been saved for better uses is frittered away for amusements."⁵

"Men and women living in these cities are rapidly becoming more and still more entangled in their business relations. They are acting wildly in the erection of buildings whose towers reach high into the heavens. Their minds are filled with schemes and ambitious devisings."⁶

How should families who are living in the cities respond?

"Parents flock with their families to the cities because they fancy it easier to obtain a livelihood there than in the country. The children, having nothing to do when not in

school, obtain a street education. From evil associates they acquire habits of vice and dissipation. The parents see all this; but it will require a sacrifice to correct their error, and they stay where they are until Satan gains full control of their children. Better sacrifice any and every worldly consideration than to imperil the precious souls committed to your care. They will be assailed by temptations, and should be taught to meet them; but it is your duty to cut off every influence, to break up every habit, to sunder every tie, that keeps you from the most free, open, and hearty committal of yourselves and your family to God.

"Instead of the crowded city seek some retired situation where your children will be, so far as possible, shielded from temptation, and there train and educate them for usefulness. . . . All who would escape the doom of Sodom must shun the course that brought God's judgments upon that wicked city."⁷

"Out of the cities, out of the cities!" . . . "This is the message the Lord has been giving me. The earthquakes will come; the floods will come; and we are not to establish ourselves in the wicked cities, where the enemy is served in every way, and where God is so often forgotten. The Lord desires that we shall have clear spiritual eyesight. We must be quick to discern the peril that would attend the establishment of institutions in these wicked cities. We must make wise plans to warn the cities, and at the same time live where we can shield our children and ourselves from the contaminating and demoralizing influences so prevalent in these places."⁸

"I could not sleep past two o'clock this morning. During the night season I was in council. I was pleading with some families to avail themselves of God's appointed means, and get away from the cities to save their children. Some were loitering, making no determined efforts.

"The angels of mercy hurried Lot and his wife and daughters by taking hold of their hands. Had Lot

hastened as the Lord desired him to, his wife would not have become a pillar of salt. Lot had too much of a lingering spirit. Let us not be like him. The same voice that warned Lot to leave Sodom bids us, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . . and touch not the unclean thing.' 2 Corinthians 6:17. Those who obey this warning will find a refuge. Let every man be

temptations which threaten to overpower the minds of your children. They need employment and variety. The sameness of their home makes them uneasy and restless, and they have fallen into the habit of mingling with the vicious lads of the town, thus obtaining a street education."¹¹

"When the power invested in kings is allied to goodness, it is

Lot had too much of a lingering spirit. Let us not be like him. The same voice that warned Lot to leave Sodom bids us, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . . and touch not the unclean thing."

wide-awake for himself, and try to save his family. Let him gird himself for the work. God will reveal from point to point what to do next."⁹

Why is a home in the country more desirable?

"The physical surroundings in the cities are often a peril to health. The constant liability to contact with disease, the prevalence of foul air, impure water, impure food, the crowded, dark, unhealthful dwellings, are some of the many evils to be met.

"It was not God's purpose that people should be crowded into cities, huddled together in terraces and tenements. In the beginning He placed our first parents amidst the beautiful sights and sounds He desires us to rejoice in today. The more nearly we come into harmony with God's original plan, the more favorable will be our position to secure health of body, and mind, and soul."¹⁰

"It would be well for you to lay by your perplexing cares and find a retreat in the country, where there is not so strong an influence to corrupt the morals of the young.

"True, you would not be entirely free from annoyances and perplexing cares in the country; but you would there avoid many evils, and close the door against a flood of

because the one in responsibility is under the divine dictation. When power is allied with wickedness, it is allied to satanic agencies, and it will work to destroy those who are the Lord's property. The Protestant world have set up an idol sabbath in the place where God's Sabbath should be, and they are treading in the footsteps of the Papacy. For this reason I see the necessity of the people of God moving out of the cities into retired country [places], where they may cultivate the land and raise their own produce. Thus they may bring their children up with simple, healthful habits. I see the necessity of making haste to get all things ready for the crisis."¹²

Do we find the benefits of country living illustrated by any Biblical examples?

"Read the history of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph, of Moses, David, and Elisha. Study the lives of men of later times who have most worthily filled positions of trust and responsibility, the men whose influence has been most effective for the world's uplifting.

"How many of these were reared in country homes? They knew little of luxury. They did not spend their youth in amusement. Many were forced to struggle with poverty and hardship. They early learned to

work, and their active life in the open air gave vigor and elasticity to all their faculties. Forced to depend upon their own resources, they learned to combat difficulties and to surmount obstacles, and they gained courage and perseverance. They learned the lessons of self-reliance and self-control. Sheltered in a great degree from evil associations, they were satisfied with natural plea-

evils had he not made his home in this wicked, polluted city. All that Lot and his family did in Sodom could have been done by them, even if they had lived in a place some distance away from the city. Enoch walked with God, and yet he did not live in the midst of any city polluted with every kind of violence and wickedness, as did Lot in Sodom.”¹⁴

cities. How can we know when and how to leave, and what our duty is until we can move out?

“More and more, as time advances, our people will have to leave the cities. For years we have been instructed that our brethren and sisters, and especially families with children, should plan to leave the cities as the way opens before them to do so. Many will have to labor earnestly to help open the way. But until it is possible for them to leave, so long as they remain, they should be most active in doing missionary work, however limited their sphere of influence may be. As they yield their talents and their all to God to be used as He may direct; as they live out their consecration by engaging in practical missionary work wherever opportunity affords, God will bless them with wisdom and discretion, and in His own way and time He will make it possible for them to place themselves where they will not be surrounded constantly with the contaminating influences of modern city life.”¹⁶ ✨

If we are living in the country, how will the cities be evangelized? Don't we have to live among the people in order to witness to them?

tures and wholesome companionships. They were simple in their tastes and temperate in their habits. They were governed by principle, and they grew up pure and strong and true. When called to their lifework, they brought to it physical and mental power, buoyancy of spirit, ability to plan and execute, and steadfastness in resisting evil, that made them a positive power for good in the world.”¹³

If we are living in the country, how will the cities be evangelized? Don't we have to live among the people in order to witness to them?

“When iniquity abounds in a nation, there is always to be heard some voice giving warning and instruction, as the voice of Lot was heard in Sodom. Yet Lot could have preserved his family from many

“He [Enoch] did not make his abode with the wicked. He did not locate in Sodom, thinking to save Sodom. He placed himself and his family where the atmosphere would be as pure as possible. Then at times he went forth to the inhabitants of the world with his God-given message. Every visit he made to the world was painful to him. He saw and understood something of the leprosy of sin. After proclaiming his message, he always took back with him to his place of retirement some who had received the warning. Some of these became overcomers, and died before the Flood came. But some had lived so long in the corrupting influence of sin that they could not endure righteousness.”¹⁵

It sounds as if every God-fearing Seventh-day Adventist should make plans to move out of the

References:

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 84.
- ² *Evangelism*, 25.
- ³ *The Adventist Home*, 136.
- ⁴ *Evangelism*, 27.
- ⁵ *The Ministry of Healing*, 364.
- ⁶ *Evangelism*, 27.
- ⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 232–233.
- ⁸ *Life Sketches*, 409–410.
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- ¹⁰ *The Ministry of Healing*, 365.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 136.
- ¹² *Selected Messages*, book 2, 359.
- ¹³ *The Ministry of Healing*, 366.
- ¹⁴ *Evangelism*, 78.
- ¹⁵ *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1087–1088.
- ¹⁶ *Review and Herald*, September 27, 1906.



What I Believe
Spear, Ron D.

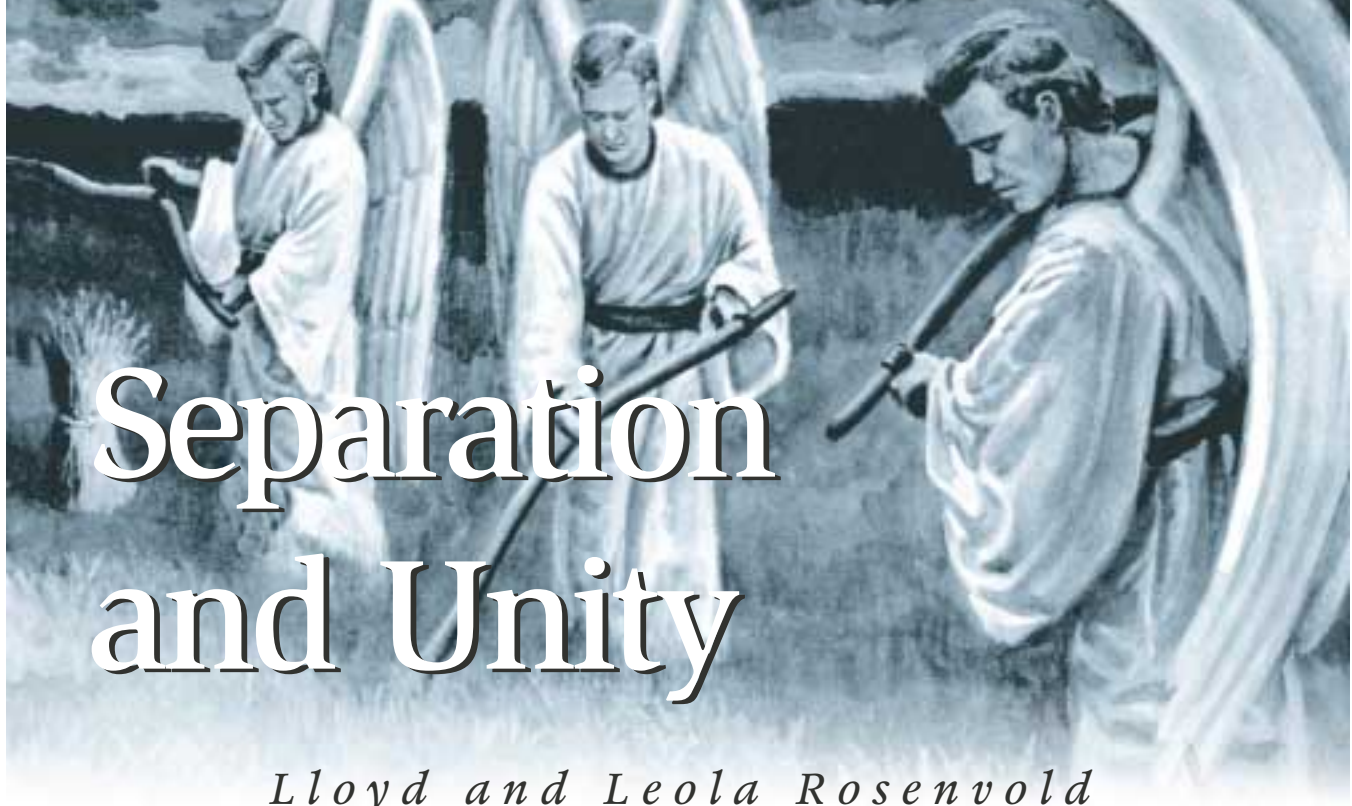
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Separation and Unity

Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold

“As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. Some who are now ready to take up weapons of warfare will in times of real peril make it manifest that they have not built upon the solid rock; they will yield to temptation. Those who have had great light and precious privileges, but have not improved them, will, under one pretext or another, go out from us. Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy; they will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and will depart from the faith. But, on the other hand, when the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd’s voice.”¹

We are living in a day when the above testimony is being fulfilled before our very eyes. We find from many quarters a ground-swell movement to denounce the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and urge members to deliberately separate from its communion. Fantastic theories, supposedly based on Inspiration, are being set forth to try to establish the separationist ideas. Some listeners ask: “Where shall we go? What shall we do? Shall we stop attending church services?” Surely every wind of doctrine is

blowing, as Ellen White said would take place.²

Readers would do well to note that not only will there be movements toward separation, but there will also be corresponding movements toward effecting greater unity among those who remain in God’s last church. In the message of Revelation 3, the True Witness proposes to bring about a separation in His last church by spewing out those who are unrepentant, while those who have heeded His call to repentance will be eternally redeemed.

The True Witness, while He was yet here on earth, used still another illustration of this separation—namely, the parable of the wheat and the tares (see Matthew 13) to describe this end-time separation. In this parable Jesus also pinpoints the exact time of separation, and by whom it will be accomplished.

Two Parties Will Be Developed

In Matthew 13 and 25, as well as in the Spirit of Prophecy, we are informed that two parties will develop in the church: “A new life is coming from heaven and taking possession of all God’s people. But divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest.”³

“As character develops, man and woman will take their position, for varied circumstances brought to bear upon them will cause them to reveal the spirit which prompts them to action. Everyone will reveal the character of the bundle with which he is binding himself. The wheat is being bound up for the heavenly garner. . . . The true people of God are now pulling apart, and the tares are being bound in bundles ready to burn. Decided positions will be taken.”⁴

“The LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.’ Isaiah 8:11-16.

“Here are plainly represented two distinct parties, formed from a

company that was once united. The members of one of these parties are in resistance to the will of God. They have taken themselves from the side of the loyal and true, and are now resisting the warnings of the Spirit of God. To the obedient the Lord will be 'for a sanctuary.'"⁵

"As we near the judgment, all will manifest their true character, and it will be made plain to what company they belong."⁶

Today we can surely see these predictions being fulfilled before our very eyes! Divisions have come into the church. Two parties are being developed in the church. Decided positions are now being taken. The question that now concerns many of us is *when* the false and the true brethren in the church will be separated one from the other. *When* will God's church militant be purified through the removal of the tares—the chaff separated from the precious wheat?

How grateful we can be that Jesus has provided all the answers! It will all take place at the time of the harvest.

When Is the Time of the "Harvest"?

"The harvest is the end of probationary time."⁷ "The harvest is the end of the world." Matthew 13:39. Obviously the harvest commences at the time of the judgment of the living. Observe how the servant of the Lord associates the harvest and the judgment:

"The looker-on may discern no difference; but there is One who said that the tares were not to be plucked up by human hands lest the wheat be rooted up also. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then the Lord sends forth His reapers to gather out the tares and bind them in bundles to burn, while the wheat is gathered into the heavenly garner. The time of judgment is a most solemn period, when the Lord gathers His own from among the tares. . . .

"The tares and wheat are now commingled, but then the one hand that alone can separate them will give to everyone his true position. . . .

"The righteous are those who keep the commandments of God, and they will be forever separated from the disobedient and unrighteous who trampled underfoot the law of God. The pure ore and the dross will no longer commingle."⁸

"Finite man is likely to misjudge character, but God does not leave the work of judgment and pronouncing upon character to those who are not fitted for it. We are not to say what constitutes the wheat, and what the tares. The time of the harvest will fully determine the character of the two classes specified under the figure of the tares and the wheat. The work of separation is given to the angels of God, and not committed into the hands of any man."⁹

Clearly, the investigative judgment of the living marks the time of the harvest, the end of probationary time, when one shall be taken and the other left. At the same time the great final crisis over true Sabbath-keeping and the Sunday-law issue ensues. While some receive the mark of the beast, the true people of God will receive the seal of the living God.

In the passages which follow, the servant of the Lord once again identifies the time of separation—when the two classes will no longer commingle—to be the time when the Sunday laws will be trying men's souls, and the mark of the beast will be urged upon all of us:

"Then will come the times which will try men's souls; for the confederacy of apostasy will demand that the loyal subjects of God shall renounce the law of Jehovah, and repudiate the truth of His Word. Then will the gold be separated from the dross, and it will be made apparent who are the godly, who are loyal and true, and who are the disloyal, the dross and the tinsel. What clouds of chaff will then be borne away by the fan of God! Where now our eyes can discover only rich floors of wheat, will be chaff blown away with the fan of God. Everyone who is not centered in Christ will fail to stand the test and ordeal of that day. While those

who are clothed with Christ's righteousness will stand firm to truth and duty, those who have trusted in their own righteousness will be ranged under the black banner of the prince of darkness. Then it will be seen whether the choice is for Christ or Belial."¹⁰

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. . . . In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church."¹¹

Who Will Do the Separating?

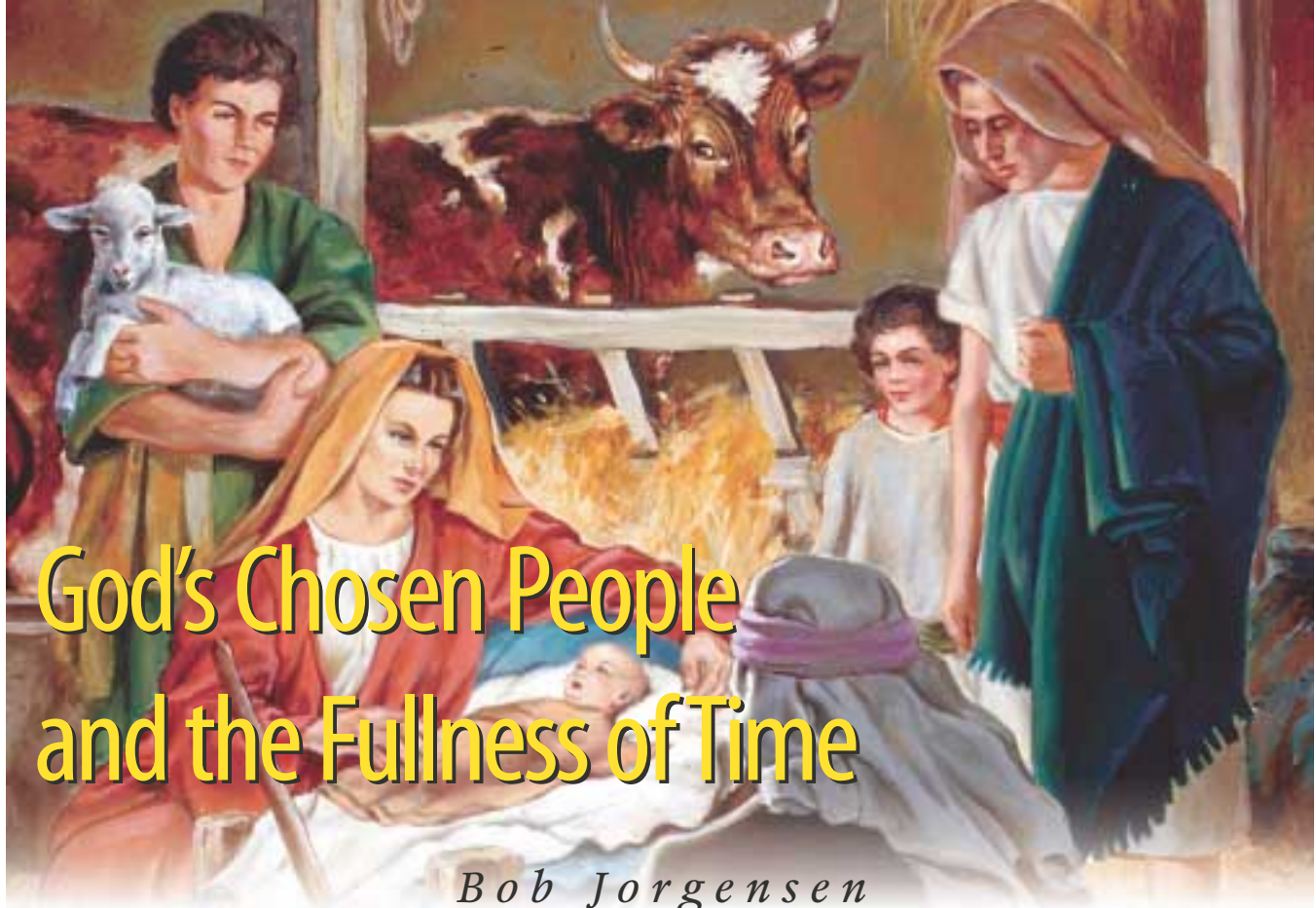
"True, there are tares with the wheat; but Christ said He would send His angels to first gather the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into the garner. I know that the Lord loves His church. It is not to be disorganized or broken up into independent atoms. There is not the least consistency in this; there is not the least evidence that such a thing will be. Those who shall heed this false message and try to leaven others will be deceived and prepared to receive advanced delusions, and they will come to nought.

"There is in some of the members of the church, pride, self-sufficiency, stubborn unbelief, and a refusing to yield their ideas, although evidence may be piled upon evidence which makes the message to the Laodicean church applicable. But that will not blot out the church that it will not exist. Let both tares and wheat grow together until the harvest. Then it is the angels that do the work of separation."¹²

Shall We Separate?

Surely it would be folly for us to consider that because of the deceptions and sins which have crept into the church, we must now withdraw ourselves and our membership from the church so that we will no longer commingle with the tares in the church. God has specifically designated not only the time when the separation shall take place, but also by whom the cleavage will be effected. It will not be by you and me

continued on page 23...



God's Chosen People and the Fullness of Time

Bob Jorgensen

This is the next in a three-part series of articles on the subject of the church. Much misunderstanding exists as to what different groups believe, and which view is correct. This series attempts to set forth answers to these difficulties. Part 1 is available from Hope International upon request.

The Editors

In the book *The Desire of Ages* there are two chapters that are filled with very important observations concerning the condition and status of Israel at the time of Christ's birth. They are chapter two, "The Chosen People," and chapter three, "The Fullness of the Time." I wish to share some pertinent observations regarding points brought out in these chapters, but I would like to lay some background first. This background has to do with the history and issues of the great conflict between Christ and Satan.

In the *The Great Controversy*, chapter 29, is found a chapter entitled "The Origin of Evil," and in *Patriarchs and Prophets* is chapter 1, entitled "Why Was Sin Permitted?" In these and other sections it describes how Lucifer developed his

original accusations against God. Basic among them was the thought that God was selfish and arbitrary — that He was more interested in His own well-being than in the good of His created beings. Lucifer accused God of practicing strict justice and of not even being capable of forgiving transgression. Such forgiveness, an attribute of mercy, could not exist in God's character or government, according to Satan. *The Desire of Ages*, 761-764, describes the basic charge of Lucifer. It is summed up in the thought that justice excludes mercy.

There was only one way that God could effectively answer that charge. This is beautifully described in the two chapters I have mentioned. God must allow time for the development of Satan's principles. He must make a demonstration of His character and government so that the contrast would become apparent, and Satan would thus be proved wrong by demonstration. No divine proclamation or show of infinite power could be as convincing and permanently effectual as could be a full demonstration of all the claims and counterclaims.

But such an undertaking required considerable time and development. God prepared for His demonstration by raising up a people. Through them He purposed to bring forth before the world and the whole universe His demonstration that would forever answer the false insinuations and accusations of Satan. In *The Desire of Ages*, the chapter called "The Chosen People" discusses this people. It was, of course, the nation of Israel. To the chosen nation God committed the sacred oracles, a knowledge of His law, sacred ceremonies and services, the ministry of prophets, and many other blessings. He designed that through them the world would be able to see the goodness of His character. But even more, He designed that through Israel the supreme demonstration would take place that would prove that there was self-denial and forgiveness with God. In this way Satan's claims would be answered. Thus a "chosen people" was a very important part of settling the issues in the great controversy.

Satan recognized the favor which God had bestowed upon Israel, and

with cunning and malice he worked to undermine every detail of God's plan to accomplish His purpose through Israel. It became a bitter conflict over whether Israel could even be maintained intact long enough to bring forth what God had promised to bring forth through them. Speaking of the nation in Nehemiah's time, Inspiration says: "The Lord showed His rebellious people that they were dependent upon Him for prosperity and safety,

Similarly, God raised up Israel and decreed that it should be the nation through whom the Messiah would come. Satan did his utmost to prevent that from happening, but, of course, it happened anyway. It happened in spite of all the rebellion and apostasy in Israel. It happened in spite of the fact that the leaders of Israel constantly plotted how to prevent Jesus from carrying forward the work He had undertaken in God's great plan. No amount of

the issues of the controversy came into prominent display. It was in this setting that God sent His Son and demonstrated the existence of the very thing denied by Satan. Within Israel were simultaneously demonstrated the climax of Satan's demonstration as well as the climax of God's demonstration. They appeared on the same stage of action side by side, and could thus be evaluated better than ever before. If God had sent His Son previously, it would have been premature. It would not have been the fullness of the time. Likewise, if the door of probation had been closed for Israel any sooner than when God closed it, it would have meant the failure of God's plan and the success of Satan's rebellion.

Within Israel were simultaneously demonstrated the climax of Satan's demonstration as well as the climax of God's demonstration.

yet His eye was upon them. They were feeble, exposed to the ravages of their enemies; yet they were the guardians of the worship of the true God, and were to preserve a knowledge of His law until the Prince of peace should come."¹ Here we find a declaration that Israel was basically promised an existence and a standing as God's chosen people until the Messiah came.

There have been some who have maintained that all of God's promises are conditional. Indeed, there are statements that suggest this thought. But we must also recognize that this is speaking in a qualified sense regarding the blessings God will bestow. There are prophetic utterances—such as when God says that He raised up Pharaoh for the purpose of glorifying His name. We might say that this is an unconditional prophecy. It was to be fulfilled whether Pharaoh cooperated with God or whether he rebelled. God was glorified, but it was at the cost of the riches and prosperity of Egypt—the loss of their first born, the destruction of their army, and Pharaoh's death. This was all because he was in utter rebellion. He could have cooperated with God, and then he and Egypt would have been greatly blessed. Either way, God's name was glorified.

apostasy and rebellion kept Israel from having the first opportunity to receive the Messiah and herald His advent.² The preservation of Israel as a distinct nation for over a thousand years was a witness to the fact that *through Israel* the Messiah was to come.

In addition to the chosen people, there was also the fullness of the time. At this time the conditions of the chosen nation and of the world were ripe for the demonstration that God was going to make. The conditions that constituted the fullness of the time included the fact that Satan had so succeeded in perverting the faith of Israel that he won his greatest triumph in Israel. *It was within Israel that the deception of sin reached its highest attainment.* *The Desire of Ages*, 35–36, tells us that Israel had developed to maturity the concept that man can save himself by his own works. They caused God to be viewed as a tyrant.

We can now see that Satan had hijacked the nation of Israel and endeavored to so turn it around from God's purpose that it was actually demonstrating more effectively than any heathen nation the idea that God is all justice and that there is no mercy with Him. Thus the fullness of the time for Israel included a development in which

Inspiration tells us that even the holy angels saw no room for hope at the time of Christ's first advent. They expected to see "Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth."³ If the decision as to when to close the door for Israel had been committed to any of the heavenly beings, God's character would not have been effectively demonstrated. The claims of Satan would not have been adequately answered. The extent of God's self-denial and forgiveness would not have been demonstrated correctly. *God would have been misrepresented.*

As I have studied these events, I have often asked myself the question, If the outcome of the controversy had depended on my making a decision of when the appropriate time had come to close Israel's probation, would I have closed it long before God did? If so, then I would have been showing that I did not understand God's character and purposes—I would not have reflected His thinking. Fortunately, this decision was not left to angels or to other heavenly beings because none of them knew the attributes of God's mercy and justice clearly. *But none of them presumed to pronounce the decision either.* They waited to see what God would do. It was Satan who continually declared that there was no mercy or forgiveness for Israel or mankind. It was he who

said that they had passed the point of no return.

The passage previously mentioned in *The Desire of Ages*, 761–764, describes how Christ came to this earth and forever settled the question of whether there was self-denial with God. All heaven was amazed and glorified God for the wonderful revelation of His marvelous love!

Yet Satan was not to give up so easily. He now came forward with a new argument. It went like this: “Ah, yes. We see that there is mercy and forgiveness with God. His justice is not so strict and harsh as we once thought. We now can see that in reality God is so full of mercy that we don’t need to be concerned about His justice.” *Mercy excludes justice* became the new emphasis of his attack. *The Desire of Ages* tells us that this is the big issue now. Accountability for obedience to God’s law is the big issue to be settled in the last phase of the great controversy.

In this phase we can again see the application of a chosen people and the fullness of the time. And by *when* we would close the door of probation for the “chosen people” of *our* time, we display whether we reflect the thoughts of God, or the sentiments of Satan. Yet, brethren, I think we all know in our hearts that we can make many apparently righteous declarations, denouncing sin and apostasy and looking pretty pious, but yet we can still be cherishing and promoting the sentiments of Satan. If we close the door too soon, we are erring on the side of justice; if we close the door too late, we are erring on the side of mercy. To err on these issues in the controversy at this hour of earth’s history is to neutralize both justice and mercy.

We are being tested now, I believe, on this very issue—“Is the door closed for the church?”—to show before the universe who has a correct reflection of God’s mind in this matter, who understands correctly God’s character, government, and purposes.⁴ I propose that just as in God’s church anciently there were two demonstrations that

took place side by side, so today the church is a stage on which a demonstration is to take place—a demonstration of God’s side of the controversy. It will be a demonstration that proves that mercy does not lower justice in the least. It will prove that those who have availed themselves of the provisions of mercy can meet and survive the demands of justice. It will bring forth a people who stand with their characters perfected before the universe.

The keynote of Satan’s smooth and attractive deception is that God’s requirements are not as strict as we once thought they were.

Yet it also appears that, just like in ancient Israel, Satan has commanded the stage of demonstrations and is endeavoring to present the perfection of his deception—that mercy excludes justice. He promotes the do-as-you-please, if-it-feels-good-do-it forms of worship. He insinuates his philosophy that “it doesn’t matter how you eat, dress, speak, or act; just love everybody and don’t make waves.” We see that all through the ranks of God’s chosen people, the representations and echoes of Satan’s big argument are prevalent and multiplying. They spring up in the most unexpected ways and places!

Whereas in the time of Christ’s first advent the people were led to look upon God as a harsh tyrant, today the people are led to look upon God as a soft and pliable granddaddy-type of person who accepts everybody just as they are. The keynote of Satan’s smooth and attractive deception is that God’s requirements are not as strict as we once thought they were.⁵ As in former times, vice is consecrated as a part of religion. Abominations that should not even be named among Seventh-day Adventists are cloaked with religious garb and called “ministries.”

There are attempts to bring in plans and methods totally unacceptable to God, and to “sanctify” them by making them tools of evangelism. Then we are pointed to the numbers attracted by them as evidence that God is blessing the work through these means. However, we have been told clearly that we show great blindness when we lower the standards to attract more people into the church and then make that increase of numbers a cause for rejoicing.⁶

But through it all we have evidence that God is calling for men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall, who are as true to duty as the needle to the pole, who do not fear to call sin by its right name.⁷ And Inspiration tells us that He will bring forth a demonstration of such character within the church. That is the commission to which I am responding. It may be that our brethren in conference leadership will ever view us as dissidents and troublers of Israel, while the separationists will label us as lukewarm timeservers who are willing to sustain and endorse apostasy. Perhaps we must let that be. The events soon to transpire will clearly distinguish the dross from the gold in the church. ❀

Next month in Part 3 of this series we will cover the topic of “The Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Sealing.”

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- ¹ *Review and Herald*, March 18, 1884.
- ² See *The Desire of Ages*, 231, 351, 43–44; *The Great Controversy*, 314.
- ³ *The Desire of Ages*, 37.
- ⁴ See *The Great Controversy*, 593.
- ⁵ See *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 339–340.
- ⁶ See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 31.
- ⁷ See *Education*, 57.



This month we share with you the next in a series of articles that discuss how we can cultivate Christian character traits in the hearts of our children. "The Garden of the Heart," in the February 2001 issue of Our Firm Foundation, laid the foundation for this series. It is available upon request.

The Editors

Perseverance

Perseverance is diligently working on a job or a task until it is completed. In other words, what is started is carried through to its final conclusion.

Perseverance is a character trait that even most adults are lacking because they did not cultivate it in childhood. Sometimes people live in houses for 10–15 years before they are completed. I talked to one mother recently who said, "We have been in our home eighteen years, and it is still not finished. We made it to a certain point; then we were going to finish it off, but now, eighteen years later, very little has changed."

Many of us stop working on a task when we feel comfortable. But what if our spouse is not comfortable? That was the plea of this mother's heart: "What do I do? I have borne with it patiently for eighteen years, but I am tired of living like this."

We must cultivate perseverance in our children, for this vital character trait affects every aspect of life. No matter what occupation your child might choose later in life, perseverance will be important. This character trait is necessary not only for success in temporal matters, but it bears great importance in the Christian walk as well.

When Christ was here on this earth there were many people who claimed to be His followers. How-

ever, they had a problem: They did not persevere; they did not continue to walk in the way Christ taught. When Jesus said something that they did not like or that went against their preconceived ideas, many said: "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60) and they turned around and walked away, never to return. See verse 66. They did not know how to persevere. Jesus said: "If ye continue [persevere] in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." John 8:31. Regardless of the task, we must help our children to learn to persevere.

So how do we begin to teach our children perseverance? If you take the time to notice, you will be surprised at how many opportunities you have every day to teach your children perseverance. Use the common experiences of life as a lesson book.

At the Meal Table

Many parents struggle to help their children eat a well-balanced, healthful diet. Often children will decide that they like foods, such as potatoes and bread, but they do not want to eat vegetables. We can help them learn perseverance at meal time by placing a realistic amount of the healthful food that is not their favorite on their plate and instruct

them to eat that before they move on to the foods they prefer. Be realistic. Do not heap their plate full with that good food, thinking that if they eat a huge quantity, they will develop a taste for it. Give them a realistic amount and say: "Honey, I want you to eat this first."

Is that cruelty?—Absolutely not. You can use this method to teach not only perseverance, but also obedience and self-control. It is natural for all of us to eat whatever we like—that takes no control at all. But it takes self-control to eat the things we do not like.

By Our Own Example

Many parents find it difficult to teach perseverance because they themselves have not learned how to persevere. I can relate to that because it has been a real discipline for me. I was persevering in my work away from home, but it was easy when I came home—where others were not observing—to just let things slide. How often this is the way we think! We are careful with how we appear and behave among strangers or friends, but at home we really don't think it is so important how we look or whether our home is clean and pleasant. Actually, it is very important!

If we are Christians in our homes, we will be Christians everywhere. However, if we act like Christians in the world but are not Christlike in our homes, we are living a false, hypocritical experience. We must put forth the effort needed to persevere in our own lives, and then we can teach this important lesson to our children.

In the Little Household Tasks

We give our children household chores, yet at times I have found myself being tempted when my child is only half-finished, to say: "Okay, that is good enough. Go on, and I will finish it up." Does that teach my child how to persevere?—No. The next time they will say, "Mommy, I do not want to do this. You finish it for me."

Many parents would rather do the tasks themselves than work to teach their children perseverance—because the children whine and fuss. What some people do not realize is that the whining and fussing will continue until the children learn that such behavior does not bring the desired result. We need to teach them that even if they whine, the bathroom still must be cleaned up, or the dishes must be washed, and the job must be done well.

To persevere in cleaning the toilet does not mean that they swish the water around a couple of times and flush it. No, perseverance leads the children to scrub the toilet and rinse it thoroughly so that it is completely clean and ready for use. We do our children harm when we rescue them from a task that they are tired of doing. Feeling sorry for them is an indulgent, false love. We must help them to persevere.

In School Lessons

School lessons offer our children many opportunities to develop perseverance. Sometimes they will find a lesson very difficult, and the natural inclination says, "Just give up." Then what do you do? Do you let them always take the easy path, or do you guide them and help them

to persevere until they have mastered the lesson that at first seemed so difficult?

The Scriptures tell us that we are upon the brink of the most difficult trials that God's people have ever, or will ever, experience. Are we preparing our children to persevere in the little tasks today? If so, day-by-day they are preparing to take hold of Christ and conquer through His power when the trials will be much more severe.

If we are making life easy for our children—never requiring them to persevere, to finish the tasks they are given—we are preparing them to be destroyed by the circumstances of life. We are preparing them to be overcome and lost—instead of being conquerors through Jesus and finding the victory in Him. What a solemn reality!

In Work and Play

Even play time offers experiences you can use to teach your children to persevere. If our children start a project, we like them to bring it through to completion, even in their play activities.

Josiah and Emily built a wagon, and their idea was just wheels and a board. Yet when my husband, Tom, went out to see the wagon, it was not strong enough; it needed to be reinforced and built up if it was to be useful. He wanted them to complete the project so that the wagon would actually be functional—instead of just fun for a day or two before it fell apart.

Let us help our children to persevere through these things, and when the job is well done, be sure to encourage them! Let them know that they have done something well and that you are happy to see them learning the lesson of perseverance.

Incentives can be a way to help children persevere. In our home, especially in the summer months, our children are responsible for all of the yard upkeep. An incentive for them to persevere in their yard work would be that they could go jump in the pond and cool off when they are finished with their tasks. That is a

very simple reward, but it is very motivating to our children.

It is my prayer that the Lord will give each of us wisdom as we seek to raise our children to glorify Him. May you be encouraged by this inspired promise: "Parents may understand that as they follow God's directions in the training of their children, they will receive help from on high. They receive much benefit; for as they teach, they learn. Their children will achieve victories through the knowledge that they have acquired in keeping the way of the Lord."¹ ✨

Next month we will discuss how to cultivate initiative and mercy.

References:

¹ The Adventist Home, 205.



Cultivating Christian Character in Children

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Genetically Modified Human Babies Produced

News Item: “Scientists in Livingston, N.J., announced recently that genetically modified humans—until now thought to exist only in science-fiction novels—are already among us.

“A team of infertility specialists at the Institute for Reproductive Medicine and Science at St. Barnabas Medical Center said they helped produce 15 children with foreign DNA added to that which the children naturally inherited from their mothers and fathers.

“The news was met with an outcry from ethicists and from other scientists, who accused the team of playing God and of ignoring potentially disastrous side effects in their haste to dabble in genetic engineering.”

The scientists implanted cytoplasm from a donor egg, which contains DNA, into each embryo. “The children conceived through the procedure have three genetic parents—something which is impossible in nature and which could lead to new and harmful genetic mutations.

“As well, the procedure affects the child’s ‘germline cells,’ so the genetic modification will be passed from generation to generation.”

Echoing the concerns of a number of scientists regarding mutant diseases: “‘It’s not just that these babies are at risk—the whole human race is at risk,’ said Dr. Gene Rudd, associate executive director of the Christian Medical Association in Bristol, Tenn. ‘We will take the chance of introducing a new disease into the whole genetic makeup of the human race.’”

Significantly, “there is no law governing such experiments in the United States.” *National Catholic Register*, June 3–9, 2001.

End-Times Perspective: Is not this another sign of the end time when science, through amalgamation, endangers the human race by

further defacing the image of God in mankind? The sanctity of human life is under attack, as is also the sanctity of conception within marriage. Is it no wonder that nature is poised to unleash God’s judgments upon this wicked race?

Evolution’s Uniformitarianism Falters

News Item: “An international team of astrophysicists has discovered that the basic laws of nature as understood today may be changing slightly as the universe ages, a surprising finding that could rewrite physics textbooks and challenge fundamental assumptions about the workings of the cosmos.

“The researchers used the world’s largest single telescope to study the behavior of metallic atoms in gas clouds as far away from Earth as 12 billion light years. The observations revealed patterns of light absorption that the team could not explain without assuming a change in a basic constant of nature involving the strength of the attraction between electrically charged particles.

“If confirmed, the finding could mean that other constants regarded as immutable, like the speed of light, might also have changed over the history of the cosmos.”

One scientist said that the finding could “force revisions in cosmology, the science of how the universe began and later evolved.” *The New York Times on the Web* (www.nytimes.com), August 15, 2001.

End-Times Perspective: The theory of evolution depends upon its assumption that the forces observed in nature today have been the same throughout the past ages of time. This is called uniformitarianism. Only by assuming that nature’s forces are constant can they claim any support to be able to theorize about what has occurred in unobservable past ages.

If nature’s forces were faster in the past, then the vast ages needed

by evolution’s cosmology are seriously affected.

This finding is a serious blow to the theory of evolution, which is propped up by faulty assumptions, use of selective evidence, and a bias that mandates its own conclusions. May God cause truth to shine forth!

First-Century Fragment of the Gospel of Matthew Found

News Item: “Was the Book of Matthew really written by the disciple Matthew in the first century A.D.? Or does it date to a much later time?

“This very question is now being debated by scholars who are stunned by the discovery of a fragment which may very well be the oldest text of the Gospel of Matthew ever found.

“‘For centuries,’ says Jerusalem archaeologist, A. Cohen, ‘scholars have believed that the New Testament, its Gospels and Epistles, were not written by the Apostles in the first century. Rather, they were passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation for a hundred years to be finally penned by scribes some time in the second century A.D.’

“‘But now,’ says Jerusalem historian, Prof. Ory Mazar, ‘new research on an ancient fragment of New Testament text may well shatter the conventional wisdom.’

“This papyrus text seems to provide genuine proof that at least the Gospel of Matthew was indeed an eyewitness account, written by a disciple of Jesus who lived during the days Christ Himself was on earth.

“The ‘Oxford Papyri’ includes three tiny scraps of text with verses from Matthew, chapter 26, describing Jesus’ anointment in the house of Simon, the leper at Bethany, and his betrayal to the chief priests by Judas Is’cariot.”

The papyri were found along with a farmer’s civil document that is clearly dated to July 24, 65/66 A.D. “Since both these fragments were found in the same location and their

writing styles and materials match, they can both be dated to a period prior or concurrent to the year 66 A.D.

“It is hard to be indifferent to such a finding,” says Prof. Mazar. The fragments clearly show that Matthew’s Gospel was written and in use only a generation or less after Jesus’ crucifixion.” *Christian News Today.com*, May 31, 2001.

Families Flee Canada to Obey Scripture

News Item: “Dozens of people from the Aylmer Church of God near Toronto have fled Canada for the United States in order to stop social workers from inquiring about how they spank their children. Police took away seven children in one of the congregation’s families because their parents refused to promise to stop disciplining them with sticks or straps. . . .

“The church’s website says 28 women and 83 children left town in ‘the dark of night’ to avoid further removals by the child welfare agency. Aylmer parishioners say the government is persecuting them for their beliefs. ‘It clearly states in the Bible that corporal punishment should be used and that means more than a hand,’ said Henry Hildebrandt, the pastor in Aylmer. ‘The Bible talks about using an object. We find that works and it works well.’” *World*, August 4, 2001.

Society’s Depravity Worsens—Body Modification

News Item: “In dark corners of cities around the United States, tattooing and piercing have evolved into more radical ways to change the body, dubbed ‘Body Modification.’

“The East Village in New York is a hot spot for body modification, which mixes tattoos, mutilation, branding, scarification and implants under the skin.

“People are over this whole piercing craze,” said Keith Alexander, a member of the Association of Professional Piercers. ‘Body Modification is a new trend towards experimentation with the one thing you truly own, your body.’

“Under-skin implants are used to create a variety of looks, from the more discreet balls on the chest, to devil’s horns poling out of the forehead. . . . The steel balls—or hearts, stars or other shapes—are placed under the skin through a shallow cut that is quickly sewn shut, if all goes according to plan. ‘Body modification can be very dangerous,’ Alexander said. . . .

“Body modification can also include ritual scarification, practiced for centuries in many African countries. Using a scalpel, the body piercer cuts the skin on the face or body in order to leave a scar. Others are branded like animals, having characters, letters or words burned into their skin.

“In the extreme, some people opt to transform their bodies as a form of artistic expression, hoping to resemble animals.

“Eric Sprague, 28, took his desire to look like a lizard so far—including tattoos across his face and fingernails filed into claw-like points—that he is known as ‘the Lizard Man.’ . . .

“Sprague has five implants over each eye for a ‘horned ridge effect,’ teeth filed to sharp points and a split tongue.

“I have two tongues,” he said. ‘My split tongue is the culmination of childhood daydreams and fantasies.’” *AFP-Worldwide News Agency (AFP-DIRECT.com)*, May 4, 2001.

End-Time Perspective: What an abomination! “Professing to be wise, they became fools.” Romans 1:22, NKJV. People of the world are seeking to be more and more like their father, the devil. However, let us seek to reflect more and more upon the beautiful character of our Saviour Jesus Christ. “Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” James 1:21, NKJV.

Bible Verses Condemned As Hate Material

News Item: “The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has

ruled that a newspaper ad with references to Biblical passages exposed gay men to hatred.

“The advertisement, placed by Regina resident Hugh Owens in the Saskatoon StarPhoenix, features an icon of two stick figures holding hands. The figures are covered by a red circle and slash, and are accompanied by four references to the Bible.

“The slashed figures alone are not enough to communicate hatred, said the ruling. But the addition of the Biblical references are more dangerous.”

The Commission fined both the sponsor of the ad and the newspaper that published it. *Ottawa Citizen (OTTAWA.COM)*, June 20, 2001.


French Anti-Sect Law Could Impact Other Countries

News Item: “A French law that cracks down on religious groups considered sects or cults could set a dangerous precedent for government-targeted minority religions in other countries, human rights advocates said July 11 in testimony before the U.S. Congress.”

The law is being promoted as a model law by France for various countries and is being considered by Russia, countries in eastern Europe, and by Hong Kong.

“Under the law approved by the French Parliament in May, government officials can ban religious groups considered cults and can stop them from changing their name and reorganizing. Officials can also impose a fine and three-year prison sentence on religious group members who recruit new members by ‘abusing’ a ‘state of ignorance or situation of weakness.’

“Any ‘religious education or proselytization can be suspect under the vague crime of “abuse of a person’s state of weakness,” ’ said Joseph K. Grieboski, president of the Institute on Religion and Public Policy.” *RNS*, as carried by *National Catholic Register*, July 29–August 4, 2001. ✠



My Church, Oh, My Church!

Colin Standish

Almost a decade ago I was awakened early one morning, burdened with the deepening apostasy, worldliness, and sin within the membership of God's church. It seemed to me that nothing was considered sacred anymore. The holy commission that God had given to this people, making the Seventh-day Adventist Church the depository of His holy truths for these last days, seemed to be fading away alarmingly. The encroachment of worldly goals, practices, and ambitions were evident in the alarming inroads made into the Seventh-day Adventist Church by the entertainment media of the world, by the ecumenical movement, and in the drift away from the special purpose that God has entrusted to His chosen church. Peter stated: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was called out by God to be a special people with a special message, a special mission, and ultimately a special destiny. It is the

only church equipped to take the everlasting gospel to the world, for no other church of Christendom knows, believes, lives, and, therefore, can share this message. As the generations of Seventh-day Adventists multiply, there is a deepening sense that we are compromising in every facet of our calling. It is evident that Satan has made the Seventh-day Adventist Church the object of his most malicious and horrendous attacks. That is not surprising because it is the Seventh-day Adventist message that stands between him and the takeover of the whole planet. Yes, we recognize that there are godly, sincere, and earnest men and women in all other faiths, but they do not share with us the everlasting gospel. I pray that many of these dear people will one day soon be among those who will respond to the call: "Come out of her [Babylon], my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Revelation 18:4. It will be a united people, fastened upon the everlasting gospel of truth and righteousness, who will call these precious souls into the fellowship of God's remnant church.

My burden that morning, a decade ago, was not the strong

assaults of Satan seeking to tempt and deceive God's people, but rather the evidence that myriads of our people, including many in leadership positions, were defecting from the faith, "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. That morning, with a heart-wrenching burden upon my mind, I penned the following words:

My Church, Oh, My Church!

"What has happened to *my* church—the church I have loved and served from my youth? You are the church that molded my values, my attitudes, my beliefs, my lifestyle, my vision, and above all, my ministry. Like a passionate lover you pursued me, you wooed me, and eventually you won me. At sixteen I so loved you that through the ministry of Jesus I embraced you through baptism. At eighteen I loved you so much that I chose to give my life in service to you and to the God whom you represent.

"I loved the clear testimony that your ministering servants gave. I thrilled to the prophetic unfolding of your evangelists. I loved your stirring calls to holy living. Though I have not always lived up to God's standards, yet I have never for a

moment rejected their validity nor their divine origin. I loved the certainty of the messages you preached; the certainty of the soon return of Jesus; the certainty of the high-priestly ministry of my crucified Saviour; the certainty of the One who is willing to stand up for me in the judgment; the certainty of the resurrection of the saints; the certainty of the double portion of God's blessing that has been promised to God's faithful Sabbath-keepers; and the certainty of the unwavering, unchallengeable standards of God's law.

"You are the church that won the lifelong allegiance of my paternal great-grandfather and my maternal grandmother. You are the church that gave me my parents, who loved and served you above everything in this universe besides God Himself. You are the church that provided me with a Christian education. You are the church that gave me a love for the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. You are the church that called me to distant places to preach and to teach the everlasting gospel.

"You are the church to which I have eagerly directed hundreds of people who have responded to my ministry. You are the church that I have staunchly defended against consistent attacks from unbelievers. You are the church that I, though unworthy, was willing to represent as one of your ministers. You are the church that called me to assume major leadership positions in your educational system. You are the church I still love with an intensity unweakened by the passing of years.

"But, alas, O *my* church, what has happened to you? I am bewildered. I still love you. I will always love you. Perhaps I love you more now that you are estranged than I did in the time of your most loyal devotion. But what are these strange voices that I hear? I hear false doctrines and teachings from your pulpits. What is this strange music that I hear from you? I hear the beat of drums and the deafening sounds of synthesizers. What are these glittering adornments that I see on

your members? From where comes the sound of sports and revelry, the laughter, and the conduct of the frivolous and worldly?

"Who are these shepherds who claim to be your representatives, yet speak with deceptive tongues? Who are these men who offer strange fire upon your altars? Who are these disloyal servants who have gone a

My Feelings Ten Years Later

I believe that in many ways what I wrote that morning a decade ago was reflecting not only my own anguished heart, but also that of many faithful Seventh-day Adventists circling the globe. Today, about a decade later, my anguish, my burden, my soul-wrenching cry

I love you, my church. I want you back—not to where you were when I was a lad, but to where God has destined you should be now. I love you too much to be silent.

whoring after the fallen churches of Babylon to join in with their errors and sins? Who are these pastors who preach tame messages week after week to their needy, thirsty congregations? Who are these ministers who garb their impotent messages in the deceptive cloak of charisma?

"I love you, *my* church. I want you back—not to where you were when I was a lad, but to where God has destined you should be now. I love you too much to be silent. I must cry aloud. I must uplift the Christ of truth and righteousness, through whom alone I can have victory over every satanic temptation. I must call your members back to the old paths wherein is the good way. I must point out error and sin in my beloved church. I must warn the unwary. I must awaken the sleepers. I must expose the false teachers. I must direct our dear members to the highway of righteousness.

"I pray that you will understand, *my* church, that what I do is born of deep devotion—not alienation. I trust that you might understand that it is a loyal love that motivates my ministry. I plead that you will accept my sacrificial service as being unto God and to His kingdom. I entreat you to understand that it is a burden for lost souls in the house of Israel that constrains me. My church, oh, *my* church!"

reaches out in love to the membership of God's church. To see so many of our dear people moving step by step, not to eternal salvation, but to eternal destruction—unaware of their undone and miserable condition—is almost more than my soul can bear. In view of the condition of life in Laodicea it is very apparent that we are truly "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Yet, we act as if we are "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Revelation 3:17. In vain do I look to our leaders to respond with heart-searching calls for revival, restoration, and reformation. Where are you, my brethren in sacred leadership positions? Have you lost your vision? Have you lost your love for perishing sinners? Do you prefer the praise of men above the approbation of Jesus? Brethren, all is not well in Zion.

Almost 120 years ago the servant of the Lord appealed to the church members. This call is surely more urgent today than it was then:

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. Pride, covetousness, and love of the world have lived in the heart without fear of banishment or condemnation. Grievous and presumptuous sins have dwelt

among us. And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders.

“The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt. Yet few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power. Doubt, and even disbelief of the Testimonies of the Spirit of God, is leavening our churches everywhere. Satan would have it thus. Ministers who preach self instead of Christ would have it thus. The Testimonies are unread and unappreciated. God has spoken to you. Light has been shining from His Word and from the Testimonies, and

Who in leadership has come forward to admit, as Elder Pierson did, that we are a people in the condition of “insubordination”?

I Am Powerless

As a self-supporting worker, I know just how powerless I am to lead a reformation in God’s church. I longingly look for leaders whose only goal will be to help our people find the pathway to heaven. My plea to the leaders of the world field is: Forget the politicking, forget the infighting, forget the attempts to unify the members upon false principles of coercion—man-made documents such as the *Twenty-seven Fundamental Beliefs*, the *Seventh-day Adventist*

God has given us only one way to bring unity into the ranks of His people. In His prayer for unity Jesus gave the key: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”

both have been slighted and disregarded. The result is apparent in the lack of purity and devotion and earnest faith among us.

“Let each put the question to his own heart: ‘How have we fallen into this state of spiritual feebleness and dissension? Have we not brought upon ourselves the frown of God because our actions do not correspond with our faith? Have we not been seeking the friendship and applause of the world rather than the presence of Christ and a deeper knowledge of His will?’ ”¹

It is now more than a quarter of a century since a plea this earnest was made under the leadership of Elder Robert Pierson, then president of the General Conference, who went to his grave in January of 1989 with a broken heart—over the direction of God’s people. On at least two occasions he said to me, “Colin, I wonder what else I could have done.” He was referring to what he could have done to have directed the people of God toward the heavenly home. He has gone to his rest, but who has taken up the challenge?

Church Manual, or perhaps General Conference actions. All of these are flawed because of their human origin. God has given us only one way to bring unity into the ranks of His people. In His prayer for unity Jesus gave the key: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17.

Paul reiterated this principle in his unity chapter:

“But [we] speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” Ephesians 4:15.

Peter enunciates the principle this way:

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” 1 Peter 1:22.

We earnestly desire unity, but we must remember that it is the result of something else that should be even more important to us than unity: “Unity is the sure result of Christian perfection.”² Further, Sister White elucidates: “There is no sanctifica-

tion aside from the truth—the Word.”³ The Lord, through His servant, has forewarned us that company after company will defect from the faith. Many who once stood under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel will choose to stand under the apostate banner of Satan. Yet there is encouragement. We are also told that tribe after tribe will come in:

“In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world’s insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord’s army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God.”⁴

May we be found with those who stand under the blood-stained banner of Christ, faithful to truth, sanctified by the truth, and united as one body. ❄

References:

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 217-218.

² *The Sanctified Life*, 85.

³ *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 432.

⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 41.



Rome’s Arraignment of Sabbath-Breakers

This booklet contains a reprint of a sermon published in the July 3, 1897, *Catholic Mirror*.

J. O’Keefe, a prominent

Catholic priest of his day, refutes the hypocrisy of Protestant Sunday-keeping, forcefully demonstrating the unquestionable constancy of the Bible Sabbath. Also included is “Authoritative Quotations on the Sabbath and Sunday,” a compilation of quotations on the Bible Sabbath from various denominations, as well as from historical and non-Christian sources. A great witnessing tool!

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Continued from page 12

making a premature departure from the church, but it will be accomplished only by the one hand that alone can separate the two classes. For us to assume or presume to take on God's prerogatives would be no better than Uzzah's trying to steady the ark of God. Our duty at this time is not separation, but rather to heed the many calls from God for repentance, revival, and reformation.

Dare any of us to try to designate who is a tare and who is wheat? Surely, though "there are among us wicked men who do not love the truth,"¹³ we must realize that we cannot ourselves pull up the tares, lest we pull up wheat also, nor are any of us qualified to blow away the chaff. Dare we—feeble mortals that we are—run ahead of the Lord? Should we not rather heed the admonition of Jesus to allow the two classes to grow together in the church until the harvest—when separation will be made by other than human hands?

Yet Another Illustration

In the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus gave yet another illustration of the final separation to take place in the last church between the righteous and the unrepentant. We find in this parable that once again the separation of the wise and the foolish virgins came near the end of probationary time—when it was too late for the foolish ones to obtain the indwelling Holy Spirit. And while they were gone away to search, the wise ones were admitted to the marriage feast (judgment), and the door was shut. When the foolish ones returned, Jesus answered their pleadings with: "I know you not." In effect, they had been spewed out of His mouth, as was the case with the unrepentant Laodiceans. Like chaff, they had been blown away on the wind. However, as with the wheat and the tares, the wise and the foolish had commingled until the time when God made the separating determination at the end of probationary time.

So Much Chaff in God's Church

"Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat."¹⁴

"But the church, defective as it is, and enfeebled with so much chaff, is

God will sigh and cry for all these abominations that will be perpetrated by the tares in the church. And more especially at the time when the 144,000 will be sealed, the faithful will openly declare their position for the truth by obeying the command, through the Holy Spirit, to: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the

The church, defective as it is, and enfeebled with so much chaff, is the only object on earth upon which He bestows His highest regard.

the only object on earth upon which He bestows His highest regard. In His estimation the church in heaven and the church on earth are identical. He has promised to come personally into the midst of His church."¹⁵

Until the time of separation arrives, that pile of mixed chaff and wheat remains exceedingly precious to the Lord, because of its wheat content. He will come personally into the midst of His church militant to cleanse it, for God loves His church militant—in spite of its failings and so much chaff.¹⁶

"Come Out From Among Them"

Paul commanded: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." 2 Corinthians 6:17. From what are we admonished to separate? Some would have us apply it to the church. Yet Paul did not. Until the end-time harvest, while the wheat and the tares commingle in the church, the wheat certainly need not, nor will they, volunteer to associate with the tares in their ungodly activities and practices. They need not join them in their worldliness and sins. They need not partake of their wicked characters, nor accept their doctrinal errors—doctrines of devils—which they teach. Rather, the true servants of

house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1.

Pulling Apart From What?

In Letter 13, 1892, the servant of the Lord advised that "the true people of God are now pulling apart, and the tares are being bound in bundles to burn." The context of this passage does not suggest that God's true people were at that time "pulling apart" from the church, or that they would in the future, but rather that they will pull apart from the errors, sins, and worldliness of the tares. The very next sentence states that "decided positions will be taken" by both parties in the church. Both were developing their characters for the harvest time.

In the testimony, Ellen G. White wrote in the present tense as to "pulling apart." There is not the slightest shred of evidence that she was in any way leading a movement to pull apart from the church. All through her ministry her message was ever to "press together in unity."

The Example of Jesus

Our Exemplar was ever separate from "sin and sinners," yet He dwelt among sinners, taught them to give up sin, ate with them, walked with them, and went to church with them on the Sabbath days.

Christ continued to attend church services—even though the scribes and the Pharisees were teaching false, man-made doctrines, even as some do in our day. But He always took a decided personal stand against error, and clearly declared Himself on the side of truth. While Christ was ever separated from their false teachings and sins, He still attended worship services with them and tried to give a positive witness for truth. So it should be with us.

Ellen White, Her Example

Although Ellen White often commented on the Bible text to “come out” (quoted earlier) and be separate, she never applied it to indicate that we were to separate ourselves from the church, nor did she ever by her own example separate herself from the church. She remained a loyal and supportive member until her death. Yet she did urge members to separate themselves from sin and the ways of sinners.

She did comment once on the possibility that men might cast her name out of the church, but she did so in the context that it would not lead her to take a stand against Christ. Note: “If my name is cast out as evil, I am in excellent company. Those who would not receive Christ

were dead in trespasses and sins.”¹⁷

The Lord’s servant did have a pointed comment for those who would use the Pauline text (see 2 Corinthians 6) to support an exodus from the church, as follows: “Supposing this spurious message is the one everyone must hear for this time, ‘Come out of her, my people,’ where shall we go to? Where shall we find the purity, goodness, and holiness where we shall be secure? Where is the fold where no wolves will enter?”¹⁸

Once again we might ask: Should we try to remove tares and chaff from the church, or should we judge ourselves to be pure wheat and decide that we have commingled with tares in the church long enough, and therefore remove ourselves from God’s threshing floor?

We believe that any candid person, having read these few pages, must conclude that it is God who will do the separating that needs to be done in the church, and that when the time for it comes, God is well able to effect the work. He does not need our feeble, ineffective, and clumsy efforts to do the removing for Him. We find no support whatsoever for the present agitation by some that we leave the church. If that is what they wish to do, we

perhaps cannot help them, but let us not aid or abet any work which is not endorsed by God. ❄

EDITOR’S NOTE: The Drs. Rosenvold have prepared a very thorough study of the Spirit of Prophecy evidence dealing with this matter of willful separation from the fellowship of the church. We have printed here only a small part of this material; for any who may be wrestling with the thought of withdrawing their membership, or who may be working in behalf of someone who has withdrawn, we suggest a careful reading of their book, *Separation and Unity*. Please see the ad on this page for more information.

References:

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 400–401.
- ² See *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 80.
- ³ *Selected Messages*, book 2, 114.
- ⁴ Letter 13, 1892 (*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 995).
- ⁵ *Review and Herald*, July 18, 1907.
- ⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 100.
- ⁷ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 72.
- ⁸ *Testimonies to Ministers*, 234–236.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.
- ¹⁰ *Review and Herald*, November 8, 1892.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 81.
- ¹² *Selected Messages*, book 2, 68–69.
- ¹³ *Review and Herald*, March 19, 1895.
- ¹⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 81.
- ¹⁵ Manuscript 13, 1895.
- ¹⁶ See *Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 971.
- ¹⁷ *Loma Linda Messages*, 156.
- ¹⁸ *Manuscript Releases*, book 1, 354.



Separation and Unity

Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold

Right now thousands in modern spiritual Israel are sighing and crying for the abominations that have entered into the remnant church. Perplexity upon perplexity has come upon the faithful. “How shall we react?” ask many. The church seems “about to fall.” Some say it has already fallen, and they advise everyone to depart. Others say, “Wait, the Lord has promised to rectify matters in His appointed time and way.”

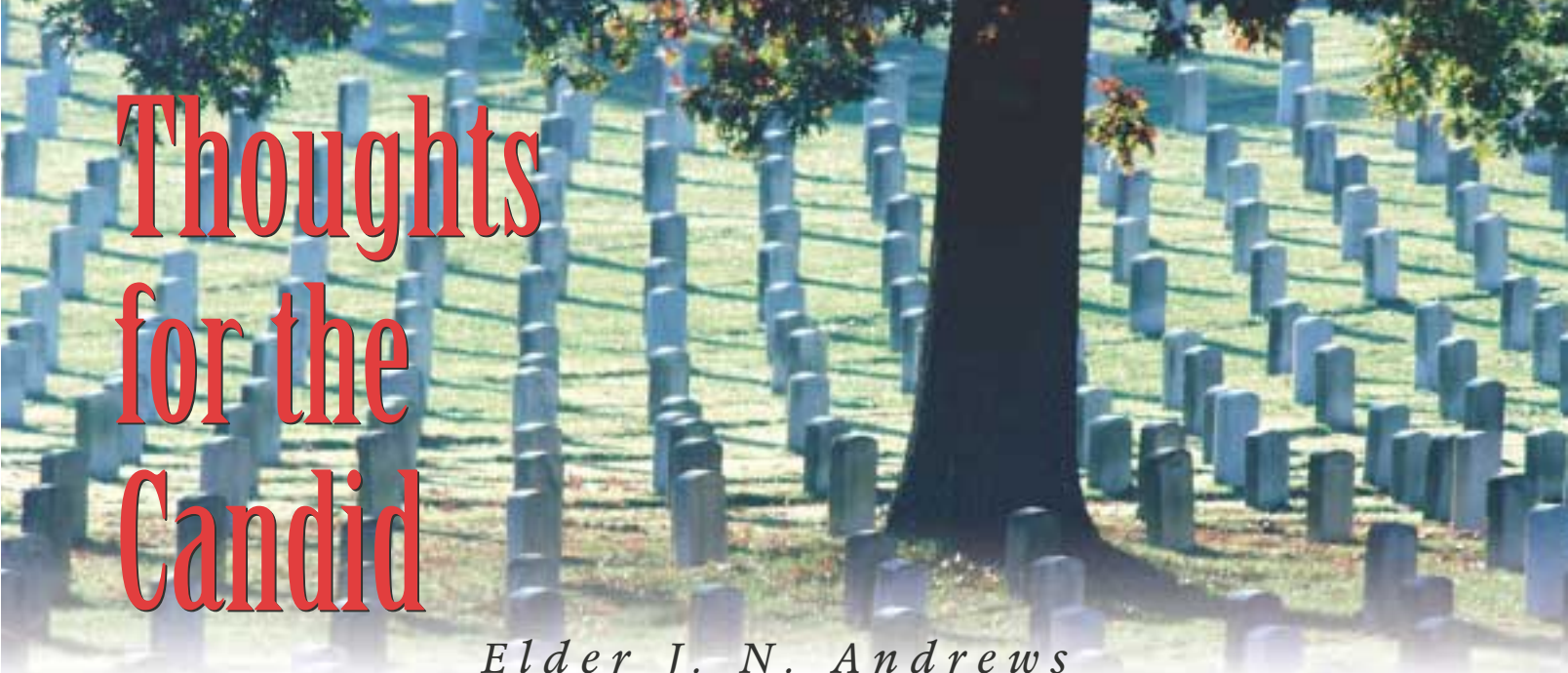
The question that concerns many of us now is, When will the false and true brethren in the church be separated one from the other? When will God’s church militant be purified through the removal of the tares and chaff from the wheat?

In this book, Lloyd and Leola Rosenvold turn to the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy for guidance. How thankful we are for the clarity of Inspiration, so that none need wonder! Jesus says that the separation will take place at “the time of the harvest.” Many have found this book to be a great help to them because it answers a lot of perplexing and troubling questions.

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Thoughts for the Candid

Elder J. N. Andrews

The sleep of the dead is often designated a gloomy doctrine. To many it is chilling, repulsive, forbidding. But the immortality of the soul, and the reward of the saints at death—this is declared to be a great joy, the fruition of the “blessed hope.”

But stop, friends, a few moments. Be not too hasty. Wait long enough to try the justice of this objection in the balances of reason.

You say that the doctrine is full of gloom, and that the departed saints would experience a bitter disappointment in being consigned to the grave for long ages, instead of being received into glory at death. You think the idea full of gloom to the living, and dreadful to the dead. But you forget that, if the doctrine be true, there is no chill, no gloom, no darkness, no disappointment, no lapse of time, no waiting through long ages, to the dead. The interval between their decease and their resurrection will be to them no time at all. The twinkling of an eye, in which the righteous will be changed to immortality, will be as long to them as the whole period during which righteous Abel has slept in death will be to him. And to him, so far as his own knowledge of the case is concerned, it will be precisely as if he entered heaven at the very moment he was slain.

You say that this helps the matter a little; but that, for all this, the sleep of the dead will no more

compare in consolation with the soul’s immortality and the reward at death than the desert of Sahara will compare in beauty with the Garden of Eden. But study a little further, friends. You may discover facts that will change this opinion. You find great consolation in the thought that the soul is immortal, and that men are rewarded as soon as they die. Answer me a few questions. How large a part of mankind lead lives of holiness, and die with good evidence of their acceptance with God? Truth compels you to answer that a minority are all that can be said to do this. What becomes, then, of the great majority of men, who have died out of Christ, and entered their reward? O, it is taught that they have gone into the furnace of fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth! What is the condition, then, at this very moment, of the greater part of the dead, according to this cheering doctrine? You have to answer, They are in unspeakable torment. You admit that this dreadful fact somewhat abates the consolation you have hitherto found in this doctrine.

But I want you to answer one question more. If the soul is immortal, as you affirm, how long are these impenitent men thus to suffer? You answer again, and this time surely with a shudder, *they must suffer to all eternity*. Before we part, will you not own that yours is a gloomy doctrine? Is it not a relief to

your mind to think that men are to be judged *before* they are rewarded or punished, and that till the day of judgment men wait for their reward? And is not that doctrine best which teaches that immortality is the gift of God, and that it is given only to the righteous?

An Examination of Certain Scriptures

The Prayer of the Souls Under the Altar: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Revelation 6:10.

The advocates of the kindred popular doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and that the souls of the righteous go to heaven at death, believe and teach that the souls of martyrs are alive under an altar in heaven, and that they literally pray in the above words for vengeance on their persecutors. They do not seem to see that there is anything inconsistent in the idea that the souls of the martyrs in the presence of God, where there is fullness of joy, should be able to think only of their past tortures, and be entirely given up to anxiety for vengeance on their persecutors, who had hastened their arrival to their state of blessedness. Nor do they seem to realize that such prayers are not only unlike the spirit of Christ, who prayed in an hour of extreme anguish, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do;” but that they are

unlike the spirit of the noble martyr Stephen, who cried with his dying breath, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60. Nor do they explain how such a prayer can be offered literally while the Saviour stands before the ark of God's law as a great Sacrifice, and the Spirit of God strives with sinful men to lead them to repentance. But let this case stand while we look at another.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus teaches, to the same class of people, that the righteous at death go to heaven, and the wicked at death go into the flames of hell. See Luke 16:19-31. It also shows them

kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.)

1. These texts are the record, by different writers, of the same language of the Saviour. The first one is often quoted by those who teach the immortality of the soul and its conscious existence in death. In Matthew's version of the Saviour's

the first of these deaths; but He warns us to fear Him who alone is able to kill with the second death.

4. The place in which the terrible punishment here set forth is inflicted, is called hell. This word is found in the English Testament twenty-three times. But in the Greek Testament there are three different words: *hades*, *gehenna* and *tartarus*, signifying different places, all rendered by the one English word, "hell." Thus, *hades* is used eleven times in the original, and is rendered "hell" ten times and "grave" once.

The following are the places of its occurrence, the italicized word in each case being the translation of *hades*:

Matthew 11:23. Shalt be brought down to *hell*.

16:18. The gates of *hell* shall not prevail.

Luke 10:15. Shalt be thrust down to *hell*.

16:23. In *hell* he lift up his eyes.

Acts 2:27. Wilt not leave my soul in *hell*.

2:31. His soul was not left in *hell*.

1 Corinthians 15:55. O *grave*, where is thy victory?

Revelation 1:18. Have the keys of *hell* and of death.

6:8. Was Death, and *Hell* followed.

20:13. Death and *hell* delivered up the dead.

20:14. Death and *hell* were cast into the lake of fire.

Gehenna is found in the following places:

Matthew 5:22. Shall be in danger of *hell* fire.

5:29. Whole body should be cast into *hell*.

Our Lord recognizes the fact plainly expressed elsewhere, that there are two deaths. The first death . . . is the common lot of mankind. . . . The second death is the portion only of the wicked.

that the wicked in their torment are not only in plain sight of the righteous in their blessedness, but that the two places are within speaking distance of each other, and that the two parties converse together. Now let us put these two cases together:

The souls under the altar had only to look from their state of blessedness to see their persecutors in the flames of hell, or dropping, one by one, into this fiery gulf. Could the martyrs, with this terrible sight before them, pray, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Would they have been bidden to wait yet a little season? Would they not rather have been directed to look across the great gulf, and see many of their persecutors already in torment, and others every moment arriving? Who does not see that these two cases, when taken together, completely refute the doctrine so often drawn from each taken alone!

Thoughts on Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4-5: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to

words, the soul is indeed made very prominent; but in that of Luke, it is not mentioned. Yet the language of the one version is the same substance as that of the other.

2. Thus, while Matthew represents the Saviour as saying, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," Luke expresses the idea thus: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more they can do." And Matthew adds, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Luke gives the same warning, thus: "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell."

3. Thus it is seen that our Lord recognizes the fact plainly expressed elsewhere, that there are two deaths. The first death, which is the common lot of mankind, is thus spoken of by Paul: "It is appointed unto men once to die." Hebrews 9:27. The second death is the portion only of the wicked. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Revelation 2:11. See also 20:6, 14; 21:8. The Saviour bids us not to fear those who can inflict only

- 5:30. Whole body should be cast into *hell*.
- 10:28. Destroy both soul and body in *hell*.
- 18:9. Having two eyes to be cast into *hell* fire.
- 23:15. More the child of *hell* than yourselves.
- 23:33. How can ye escape the damnation of *hell*?
- Mark 9:43. Having two hands to go into *hell*.
- 9:45. Having two feet to be cast into *hell*.
- 9:47. Having two eyes to be cast into *hell*.
- Luke 12:5. Hath power to cast into *hell*.

James 3:6. It is set on fire of *hell*.

Tartarus is used only in the following text: "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to *hell*." 2 Peter 2:4.

Thus *hades* is seen to be *the place of the dead*, whether righteous or wicked; the place into which they are introduced by death, and from which they are delivered by the resurrection. Those who are in *hades* are said to be *dead*. See Revelation 20:13. Once, in the English Testament, *hades* is rendered "grave." 1 Corinthians 15:55. *Gehenna*, on the contrary, is *the place where the wicked are to be cast alive with all their members, and to be destroyed soul and body*. It is *the lake of fire* in which the wicked dead are to be punished after their resurrection. Revelation 20:13-15. *Tartarus* is *the place into which the evil angels were cast after their rebellion*. These three places, therefore, though rendered by the one English word "hell," are not to be confounded with one another.

5. It is claimed that the Saviour, in giving the warning recorded in Matthew 10:28 and Luke 12:4-5,

taught the continued existence of the soul in death. But it is worthy of notice that in each of these texts He utters no warning concerning the punishment of the soul in *hades*, the place or state of the dead. His warning relates to that which shall be inflicted upon "soul and body" together in *gehenna*.

6. That He should speak nothing of the punishment of the soul in its disembodied state in *hades*, if such punishment really takes place, is very remarkable; for here, more than anywhere else in the Bible, is there evidence of the continued existence of the soul while the body is under the power of death. Yet while expressly stating the terrible fate of

8. "Fear him, which *after* he hath killed hath power to cast into *gehenna*." As the wicked are to be cast into *gehenna* alive, and in possession of all their bodily members (see the list of passages in this article where *gehenna* is used), it follows that He who can thus cast them there, after they have once been killed, is God alone; for to do this, He must raise them from the dead. The resurrection to damnation must precede the damnation of *gehenna*. Compare John 5:28-29 with Matthew 23:33.

A Remarkable Cornerstone

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is something indispensable

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is something indispensable to almost every prominent erroneous religious system.

the lost, and that, too, in such connection as would especially call out the fact, if it were a fact, that the souls of the wicked exist in a place of dreadful suffering, between death and the resurrection, the Saviour says not one word concerning the sufferings of the soul in its disembodied state, but confines His warning to that which shall be inflicted upon "both soul and body in hell," that is, in *gehenna*, thus showing that the retribution against which He warns us comes after the resurrection, and not before.

7. Our Lord means to point out precisely the danger to which the ungodly are exposed. When, therefore, He says "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into *gehenna*," He means to teach that God will cast the wicked into *gehenna*. And when Matthew, expressing the same warning in different words, makes the Saviour say, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in *gehenna*," the fact set forth is that such will be the fate of the lost.

to almost every prominent erroneous religious system. It is the cornerstone of heathenism. All or nearly all the gods of heathenism are believed to be dead men who were turned into gods by dying.

Catholicism is indebted to this doctrine for all its saints who are believed to be mediators with God. It is a fundamental idea in the system of purgatory. In fact, Romanism is as much dependent on this doctrine as is heathenism.

Spiritualism is simply the embodiment of this doctrine of natural immortality. It is incapable of existing without it.

Is it not strange that this cornerstone of heathenism, Roman Catholicism, and Spiritualism, should be also the cornerstone of modern orthodoxy? Yet such is the case. It is in these days esteemed the marrow and fatness of Christianity. And so prevalent is the doctrine, that the advent of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment are rendered almost obsolete by it. How much better is life only in Jesus our Lord! ✠



Ellen G. White

Another year has almost passed into eternity. A few more days, and we shall enter a new year. My brethren and sisters, employ wisely the remaining hours of the old year. If you have in any wise neglected your duty, repent before God, and return to the path from which you have wandered. Remember how brief the period of life allotted you. You know not how soon your probation may close. Say not presumptuously, "To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain." James 4:13. God may have different plans for you. Life is but a vapor, "that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth." Verse 14. You know not how soon your hand may lose its cunning, your step its firmness. There is peril in a moment's delay. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD; and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:6-7.

What is your stewardship? Have you during the past year robbed

God in tithes and offerings? Look at your well-filled barns, at your cellars stored with the good things the Lord has given you, and ask yourselves whether you have returned to the Giver that which belongs to Him. If you have robbed the Lord, make restitution. As far as possible, make the past right, and then ask the Saviour to pardon you. Will you not return to the Lord His own, before this year, with its burden of record, has passed into eternity?

We ask your prayers for the advancement of the work. We need them. But we ask that prayer and giving may be united. Let your prayers and your alms rise as a memorial before God. Remember that faith without works is dead. We are to pray, and we are to give all that we can, both of our labor and of our means, for the fulfillment of our prayers.

From age to age Jesus has been delivering His goods to men and women. Soon will come the day when He will call each to account for the use made of these goods. It is God who gives men power to get wealth. He waters the earth with the dews of heaven and with the showers of refreshing rain. He gives the sunlight, which warms the earth,

awakening to life the things of nature, and causing them to flourish and bear fruit. And He asks for a return of His own.

Hoarded wealth is not merely useless; it is a curse. In this life it is a snare to the soul, drawing the affections away from the heavenly treasure. In the great day of God its witness to unused talents and neglected opportunities will condemn its possessor.

There are many who in their hearts charge God with being a hard master because He claims their possessions and their service. But we can bring to God nothing that is not already His. "All things come of thee," said King David, "and of thine own have we given thee." 1 Chronicles 29:14. All things are God's, not only by creation, but by redemption. All the blessings of this life and of the life to come are delivered to us stamped with the cross of Calvary.

The Home a Training School

Fathers and mothers, how stands your record? Have you been faithful to your trust? As you have seen your children inclined to follow a course that you knew would result in impurity of thought and word and

act, have you, first asking God for help, tried to show them their danger? Have you pointed out to them the peril of following a path of their own choosing? Mothers, have you neglected your God-given work—the greatest work ever committed to mortals? Have you refused to bear your God-given responsibilities? In the time of trouble just before us, when the judgments of God fall upon the impure and unholy, will your children curse you because of your indulgence?

Your home is a little world of itself. In it, order, prompt obedience, submission, should prevail. It is a duty that parents owe their children to make wise rules for the guidance of the household, and then to see that these rules are obeyed.

The home is a training school. The mother is the teacher. She is to choose for her children. She is to mold and fashion their characters. She is to teach them to bring God into their lives. She should be so closely connected with God that through her He can work out His will.

Mothers, have you neglected your work? Then I beseech you to take it up now in the fear of God. Be converted. Before the year closes, confess your neglect to your wayward children, and ask them to help you to begin the new year aright, and during its hours, to live for God.

Parents, you are the ones who must decide whether your children shall choose the service of God or the service of mammon, eternal life or eternal death. Watch them carefully and tenderly. Give them wise instructions, line upon line, precept upon precept. Study their dispositions, that you may know what traits of character to repress and what traits to encourage. Teach them to guard constantly against selfishness, fraud, cruelty, dishonesty, and to cherish all that goes to make human beings Christlike. Remember that what your children learn in the home, they will carry with them when they go out into the world, and that it will affect all their future experience.

If you have neglected your work, repent before it is too late, and strive to atone for your neglect. Think of the time you have lost, and be doubly earnest in your efforts to undo the wrong you have done. The result of your neglect you may see in the wayward course of your children, and in their lack of power to resist the corrupting influence of the age. And very plainly you will see it when they go forth to fight the battle of life for themselves. I entreat you to arouse before it is too late, and take up your work, lest you be found unfaithful. To the parent who neglects his lifework, God cannot say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Matthew 25:23.

hearts in humble supplication for themselves and for their children. Let the father, as priest of the household, lay upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to abide.

From every Christian home a holy light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in every act. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. There are homes where this principle is carried out—homes where God is worshiped, and truest love reigns. From these homes, morning and evening prayer as-

It is a duty that parents owe their children to make wise rules for the guidance of the household, and then to see that these rules are obeyed.

Prayer and the Home

In many homes, prayer is neglected. Parents feel that they have no time for morning and evening worship. They cannot spare a few moments to be spent in thanksgiving to God for His abundant mercies—for the blessed sunshine and the showers of rain, and for the guardianship of holy angels. They have no time to offer prayer for divine help and guidance, and for the abiding presence of Jesus in the household. They go forth to labor as the horse or the ox goes, without one thought of God or heaven. They have souls so precious that rather than permit them to be lost, the Son of God gave His life to ransom them; but they have little more appreciation of His goodness than have beasts that perish.

Like the patriarchs of old, those who profess to love God should erect an altar to Him wherever they pitch their tent. If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. Fathers and mothers should lift up their

cends to God as sweet incense, and His mercies and blessings descend upon the suppliants like morning dew.

A well-ordered Christian household is a powerful argument in favor of the reality of the Christian religion—an argument that the infidel cannot gainsay. All can see that an influence is at work in the family that affects the children, and that God is with them. If the homes of professed Christians had a right religious mold, they would exert a mighty influence for good. They would indeed be "the light of the world." Matthew 5:14. The God of heaven speaks to every faithful parent in the words addressed to Abraham: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Genesis 18:19. ✿

Review and Herald, December 23, 1902.

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letters to the editor

Have a letter to share?

contact editor@hopeint.org or see page 3 for our mailing address.

We want to thank you for the material that you publish. It is a real blessing to God's people in these last days!

G., Canada

God bless you and lead you in these last days full of strange events.

TS, Idaho

A brief note to express our appreciation for the quality of your journal. We enjoy the reprints of articles by pioneers of our Church, and especially the articles by Mrs. Ellen G. White. I perceive that there is in our Church a hunger for such materials, and for that reason many are now reading *Our Firm Foundation*. Please continue with the good work.

CB, Tennessee

I am writing to thank you. A few weeks back I sent you a letter to receive some Bibles and your magazine. I told you my situation in paying for them and you blessed me and a friend with a nice discount. Thank you. This isn't the only thing I want to thank you for. I've been blessed with some copies of your magazine, and I see how you're blessing other people with resources to study the gospel and also present it to other people. This is an awesome work! Thank you for what you are doing. Keep up the good work with your magazine. I can't tell you enough how much it blesses me every time I pick it up! Also, thank you for the help it was in my friend's life in making her stay steadfast in the church.

JH, New Jersey

From Overseas

I wrote to you some time ago and the books and the booklets you gave me have done a marvelous work! We were having a crusade and we distributed the booklets to our visitors and they were amazed! Most of them surrendered their lives to Christ.

Very soon we are going to have another one, so I pray you in the name of the Most High that you give us

some more of the books and the booklets—especially the prophetic books.

I hope by the grace of the Almighty God my request will be greatly favored. I will end here by saying that may the good Lord richly bless you all. Shalom!

JA, Ghana

I am happy to pass my personal thanks to you all. The books and Bibles you sent me I have received. I am working in spreading the good news to the people at — town. The Bibles and prophecy books I received I have been giving to people and I am still requesting more so that I can go on giving to others. Brethren and sisters, I am still saying help me so that I may help many others in need of the gospel. Whatever you give me I say thank you. I pray the Almighty God to bless you in giving out your property for the sake of the gospel.

So brethren you still have much to do. And the spreading of the gospel is the special work for those who are on the wait—Titus 2:13. Finally may the Almighty God bless you all.

DM, Kenya

I am so grateful for the parcel that you sent to me. It contained just the magazines that I needed for my spiritual well-being.

It is unbelievable that you could still send me those magazines even though you attend to so many people. I am supposed to start subscribing for *Our Firm Foundation* magazine, for I have never, ever received it before, but I love it! But just be patient with me and I will do it in the nearest future once I get some cash.

What can I give to show my appreciation? I give you the blessings of Jesus Christ. Let Him water the seed sown in those human hearts all around the world. Only God can pay you back for this inspired work that you are doing all over the world.

AW, Nigeria

Calvary greetings in the most precious name of our Lord and Saviour,

Jesus Christ in whom we have true fellowship!

I write to request you to come to our aid. As people involved in outreach, we have, to our dismay, discovered that in our community people do not have Bibles. This does not only apply to the general populace, but even some pastors only have either an old copy of the Bible with a lot of pages missing or just a New Testament copy—a breathtaking situation.

There may be Bibles in the very few bookshops, but they are always priced beyond the reach of many, many people. We are going through a very terrible economic depression and 80% of our national population is living in abject poverty. And so to the bigger portion of our society a Bible is a luxury, though their only hope.

My humble appeal to you is that you send us Bibles to use in our ministry and some Study Bibles for Pastors and Christian leaders.

Your kind consideration will go a long way in resuscitating hope in our hopeless people. As we receive these Bibles and books we assist many people to see the light of Jesus Christ in these days of false doctrine.

May the Almighty God bless you, your ministry and fields of work as we look forward to hearing from you soon.

KS, Zambia

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the sweet fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forever more. Amen. Please, I am a boy of 18 years old who is a newborn in Christ, just a beginner in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Though I read the Bible, but at times I don't understand it when I read.

So I need some books that will help me know details of the Scripture when I read. I will like to know more about the Sabbath, the Sanctuary, Antichrist, Daniel and Revelation. Please include a big Holy Bible, which I hope will help me know more about Christ that I can pass on to other friends. Thank you!

NK, Ghana

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These outreach publications are perfect for sharing with friends, neighbors, relatives, or your local community. Keep some in your car, briefcase, or purse, and have them ready to share with the people you meet every day.

- *Earth's Final Warning*. See how the events that are happening today were predicted years ago, showing the resurrection of the power of the Roman Catholic Church and the fulfillment of Bible Prophecy! Highlights the message of *The Great Controversy*.

Quantities of 1-10	TEHI-EFWA-1	\$0.45	ea.
Quantities of 11 or more	TEHI-EFWA-11	\$0.16	ea.
Case of 750	TEHI-EFWA-750	\$0.10	ea.
5 Cases or more	TEHI-EFWA-3750	\$0.06	ea.

- *Behold He Cometh*. Presents the teachings of the Bible on the essential topics of Christian living. Also contains a study of Bible prophecy in the light of current world events. An excellent follow-up to *Earth's Final Warning*.

Quantities of 1-10	TEHI-BHCO-1	\$0.45	ea.
Quantities of 11 or more	TEHI-BHCO-11	\$0.16	ea.
Case of 700	TEHI-BHCO-700	\$0.10	ea.
5 Cases or more	TEHI-BHCO-3500	\$0.06	ea.

- *Health for Today*. This outreach magazine contains practical information from Adventism's leading health professionals. It also introduces the reader to Ellen White, who was one-hundred years ahead of her time as a health promoter. Use it in sharing God's eight natural remedies with your friends and neighbors!

Quantities of 1-10	MEHI-HFTO-1	\$1.50	ea.
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Case of 175	MEHI-HFTO-175	\$0.65	ea.
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A letter from one of the millions of people reached by these vital messages:

"I received a copy of your tabloid *Earth's Final Warning* in the mail the other day, and I was fascinated by what I read. I am a true believer in the Word of God, and I know that when all else fails, God's Word will prevail. I believe wholeheartedly in Bible prophecy, so when I read the heading of your tabloid—"A New World Order Is Coming"—I knew in my spirit that Bible prophecy was unfolding right before my eyes. I am writing this letter to you to ask if you would send me more information. Whatever you can send me, whether it be more tabloids, books, or other materials, I will be more than grateful."

AB, Georgia

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