Recently I broke open a Chinese fortune cookie and read the following statement: “You will come to realizations in your life that change you forever.” I knew this was an accurate statement, but it had come many years after the fact. It was over thirty years ago that I was baptized into the wonderful Bible truths of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

My certificate of Baptism, dated the 21st of May 1977, is actually sewn into the binding of my Bible. I did come into realizations about God, the Bible and my purpose here that did change me forever. My life was never the same again.

Up to that time, I had practiced law in Colorado Springs, Colorado for several years. At the same time, in my private life, I had been searching for truth. I have been through several stages in my search—evolution, agnostic, atheist, new age, far eastern religions, and on and on, but the truths of the Bible were finally brought forcefully into my life experience.

Jesus had said in John 13:19, “Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.” As I saw the wonderful evidence of the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, I knew the Bible was truly God’s Word. And as I heard testimonies of the changes wrought in lives dedicated to Jesus, there was no question about the path I needed to take.

After practicing law for 14 years in a very successful law firm, I informed my two law partners that I was leaving the law practice to go to the seminary at Andrews to be trained for ministry. One of my law partners, before he died of pancreatic cancer a little over a year ago, said, “Clark, you did the right thing.” Of course, there had never been any question in my mind.

In law school I had been trained in many areas, including the area of determining what is truth by examining the evidence. It is my belief that God has given us sufficient evidence in both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to know that they both are God’s truth. I also believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God’s Remnant Church—it is not Babylon. However, at the same time, I know that tares are brought into the church along with wheat, and some of those tares are allowed to stay in leadership positions in spite of what their effect may be on others within the church. But these situations have existed from early on.

In 1 T 122, Ellen White, was shown in 1855, “that God’s people have been weighed down with clogs; that there have been Achans in the camp….God’s frown has been brought upon the church on account of individuals with corrupt hearts being in it.”

In 1 SM, at page 122, Ellen White states: “We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world.” She goes on in the same paragraph to state: “But how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacles to its advancement! The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan’s devices.”

But why do I say this, at this time, in this editorial? Recently, January 4, 2010, an article appeared in a magazine called Adventist Today. The article written by Loren Seibold, the senior pastor of the Worthington Seventh-day Adventist Church, is entitled, “Letting Roman Catholics Off the Hook.”

The article begins as follows: “For over a century, even before the publication of The Great Controversy, we Adventists have regarded the Roman Catholic Church leadership, typified in the first beast of Revelation 13, as our arch-nemesis, our bête noire, the enemy that takes the evil part in the apocalyptic scenario against God’s remnant. Here are seven reasons why it may be time to question them in that role.” And then seven, very weak, non Biblical and non Spirit of Prophecy reasons are given.

In effect not only is this pastor challenging the writings of Ellen White, including the Great Controversy, but he is also challenging the very clear statements of prophecy contained within the Bible indicating the time when the anti Christ would arise, the changing of times and laws, how long before the deadly wound would be inflicted, and the healing of the deadly wound. He ignores the claims of the church of infallibility, the blasphemy in claiming to be able to forgive man’s sin, and in creating the Creator in the Eucharist. There is also the uplifting of Mary into a God position as redemptrix.

Hope’s purpose in producing Our Firm Foundation has been to encourage the walk of the Seventh-day Adventist people in making it into the Kingdom. We have been accused at times in the past of being critical. We have been denied a table at the exhibits in the General Conference session in Atlanta. Every one of the workers at Hope loves the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but at the same time, it is hard for us to understand how we are the “bad guys” when we point out dangers in the Church, as Ellen White did, and yet how someone who speaks against the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy or who upholds the false doctrine of evolution can remain in their positions within the Church.
Our Mission:
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days remaining for this world are few, and we must work 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. —Editor

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About Hope International:
We are a lay ministry founded, supported, and operated by Seventh-day Adventists to assist God’s Church in the proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel in every way that is consistent with the principles of God as revealed in Inspiration.

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Subscription Information: See page 29 • Shipping & Sales Tax: See page 29

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Knoxville, Illinois
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Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Central Time • Friday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Central Time
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There are many objects of deep interest for the student of Scripture, the accounts of which have been written for our learning, objects which we are intended to contemplate with earnest attention, and from which we may draw spiritual lessons.

Rahab’s Scarlet Cord

No fragile cord this, the “scarlet thread” which Rahab fastened in her window. Its firm twist has borne the weight of the two Israelite spies whom this woman of a doomed race, strong in faith, saved from the pursuit of their enemies. It was a moment of deep anxiety when Rahab led the spies to the casement in the darkness of night, and ere they descended by that scarlet cord, earnestly pleaded with them for the family whom she loved.

Rahab’s plea

“Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father’s house, and give me a true token: and that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death!”

This line of scarlet

“Our life for yours,” answered the men to their brave and generous preserver. “Behold,” they afterwards said, “when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father’s household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless; and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.”

Rahab’s courage

They were gone, those men of Israel; Rahab had faithfully performed the duties of hospitality, of mercy, and now she remained awaiting in trembling hope the fulfillment of the promise which they had made. There hung the scarlet line from her window over the wall of the doomed city: on it was now suspended the safety of herself and her household. We picture to ourselves Rahab watching from that window the miraculous passage of the Jordan by Israel’s hosts under Joshua; the priests descending into the bed of the river, bearing with them the Ark of the Covenant; and the waters standing on a heap to let the Lord’s people go over dry-shod. She beholds the multitudes of Israel, --warriors and women, flocks and herds --streaming across the dry channel of the once rapid river, a countless, an irresistible force, because under the immediate guidance of Him who is omnipotent. We know what was the effect of the marvelous passage on the minds of the people of Canaan: “their heart melted, neither was their spirit in them any more.” Rahab might tremble like the rest; but when she looked on that scarlet cord she would yet thank God and take courage. Those terrible hosts of Israel came not as enemies to her.

The scarlet cord was a pledge and token of mercy

Then followed the siege of Jericho, the city on whose wall stood the dwelling of Rahab. Day after day the woman of Canaan beheld that mysterious march of the Israelites round the city. Strange and terrible must have appeared the solemn procession which for seven days moved round its walls. First came the seven priests with their trumpets, preceding...
the Ark of God. The warriors of Israel followed in stern silence; there was no sound of voice from the hosts whose glittering arms were consecrated to the terrible work of executing the sentence passed by a righteous God upon his guilty creatures. Despair would have oppressed the soul of Rahab, who knew but too well that Jericho was given into the hands of its foes, but for that scarlet line, the pledge and token of mercy to her and all in her house.

**Jericho's final day**

The seventh day dawned, the last that the city of Jericho—as it then stood—ever should see. Seven times the march of the Israelites encircled the walls. Then with what terror must the household, gathered together in the dwelling on the wall, have heard the blast of the trumpet, followed by that thundering shout before which crashing fell bulwark and battlement—all Jericho's pride and strength! Fearful sounds succeeded; slaughter was raging in the streets; the swords of Israel were bathed in blood! Rahab and her family could not but have experienced emotions of pity and horror, as shuddering they listened to those sounds; but they needed to have no feelings of personal fear: that scarlet line was to them a surer defense than strongest bulwark or loftiest tower; a surer defense than a phalanx of spears bristling around them.

**By faith, Rahab perished not**

There was no danger to Rahab from falling wall or from enemy's sword; there was no stain on her threshold, no dying cry in her home. By faith, she perished not with them that believed not. She lived to be a mother in Israel, by adoption one of the people of God, if, as is supposed, it was this Rahab who became the wife of Salmon, and the mother of Boaz of Bethlehem, and thus the ancestress of the blessed Saviour Himself. We naturally suppose that the scarlet cord would be preserved as an heirloom in the family at Bethlehem; that the gentle Ruth, herself a daughter of Abraham by adoption, looked with peculiar interest upon this relic of her husband's Gentile mother; and that young David often gazed with reverential awe on this memorial kept in his father's home of her who, in faith, preserved the Israelite spies. We can scarcely conceive that such a family relic as this would lightly be cast away.

**Rahab, secure in a promise**

There is much that reminds us of Christ's Church, in the position of the pale, anxious woman of Jericho, watching from her casement the Israelites encircling the city doomed to destruction, she herself secure in a promise, saved by faith, reserved for blessedness and honour. A thousand years with the Lord is but as a day, and for nearly six such periods has the silent, solemn march of events, brought nearer the grand consummation before us. The church knows that “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” She is listening with trembling expectation for the sound of the “shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God”, when the earth shall reel to and fro, and the mountains shall shake, and the mighty cities shall fall! She has nothing to fear in that day: the blood of Christ is her salvation—the angel of destruction will see the token of living faith, and touch not the redeemed of the Lord.

**Faith in Christ is our scarlet cord to be witnessed by all**

Yes, faith in Christ is our scarlet cord, and there are two lessons which we may learn from the type. Rahab's cord was not left in her dwelling a useless coil; it was employed in God's service, and it was shown forth in sight of the world. What would the mere possession of a scarlet line have availed to Rahab, if she had not used it in doing God's work? Was not Rahab “justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?” Nor was her scarlet cord hidden from men; it hung from her window over the wall. So should the Christian's profession of faith be open: he should not only believe in Christ, but serve Him—not only serve Him, but confess Him.
I would like to address a topic that has frequently been in the news for a few years and seems to be even more so today - global warming. Most people I speak with have pretty strong views on the subject; either pro or con.

Over the past few months the issue has become quite heated as scientific scandals have revealed some serious flaws in the global warming concept. An e-mail scandal has revealed that a 2007 UN global warming report which is often cited as an authoritative source proving “man-made warming”, may well need rechecking. In this report, a statement that the Himalayan glaciers could disappear by 2035 was based on a study by an environmental advocacy group. This group in turn, referenced an interview with an Indian glaciologist, who now says he never made such a prediction.

SEVERAL ERRONEOUS ACCOUNTS AND LOST DATA
Another claim of receding mountain ice was based on anecdotal evidence and a mountaineering magazine article, rather than systematic scientific evaluation. The report also mistakenly stated that 55 percent of the Netherlands is below sea level. The correct figure is 26 percent.

Another scandal had to do with the fact that Freedom of Information Act requests by skeptical experts seeking computer codes and raw data were blocked. The information wasn’t shared.

Further findings revealed that satellite temperature measurements showed declining temperatures for the past several years, not rising temperatures. Those measurements were ignored in favor of selected ground-level temperatures. It was discovered that many ground-based gauges were placed next to air conditioning exhausts, close to blacktop, and near other heat sources.

Also, a lot of raw data was “lost”, which made it impossible to check the accuracy or methodology.

Perhaps the worst scandal of all was the corruption of the peer review process. Academic papers and studies are supposed to be reviewed by experts in the field (including skeptics). But this didn’t happen with respect to the Climatic Research Unit. Rather, those in charge left skeptics and dissenters out of the literature and then proclaimed that the peer reviews showed unanimous agreement.

EXAGGERATED CLAIMS AND SELECTIVE METEOROLOGICAL REPORTING
In mid March, in Great Britain, government commissioned advertising aimed at raising the awareness in children of climate change was banned for making exaggerated claims and going beyond mainstream scientific consensus.

Other revelations also caused increased skepticism: Scientists from Russia’s Institute of Economic Analyses assert that the Hadley Center of Britain’s Meteorological Office used only 25 percent of Russia’s weather stations in its analysis. Guess what? The Hadley Center used the warmest 25 percent. The NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies faces accusations that it has been picking the Canadian weather stations that show only what they want to show.

POOR RECORD KEEPING AND OFFICE-TIDYING SKILLS
Finally, the head of the research center at the heart of the climate-gate scandal admitted in an interview, after he resigned, that there has been no global warming over the last 15 years. While he still believes in global warming, he also stated that (listen to this) an overall lack of organization, and his poor record keeping and office-tidying skills, had contributed to his reluctance to share data with critics. For a major record keeper for the globe’s temperature to state that he is not a good record keeper is quite an alarming statement.

SOME STRONG EVIDENCE DOES POINT TO GLOBAL WARMING
Now, please don’t jump to any conclusions regarding my personal views on this important subject. Even though I have shared some disturbing information with you, I want to state that I do actually believe that there is certainly some evidence that points toward global warming.

Let me share with you that many scientists believe that global warming has been occurring since 1850. I think that while they are a little off on their date, that there is some solid evidence for this time period having importance in the Global warming picture.

I propose to you that since 1844, not 1850, the earth has been (listen carefully now) pointing toward a rapid global warming.
We are certainly told that the earth is waxing old like a garment, are we not? 6T 178. Also, in 1844, we know that we arrived at the end of the last prophetic time period. EW 242. We also know that Jesus began conducting His closing work in 1844 (GC 435-6), at the completion of which He will lay off His priestly attire, and put on his most kingly robes, and crown, to ride forth on the cloudy chariot, to “thresh the heathen in anger,” and deliver his people. WLF 12.5.

THIS EVIDENCE IS NOT BASED ON MAN’S WISDOM

Now, let me state that the evidence I have for this statement about the earth pointing toward a rapid global warming since 1844 is not based on man’s wisdom, for we know that “cursed be the man that trusteth in man”. Jeremiah 17:5.

NO FLAWED DATA OR POOR RECORD KEEPING HERE!

Unlike the faulty and flawed data and research that is being presented currently, the data I present to you comes from a source fully reliable. The author of the majority of the information I share, will not alter the things that have gone out of His lips (RH, April 16, 1901) and we are told in the book of John that He is full of truth (John 1:14) and that “His word is truth”. (John 17:17). And in Proverbs He tells us “my mouth shall speak truth”. Proverbs 8:7.

I also want to point out that He has a long, long history of being an excellent record keeper. The records He keeps are both imperishable (RH 7-31-1894) and immortal. (RH 1-27-1891). As far as his organizational skills are concerned, He is unmatched. He is a God of order (ST 274), and order is the first law of Heaven. (6T 200). It is said of Him that, by His hand He holds in their orderly arrangement and timeless activity all things throughout the universe. AA 473.

The second author is also extremely reliable and truthful as she has proven time and again her validity as a true prophet of God.

So now let me share my facts that point towards a soon occurring global warming:

“Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: [this shall be] the portion of their cup.” Psalm 11:6.

“But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he [is] like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:” Malachi 3:2.

“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Malachi 4:1.

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3:10.

DEFINITELY SOUNDS LIKE GLOBAL WARMING TO ME!

Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. The earth’s surface seems one molten mass—a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men—"the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.” GC 672.2.

"I will utterly consume all [things] from off the land, saith the LORD.” Zeph. 1:2.

“For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.” Deut. 32:22.

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.” Jer. 7:20.

“Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy:” 9T 95.5, 96.

WE NEED NOT FEAR OR WORRY

I believe these quotes from Scripture and the SOP speak of true global warming; an event of the most awful consequences. While the melting of Glaciers, the raising of the average temperatures, the rising of ocean levels, and other suspected effects of global warming may indeed have significance in our lives, if they occur, and while I do not want to negate the fact that man has abused the planet and neglected his responsibility for the care of his world, the global warming event about which I am speaking is an event with far greater consequences. We would be wise to not only consider this global warming, but to prepare for it as well. However, we need not fear or worry, we have the promise that we will be delivered from this global warming. We need not experience it if we are faithful and obedient and we also have the promise that He will give to all who desire, the power to be faithful.

SHARE HIM AND HIS TRUTH

So, my Brothers and Sisters, seek Him, seek His truth, seek His faithfulness, accept His love and forgiveness. But do not stop there, Share Him and His truth so that others may be delivered from global warming as well.

But amid the tempest of divine judgment the children of God will have no cause for fear. “The Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” Joel 3:16. The day that brings terror and destruction (and might I add global warming) to the transgressors of God’s law will bring to the obedient “joy unspeakable and full of glory” “Gather My saints together unto Me,” saith the Lord, “those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge Himself.” PP 341.

Tim Davies is a retired college professor and business consultant who lives with his family on a mountain farm in North Carolina.
By Mrs. Ellen White

“Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.” Expecting to see Jesus at the Passover, the Pharisees had laid a trap for him. But Jesus, knowing their purpose, had absented himself from this gathering. “Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes.” As he did not go to them, they came to him.

Ye hold the tradition of men

This deputation was sent from Jerusalem for the express purpose of watching Jesus, that something might be found with which to accuse him. The Pharisees saw that the disciples did not observe diligently the traditions of the elders. They did not practise the custom of “washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables”. Hoping to provoke a controversy, the Pharisees said to Christ, “Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?” They thought to draw from Christ words of which they could make capital. But he answered them with authority, while divinity was revealed with startling power: “Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.”

They set aside the fifth commandment

Christ gave them an example of what they were repeatedly doing, and had done just before coming in search of him. “Full well ye reject the commandment of God,” he said, “that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother.” They set aside the fifth commandment as of no consequence, but were very exact in carrying out the tradition of the elders. The sayings of supposed great men had been handed down from rabbi to rabbi, nullifying the plain requirements of God, “making the word of God of none effect,” said Christ; “and many other such like things ye do.”

The words of Christ clearly defined sin

“And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand.” He spoke with no hesitation, but with authority, as one who would flash light upon all around him. “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.” These words, spoken in the hearing of the multitude, infuriated the ecclesiastical powers. The cavilers were seeking to destroy Christ’s influence over the people, but he flashed forth such divine truth that they dared not ask him further questions. Christ knew that if he could speak directly to the people, opening to them the Scriptures, he would be heard; for they were in a far more receptive frame of mind than were the leaders. The punishment would fall upon those who were leading them from the path of rectitude. The people listened eagerly to all that Christ said; for never before had they heard such words. They were plain, direct, forcible, and brief, and clearly defined the true meaning of sin and pollution.

The unconverted heart sees everything in a perverted light

The Pharisees had given expression to their hatred, but they dared not then carry out their full purpose. They slunk away, repulsed. They would not receive the light shining on their pathway. When the light shines forth, those who are unwilling to receive it begin to cultivate in the heart the seeds of bitterness. These they also plant in other hearts. This evil seed prepares a place for itself, and the unconverted heart sees everything in a perverted light. So it was with the Pharisees.

 Nothing is hid from Christ

“Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draft? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from
the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man."

False religious requirements
In this our day we meet the same false religious requirements upheld by the Pharisees. The fourth precept of the decalogue is set aside, as the Jews set aside the fifth commandment, while traditions are eagerly grasped and enforced. The Lord did not give the Jews their multitudinous traditions and ceremonies. He did not require them to occupy precious time in doing that which was of no benefit to any one, while they disregarded his commands; neither has he commanded men to observe the first day of the week.

Following the path of the Jews
To a large degree the religious world is following in the path of the Jews. The Pharisees taught for doctrine the commandments of men, making the word of God void by their traditions, and thus the teachers of today are doing by upholding the first day of the week, a day that bears not the divine credentials. They clothe their false Sabbath with a garb of sanctity, and many would compel its observance by imprisonment and fine. Under the enemy's training, their zeal will grow until, like the Jews, they will think they are doing God a service by heaping reproach on those who have the moral courage to keep his commandments.

The foundation of the Sabbath
Those who do this venture to make of none effect a commandment instituted in Eden; for there, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, the foundation of the Sabbath was laid, and the seventh day was set apart to be observed as sacred. The Lord blessed this day as the day of his rest, and sanctified it, commanding man to "remember." Do not forget it; keep it holy.

God will bear with ignorance awhile longer
Man has no permission from God to nullify one precept of the decalogue. He has no permission to lead the minds of others to bow to an idol, or to make laws compelling God's heritage to worship that which is false. Of those who do this, God says, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." They place the commandments of men on a level with the divine requirements; yea more, they exalt a spurious Sabbath above the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Their obedience to man-made requirements makes their worship null and void; but God bears with their ignorance till light comes to them.

Men follow tradition when worshiping on a common working day
The worship of a common working-day, and the multitudinous ceremonies connected with this false sabbath, are of the same nature as the wrongs pointedly exposed by Christ when he said, "And many other such like things ye do." The plain evidence of truth is not discerned. Laying aside the commandments of God as altogether unimportant, men follow tradition. They reject God's law, in order that they may keep their tradition. Common things are exalted above those things that are sacred and heavenly.

Satan exalts himself in this false Sabbath
Satan has taken the world captive. He has introduced an idol sabbath, apparently giving to it great importance. He has stolen the homage of the Christian world away from the Sabbath of the Lord for this idol sabbath. The world bows to a tradition, a man-made commandment. As Nebuchadnezzar set up his golden image on the plain of Dura, and so exalted himself, so Satan exalts himself in this false Sabbath, for which he has stolen the livery of heaven.

The Sabbath is God’s memorial of creation and rest
In this work the principles of the enemy are deep and deceiving, and Christ's words are appropriate, "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men." The heavenly universe is amazed that, in their credulity, men transfer the benediction given to the seventh day to the first day of the week. The Sabbath is God's memorial of creation and rest, and at the beginning of the Sabbath command he places the word of warning, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." Thus it was with the Jewish nation, and thus it will be with all who, laying aside the commandments of God, teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

RH, March 8, 1898

Ellen G. White, 1827–1915, received the spiritual gift of prophecy, and the fruits of her life and work accord with the biblical tests of a true messenger of God. To this day, her counsels are an incalculable blessing to God’s people around the world.
Far from the world of sin and care,
    Unseen by mortal eye,
There stands a city passing fair,
    Gleaming in yon bright sky.
There, where the teardrops never fall,
    Love's banners bright unfurl,
And set within the jasper wall,
    Are wondrous gates of pearl.

They'll swing full wide in welcoming,
    Obeying God's behest,
And the redeemed shall enter in,
    Their glorious home of rest.
No gloomy clouds, enwreathed with storm,
    Their darts shall ever hurl,
But radiant are the skies of morn,
    Behind the gates of pearl.

City of light, thou land of love,
    Garden of fadeless flowers,
Soon shall the ransomed dwell above,
    In heaven's radiant bowers.
The stormy voyage o'er at last,
    Each straining sail they furl;
'Tis God, and heaven, and home at last
    Beyond the gates of pearl.
This question is one that every person on the planet asks at one point or another. I was young when I first really began to ask that question. I was a 20-year-old, in the Army, doing all manner of things that a young man should not have been doing, and was already getting tired of it. At 20, I was sick and tired of all that the devil had to offer, and wanted to know if this life was all there was, and what happened when I died. Was there an afterlife? Was this it? If it was, I thought, this was all a really sad, cosmic joke. 50, 60, 80 years and then poof… all over? And during that time, there could be so much pain and suffering. I just couldn’t see it, so I wanted to know for sure.

WE DID NOT COME FROM STARDUST

In my musings about evolution and creation and such things, I somehow understood that we, that is, human beings, did not just come up out of the slime or from stardust. It has always amazed me when people say that to believe in a God who created everything takes faith. To me, what takes faith is to NOT believe that Someone or Something made all of this.

I remember reading an article in National Geographic, and bringing it up to the staff at morning worship one day. I wish I had kept up with it. The article purported to explain creation. I mean, it was not presented as a theory… it said that they now “know” how life came about. I am not making this up.

AND THEN SOMETHING HAPPENED

The article started with some gases in the cosmos I think… I don’t really remember now, but what I do remember was that they went on at great length to explain how it all came to pass. They started with stars colliding and matter coming together and light from other stars being involved or something like that, and then they said this… and I will never, ever, ever forget what it was. They said, after introducing how things had come together thus far… “and then something happened.”

Then, the article went on to state how everything came to be after the, “and then something happened”. I couldn’t believe my eyes! There it was in black and white stating that they “knew” how life originated and their explanation was, “and then something happened.” I should have framed that particular issue.

And it takes faith to believe that we were created by an All Powerful God? Not in my book. Anyway, I believed that there was a God, but beyond that, and what would happen when I died, was a mystery to me.

THE RULES OF SCIENCE SEEM TO CHANGE OFTEN

Now, where was I to find the answer to my question? I had little to no faith in science because they changed whatever they said every other Tuesday. Rules that the scientists have said were absolutes have often been found out not to be absolutes. Carbon dating is a perfect example. Scientists, so called, have found ways to determine the age of things like stones and bones and whatever. It has been found out that it’s all a joke. They have actually taken a sample of what the scientists thought was petrified wood to have it dated, and they would assign some astronomically old date to it, only to find out that the wood was “petrified” in a lab three days earlier by chemical and mechanical means.

Scientists have stated how long it takes for wood to turn into charcoal. Supposedly, it takes millions of years for that, too. But another scientist made charcoal in his lab from a new piece of wood in a few days. And there are thousands of examples like this. Just think of what the scientists have said about how to heal the body! Every few years, whatever method we are told to use changes. So, science was not where I felt comfortable getting my answers.

WHICH RELIGION?

Religions talk about God, but which one? Just from shear logic, I couldn’t see God being some fat guy sitting around all the time. If he was God, then why not be in
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perfect shape? I looked into several other religions, but the only one that ever made sense was Christianity. This one was all about a God of love and Him creating us and how much He wants us to come back to Him and giving us His only Son to die for us. For me anyway, just the logic of it was overwhelming. It just felt right to me too. THIS was the right way and where I could get my answers.

WHICH INTERPRETATION OF WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH?

Well, Christianity uses as its foundation the Holy Bible. So, I started reading the Bible. I started in Genesis and read through Revelation. And I became friends with several different people of several different denominations, and as you can imagine, I learned several different interpretations about what happens to you when you die. I understood that when you died, you either went to heaven or hell or purgatory, although the whole purgatory idea seemed odd to me because the Bible never talked about a place like that. But there were verses in the Bible that talked about heaven and hell.

WHERE WAS HELL?

When, or where, or how was still a bit of a mystery to me. But there were some issues about going right to heaven or hell after you died in my mind. Firstly, where was hell? According to the Bible, God plans on raining down fire from heaven and destroying all the wicked in a lake of fire. “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” Rev. 20: 9, 10.

That was one issue. All of the wicked are to be destroyed, the Bible says, in a lake of fire. According to what I read, if you accepted Christ in your life, you had your name written in the Book of Life. If not... you would die... in the lake of fire. “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev. 20:15. Well, I haven’t been all over the world, but I have not seen or heard of any huge lake of fire anywhere with people burning in it. And if it is in the middle of the earth somewhere, what was the point of “raining” it down? It just didn’t make sense to me.

WHY IS HE COMING BACK TO GET US?

Then there was another biggie to me. Remember, I had read the whole Bible. I was in no way any kind of scholar, but I knew what the Bible said now. I would highly suggest for anyone who wants to know the truth about something in Christianity, to read the Bible through, and don’t just take someone else’s word for it... including mine. I read that Jesus was going to come back to this earth to take us home with Him. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14: 1-3. Jesus is going to come back here and take us home. Those are His own words.

HOW CAN THIS BE?

Well, wait a minute! If we are already in heaven, (if we have died) then why is He coming back to get us? That made absolutely no sense to me. Well, maybe it was just the people who are alive on the earth when Jesus comes back? No, then I was reminded of what Paul said... “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thes. 4:15-17. The dead are raised first, then we, who are alive and remain, are caught up in the air to meet Jesus. How, then, can we be in heaven and then go back into the grave, and then go back to heaven? Made no sense to me at all.
WHY DIDN'T THOSE WHO HAD BEEN RESURRECTED SPEAK OF THEIR EXPERIENCES IN HEAVEN OR HELL?

Then there was another issue to me. What about all of the dead people that had been brought back to life by either one of the prophets or by Jesus Himself? There is not a single solitary mention of ANY of them discussing their experience in heaven or in hell, whichever the case may have been for them. And can you imagine the complaint in being brought back to live on this old, decrepit planet again after experiencing the bliss of heaven? That would be too cruel, and I could not imagine Jesus treating anyone like that. It was the idea of being brought back to life that taught me what happens when you die. This was from the words of Jesus Himself. “These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.” John 11:11:14.

JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES THAT LAZARUS WAS SLEEPING

Lazarus had died. As a matter of fact, he was so dead that he had begun to decompose. Jesus asked to have the stone removed that covered the mouth of the cave where Lazarus had been buried. “Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.” John 11:39. Lazarus was dead… quite dead. Yet Jesus told His disciples that Lazarus was sleeping, and that He must go and wake Him. And the disciples, thinking Jesus was unaware that Lazarus was actually dead, said that he would be doing well if he were just sleeping. But, as usual, the disciples didn’t get what Jesus was talking about, so Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.” Now the disciples knew that Jesus was aware that Lazarus was dead. Then why say that Lazarus is sleeping? Because Jesus was making the point that death is a sleep. You don’t go to heaven; you don’t go to hell, you don’t go to purgatory or anywhere else. You go to sleep.

THE OLD TESTAMENT CONFIRMS THAT THE DEAD SLEEP IN THE DUST TILL JESUS COMES

Even the Old Testament says the same… “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Dan. 12:2. We sleep in the dust. We await our final disposition; either everlasting life, or everlasting contempt. But in the meantime, we rest in the grave. We sleep.

Job understood the same thing. “And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.” Job 7:21. For now, we sleep in the dust, just like Daniel said.

Job says that in the morning, if you look for him, he will not be. He didn’t say, if you look for him in the morning, that he would be gone, or would be in heaven or anything else. He said he would not be. Now it all starts to make sense. If the dead people are in their graves, then when Jesus comes back, He will have people to take back to heaven with Him. If the dead are asleep, then if they were brought back to life, as in the case of Lazarus and many others, there would have been nothing to talk about, because they were asleep.

If there is one thing that I have learned in my last 35 or so years of being a Christian, it is that God is logical. He makes sense.

JESUS SAID THAT JAIRUS’ DAUGHTER WAS JUST SLEEPING

One more illustration of Jesus saying that a dead person was just sleeping: “And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee,
come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.” Mark 5:22, 23. I won’t go into the whole story, but Jairus was desperate because his child was just about dead. He needed for Jesus to hurry before it was too late. But another person needed His attention, and it took Him a little while before He got to Jairus’ house.

And when He arrived… it was too late. The little girl was dead. “And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.” Mark 5:39-42. Jesus said, “Why are you carrying on? She’s just sleeping.”

SHE WAS SIMPLY DEAD ASLEEP
He knew she was dead, but He was making a point…, again…, that they obviously missed, for the Bible says that they, “Laughed Him to scorn.” Today, when you suggest to some people that the dead are just resting in their graves, and are not in heaven or hell, they still laugh you to scorn. No problem… they did the same to Jesus Christ Himself.

And this may be a little further than most people will go, but it is interesting what the Greek word for “arise” is. Remember when Jesus said to the little girl to, “arise?” Well, the Greek word is “egiro,” which translated means, “to waken, or to rouse, as from sleep.” Jesus woke her up from sleep, or her death slumber. She wasn’t anywhere else. She was simply… dead asleep. That same word, “arise” was used by Jesus another time to raise the dead.

WAKE UP!
“And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.” Luke 7:11-15. “Arise,” or maybe another translation would have been, “Wake up!” There are Bible translations that say that very thing… “Wake up!”

WHEN ARE THE DEAD RAISED ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE?
Jesus raised some people from the dead while He was here on earth. Some people have been taken to heaven, and I guess we can allow Jesus to take who He wants when He wants. But the vast majority of us will wait in our graves to hear Jesus’ voice call us. Paul said as much to the Corinthians…”Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” When are we changed? When are the dead raised, according to Paul? At the “last trump.” 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

SOME OF US WILL BE ALIVE WHEN JESUS RETURNS AND WILL NOT EXPERIENCE DEATH
And he said too that not all of us would sleep. Some would go straight to heaven. Some would not see death. Some will be alive when Jesus comes and will never have to sleep. And God determines each and every case and what will happen with them. Doesn’t that make sense to you? Almost everyone who has ever lived is quietly, serenely sleeping. And God will raise them up at the last trump. The righteous will be raised to everlasting immortality, and the wicked to everlasting contempt.

Jesus could not have made it plainer. Lazarus is asleep. Jairus’ daughter is asleep. Daniel said he would sleep. Job said he would sleep. The psalmist David also said that when you die you sleep… “Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death;” Ps. 13:3.

EVERYONE WHO HAS DIED IS ASLEEP
For me, the idea of just about everyone waiting until the same time to receive his or her reward is so totally fair. There haven’t been people burning for thousands of years. There are no loved ones looking down from heaven
Joe Olson serves as the executive director and chairman of the board of Hope International. He also travels as an international speaker.
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Folks are complaining now, I hear, about their poverty,—
Of money scarce, and times as hard as times, perhaps, can be.
But I am very rich; for I have raiment, food and health,
And multitudes of treasures,—yes, I’m rolling in my wealth.

I have two eyes to see with,—they are worth ten thousand pound,—
A pair of ears to hear with, and feet for walking round;
No one could purchase these from me for twenty thousand more;
My hands, so useful, raise the sum of thousands to threescore.

My tongue, though oft unruly, yet to me is such a prize,
I would not sell it cheaper than I would my precious eyes;
My head, though somewhat empty, fits upon my neck so well,
I would not part with it though you the price to millions swell.

I own a lifelong interest in that huge world, the sun;
The moon is partly mine, also; my list is but begun,
For I have stock in all the stars that seem to crowd the sky;
They shine their dividends on me, although they are so high.

The clouds that gather in the sky, and shed on me their rain,
And winds that bring them hither, are my servants, it is plain;
I plant no fields, and yet I garner harvests full and grand,
In eye-crops, rich and beautiful, o’er all our fruitful land.

I hold no houses in my name,—that is, they’re not called mine,—
For to the cares of property I never did incline;
But if I held by legal claim all dwellings ‘neath the sun,
I’d do as now,—let others have them all, excepting one.
I've had great artists painting for me very many years;
For centuries before my name among earth's sons appears,
The masters, old and new, for my delight have done their part;
I go to see my galleries, rejoicing in their art.

Romancers, poets, essayists, historians,—all have vied
With one another zealously, their skill and genius tried.
To offer me a literature, and let their very selves,
From divers climes and ages, speak from the bookcase shelves.

Astronomers are on the watch, like sentinels, to see
The movements of the heavenly host, and they report to me
The latest news received from constellation or from star,
Or of the frisky comets plunging into space so far.

Inventors tax their brains for me,—sharp-witted men and keen.—
To put in my possession some new, wonderful machine,
By which toil is easy made, and I subdue, as king,
The stubborn earth, and make it to me all its tribute bring.

The railways spanning our broad land, and managed with such skill,
Are mine, to all intents at least; they take me where I will.
My telegraph thrills through the world, down and underneath the sea,
And brings each distant country a near neighbor unto me.

And thus from every quarter, whether sea or earth or sky,
My riches are enormous; and I cannot if I try,
Join in the murmurs of my friends, pretending I am poor.
All things are mine,—God says it, and his word is very sure.

Pastor E. G. Taylor

Editor's note: The above poem came out of the Review and Herald of March, 1898. I am not sure what the economic times were then, but there are many more conveniences today that we have access to, even without money.
“Far from my thoughts vain world be gone, Let my religious hours alone.”

SERVING TWO MASTERS

From the Bible Looking Glass 1914 Edition

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Luke 16:13.

Faint not, Christian! Though in rage, Satan would thy soul engage, Gird on faith’s anointed shield,-- Bear it to the battle-field.

Faint not, Christian! Though within There’s a heart so prone to sin; Christ, the Lord is over all; He’ll not suffer thee to fall.
Both God and Mammon cannot sit upon the throne

“No man can serve two masters,” is the solemn affirmation of Him “who spake as never man spake.” There must be one ruling purpose in Life. God, or Mammon, which stands for the world with all its allurements, must reign in the heart. Both cannot sit upon the throne. Satan, the great arch enemy of man will seek to enter into the very sanctuary of the church itself, to fill the mind of the hearer of the Word with thoughts foreign to the occasion. The one into whose ear he is pouring his suggestions, as the toad squatted at the ear of Eve, may not of necessity be a worldling.

One may be a professing Christian, yet be neglectful of Christian duties

He may not have chosen mammon for his God. He may be a professing Christian. He may have solemnly promised before an earthly congregation and before witnessing angels that he steadfastly purposed, by God’s help, to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and to keep God’s Holy will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life. But he has been neglectful of Christian duties. He has not been faithful in reading God’s word and in private prayer. He has not made the proper preparation for the services of the Lord’s House, and for the reception of the Gospel of Truth. He has not thought that there must be a dutiful attention on his part as a hearer, as there must be on the part of the Minister as a preacher. He has not asked fervently for God’s Blessing to rest upon the delivery of the message of Christ’s Ambassador to dying men.

Have you sat beside the devil in church?

Has he been reading or watching news or other information that would draw his mind away from those spiritual items needful in his walk with Jesus? Has he brought into the church setting the world, the flesh and the devil along with him? As he sits down and goes through the form of listening, though with ill-concealed weariness, to what he thinks are the stale platitudes of the Sermon, the adversary is busy doing the work he loves to engage in. Thoughts of business and pleasure go whirling through his brain. He is buying and selling and bargaining in spirit and is thus making his Father’s House a house of merchandise. With a distracted and divided mind he cannot offer unto God the “Sacrifices of Thanksgiving and Praise.”

His plain, urgent duty is to “resist the devil” that he may flee from him. He should pray, and strive to answer his own prayer, “Far from my thoughts vain world be gone, Let my religious hours alone.”

We must serve God with a single heart and mind

He should follow the noble example of that great English Statesman, Mr. Gladstone, who, for nearly sixty years, moved so conspicuously on the stage of action, and won by his genius and humanity the admiration of mankind. This distinguished man made it the rule of his life to put aside on the holy Sabbath the books which were not helpful in a religious direction. No political or state papers were allowed to obtrude themselves. He thus tried to live on the Lord’s Day in an atmosphere congenial to piety and devotion. With unvarying regularity he went to Church, to worship with a mind attentive to its sacred requirements. He was a faithful Bible class teacher and loved to lead the young in the way of righteousness and truth.

Christian reader, serve God with a single heart and mind. Do not attempt the impossible in trying to serve God and listen to the devil, for “What concord hath Christ with Belial?”
Heaven’s Unspeakable Gift

Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. “With His stripes we are healed.”

By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan’s purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us.

. . . Christ is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite love. . . . By love’s self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union.

The work of redemption will be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God’s grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,--here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, “and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself, shall be with them, and be their God.” And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift, Immanuel, “God with us.”--Mrs. E. G. White. RH, February 25, 1915
ACROSS
3. A king of Persia
4. Whom did Paul call his own son in the faith?
5. Who was a prophetess during the time of the curse of Meroz?
8. Who anointed Saul as king of Israel?
9. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the ______.
11. The day of the Lord will come ________.
13. What was Esther’s uncle’s name?
16. A Governor of Judea after the return from Babylonian captivity
18. Jeremiah was the son of ________.
20. “Woe be unto the _______ that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!”
21. In which book of the Bible is the curse of Meroz pronounced?
22. A king that was guilty of adultery and murder
24. Who was Isaiah’s father?
25. Who was Belshazzar’s father?
26. The ______ movements will be rapid ones.
27. “The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the ______ of the character of his people.”
28. Before a king was appointed over Israel, what were the leaders called?

DOWN
1. Watchmen and laymen must give what a certain sound?
2. What shall be preached to all before the end comes?
6. If a man desires the office of a ______, he desireth a good work.
7. How many sons of Jesse initially followed Saul to battle against the Philistines?
8. Who slew the Gibeonites?
10. Ezra belonged to what tribe of Israel?
12. Who was Jesse’s firstborn son?
14. The agencies of ______ are combining their forces and consolidating.
15. Who was the king that Esther became the queen of?
17. Who was the main villain in the book of Esther?
19. What was one of the terms applied to Cyrus by God?
20. The longest book of the Bible
23. The ______ angel selects the wheat from the tares
Christian Crossword

Answers from Christian Crossword published in the April 2010 issue of Our Firm Foundation

**ACROSS**

4. Paul's companion on his first journey from Antioch to Cyprus [BARNABUS]
6. The father of Samson [MANOAH]
7. A tax collector that became a follower of Jesus [MATTHEW]
10. The originators of the Dead Sea Scrolls [ESSENES]
12. A Sabbath keeping minister arrested for preaching on the Sabbath in 1661 [JAMES]
16. A Jewish historian [JOSEPHUS]
18. _____ was not completed at the cross [ATONEMENT]
20. "The scepter shall not depart from Judah until _____ come." [SHILOH]
21. Those "more noble than those in Thessalonica" [BEREANS]
24. Israel's original given name [JACOB]
26. The Roman prosecuting attorney employed by the Sanhedrin [TERTULLUS]
27. "_____ is a fruitful bough." (Tribe) [JOSEPH]
28. The second son of Joseph [EPHRAIM]
30. One of the 12 apostles whose name is only found in Mark and Matthew [THADDAEUS]

**DOWN**

1. He fell from the window during a sermon of Paul's [EUTYCHUS]
2. Joseph's first son [MANASSEH]
3. "_____ shall be a serpent by the way." (Tribe) [DAN]
5. The Moabite ancestress of King David [RUTH]
8. The sanctuary to be cleansed is in _____ [HEAVEN]
9. Another name for tax collector [PUBLICAN]
11. Paul's companion in jail in Philippi [SILAS]
13. Who is the Gospel of Luke addressed to? [THEOPHILUS]
14. "In the beginning was the ____." [WORD]
15. A young German who accepted the Sabbath while cutting wood in Iowa [CONRADI]
17. Cousin of the Virgin Mary [ELIZABETH]
19. Another name for Dorcas [TABITHA]
22. The school founded in Australia by SDAs. [AVONDALE]
23. The wife of Cleophas [MARY]
25. Ellen White's mother's name [EUNICE]
O Holy book of truth divine,
Eternal as thy Maker's name,
Through countless ages of decline
Thy glowing truths have stood the same!

The dust of time is on thy page,
Yet dims no pure and hallowed thought.
In every clime, in every age,
Have saints thy holy comfort sought.

Thou art the life, the joy, the light,
The hope of trusting thousands here,
Whose faith shall find eternal sight
Beyond this dreary mortal sphere.

O wondrous lamp of promise sweet,
Thy light illumineth the trusting soul
With glory that shall be complete
When days and years have ceased to roll!
Cherries Are Not Just for Banana Splits!

Finishing up the top 3 phenomenal healing fruits would be the wonderful, sweet, and delicious cherry! Do you normally think of cherries as a medicinal food? You should! Cherries are packed with nutrients galore and have many other added benefits.

THE NUTRITION OF CHERRIES

One cup of pitted cherries has only 87 calories. That’s right! That same cup of cherries has no cholesterol, no fat, and no sodium, making it an excellent choice for those on a low-calorie, low-fat, and low-sodium diet. Do you have high cholesterol? Cherries should be your pick… no pun intended. Cherries are known as a “Super Fruit.” Here are some of the reasons why cherries have earned that title:

CHERRIES CONTAIN:

- Anthocyanins
- Beta-carotene (vitamin A)
- Melatonin
- Fiber
- Folate
- Iron
- Magnesium
- Potassium

I’ll address just a few of the many components of the cherry in this article. Cynthia Thomson at the Department of Nutritional Sciences and Chieri Kubota at the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Arizona have reviewed research published from around the world on the benefits of cherries as they relate to cancer. Their findings are encouraging. They found that anthocyanin, found in only one cup of cherries amounted to about 80.2 mg, with Bing cherries being noted as being especially high in anthocyanin. They also found that “cyanidin accounts for 93 percent of sweet cherries’ level of anthocyanin, or 75.2 mg per cup. This is significant because it is believed that cyanidin has particular importance in terms of reducing cancer risk.” They go on to say, “Cyanidin can lead to a significant increase in “free radical scavenging”.” (1)

We know the benefits of free radical scavenging. The more free radicals we can rid our body of, the better our chances of achieving and maintaining good health. You want as many anthocyanins as you can get!

CHERRIES ARE EFFECTIVE IN TREATING INFLAMMATORY-RELATED CONDITIONS

In a study by University of Michigan researchers, it was revealed that adding cherries to the diet of test animals reduced inflammation by up to 50 percent. It is believed that the anthocyanins in cherries make them effective in treating inflammatory-related conditions, such as arthritis. “Studies also suggest antioxidant-rich foods, like cherries, may help reduce levels of nitric oxide, a compound associated with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.” (2)

There is a connection between arthritis, inflammation, and gout as well. The notion that cherries might help with arthritis and gout was introduced back in 1950. A study concluded that people, who suffered from gout and arthritis, relieved their gout attacks and the pain related to their arthritis just by eating cherries. The researchers found that the patients in the study had lower blood levels of uric acid. It is believed that elevated levels of uric acid are associated with the onset and progression of gout. There are more studies being done to suggest tart cherry consumption may help relieve arthritis symptoms, too. Does it sound like cherries might be a good choice for your diet?

SWEET DREAMS AND CHERRIES!

Not getting your beauty sleep? You may want to consider cherries. “Why?” you may ask. It’s because cherries contain a fair amount of melatonin. Russel Reiter, Ph.D., University of Texas Health Science Center, said to be the “Dean"
of melatonin research, quotes, “We were surprised at how much melatonin was in cherries, specifically tart cherries.”

“Melatonin is a hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain. It helps regulate other hormones and maintains the body’s circadian rhythm. The circadian rhythm is an internal 24-hour “clock” that plays a critical role in when we fall asleep and when we wake up. When it is dark, your body produces more melatonin; when it is light, the production of melatonin drops.” (3) Even though our bodies produce melatonin, many of our activities today can cause our bodies to not produce enough of it. So… it makes sense that adding cherries to your diet, may give you more restful sleep. Additionally, the melatonin produced in our bodies decreases as we get older and this may have something to do with the fact that some seniors aren’t able to sleep well. So, if you are older and find that you cannot sleep the way you used to, cherries may be just what you need! Did I mention that melatonin is also an antioxidant?

Antioxidants, as you probably know, help protect our bodies. Antioxidants fight free radicals, otherwise known as unstable molecules. The scientific explanation of free radicals can be quite confusing, but simply put, free radicals occur as a by-product when our cells use oxygen. Think of what happens when unprotected metal is exposed to the air (oxygen), or what happens to an apple that has been cut in half and left out, open to the air. The unprotected metal will rust and the unprotected apple will turn brown. This damage is caused by oxygen (air) and is called oxidation. Oxidation happens continuously in our bodies. Free radicals can also come from smoking, pollution, poisons, fried foods, and ultra violent rays from the sun. Antioxidants help to protect our bodies from these free radicals.

TART CHERRIES ARE YOUR HEART’S FRIEND

Looking for a good choice for the heart? According to a study conducted at the University of Michigan, cherries are good for the heart. In the study, participants who consumed at least a cup and a half of frozen cherries had a higher level of antioxidants in their blood and urine.” This study documents for the first time that the antioxidants in tart cherries do make it into the human bloodstream and is coupled with increased antioxidant activity that could have a positive impact,” says Sara L. Warber, M.D., Co-Director of University of Michigan Integrative Medicine, associate professor in family medicine at the U-M Medical School. The results of the study suggest that because of their antioxidants, cherries may be helpful in reducing heart disease. (4)

WONDER-WORKING QUERCETIN

Cherries are also a good source of quercetin. Quercetin is a plant-based flavonoid and is also an antioxidant. (5) Quercetin may be beneficial in treating and/or preventing wrinkles, eczema, hives, and hay fever. It has antihistamine properties and therefore may be an important part in treating asthma. It has been believed to help treat type II diabetes and may help reduce the chance of cardiovascular disease. In an article by Lara Endreszl, published in Health News, an online newsletter, athletes, to include Lance Armstrong, like to use quercetin to enhance their energy levels because it is natural and safe. (6)

And speaking of diabetics, cherries may be just the thing. A study was conducted at Michigan State University where isolated anthocyanins (again) from cherries were exposed to insulin-producing pancreatic cells from rodents. An amazing thing happened. The insulin producing cells increased their insulin production by 50 percent. (7)

CHERRIES ARE A BENEFICIAL ADDITION TO YOUR DIET

To add to that excitement, cherries have a low glycemic index number of 22-24. The glycemic index, or GI, relates how foods affect our blood glucose (or sugar) levels. If you are trying to lower or manage your blood sugar, the lower the GI number the better the food item. As a point of reference, a baked potato has a GI of around 100, brown rice, around 55, an apple or a pear about 36. Cherries are well below all of these. Those who are watching their blood sugar would be wise to consider cherries as a healthy addition to your diet.
It is so refreshing to see scientific evidence that supports what many of us already know, and that is, a diet high in fruit, vegetables, nuts, and grains, is the gateway to better health. And you can feel good that cherries are in there among the heavyweights.

I hope this has been an informative journey into the life and benefits of the cherry. Now that you are ready to rush out to your local market to purchase some, don’t be surprised if you find them a bit pricey. They certainly are not the most inexpensive fruit you can buy, but all the benefits make them a wise purchase anyway. As far as most cherry varieties go, the darker the better. Unfortunately, cherries are a seasonal fruit and are not always available at your grocer. But here at Hope For Health, we have thought about you. If you can’t get cherries, we have a wonderful product that just happens to have cherries, and many other fruits, in it. It’s Fruitilicious.

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REFERENCES:
4. http://www2.med.umich.edu/prmc/media/newsroom/details.cfm?ID=1124
Comfrey is a flowering plant that has been used for centuries in creams, salves, and poultices to treat all kinds of problems. Traditionally comfrey is known as “Knit Bone.” This is an excellent cream that can be used externally; it can also reduce the risk of scar tissue.

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1. The Huffington Post, April 5, 2010—Mexicali Earthquake: 7.2 Quake Shakes Southern California.

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- A strong earthquake south of the U.S.-Mexico border Sunday, April 4, swayed high-rises in downtown Los Angeles and San Diego and was felt across Southern California and Arizona, but there were no immediate reports of major damage in the United States. A parking structure collapsed south of the border and power outages occurred in both countries as it sent out seismic waves felt from Los Angeles to Las Vegas and Arizona. The 7.2-magnitude quake struck at 3:40 p.m. about 19 miles southeast of Mexicali, a bustling commerce center on the Mexican side of the border where trucks carrying goods cross into California. More than 900,000 people live in the greater Mexicali area. It was the largest earthquake in the region in nearly 18 years and was followed by aftershocks or distant "triggered" occurrences in nearly 18 years and was followed by aftershocks or distant "triggered" earthquakes on both sides of the border, said U.S. Geological Survey seismologist Lucy Jones.

End time perspective #1: “Since the San Francisco earthquake, many rumors have been current regarding statements I have made. Some have reported that while in Los Angeles, I claimed that I had predicted the San Francisco earthquake and fire, and that Los Angeles would be the next city to suffer. This is not true. The morning after the earthquake, I said no more than that 'the earthquakes will come; the floods will come;' and that the Lord's message to us is that we shall 'not estahlish ourselves in the wicked cities.'” LS 411.

End time perspective #2: “June 20, 1903: The judgments of God are in our land. The Lord is soon to come. In fire and flood and earthquake, He is warning the inhabitants of this earth of His soon approach. O that the people may know the time of their visitation! We have no time to lose. We must make more determined efforts to lead the people of the world to see that the day of judgment is at hand.” LS 412.

Editor's Note: Again, it seems as if every month we have a new earthquake. I report them in the Newswatch each time because of the great frequency. Here is another report on the same day, April 4, 2010: “An earthquake also hit in Northern California Sunday afternoon. The U.S. Geological Survey says a quake with a preliminary magnitude of 4.0 was recorded at 3:49 p.m. about 25 miles north of Santa Rosa.”

2. The Daily Caller, April 5, 2010—Obama rewards unions with key labor appointee, by Jon Ward.

President Obama on Saturday gave organized labor a big payback for its help in pushing his health-care reform across the finish line, unilaterally appointing a controversial pro-union attorney to the body that arbitrates union elections, after his nomination attracted bipartisan opposition in the Senate. Coming just a few days after the president's health-care plan was passed into law despite opposition from Democrats and Republicans in Congress and strong disapproval in most public opinion polls, the move promised to only heighten political tension in Washington.

End time perspective #1: “These unions are one of the signs of the last days. Men are binding up in bundles ready to be burned. They may be church members, but while they belong to these unions, they cannot possibly keep the commandments of God; for to belong to these unions means to disregard the entire Decalogue.” CL 11

End time perspective #2: “The time is fast coming when the controlling power of the labor unions will be very oppressive.” 2SM 141 (1904).

3. On January 4th 2010 Adventist Today magazine published an article entitled “Letting Roman Catholics Off the Hook” By Loren Siebold. Siebold gives 7 reasons why Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) should no longer trust Ellen White, the original pillars of the faith, or Scriptures themselves.

End time perspective #1: “The worst enemies we have are those who are trying to destroy the influence of the watchmen upon the walls of Zion. Satan works through agents. He is making an earnest effort here. He works according to a definite plan, and his agents act in concert...Through deceptive means and unseen channels, Satan is working to strengthen his authority and to place obstacles in the way of God's people, that souls may not be freed from his power and gathered under the banner of Christ. By his deceptions he is seeking to allure souls from Christ, and those who are not established upon the truth will surely be taken in his snare.” 5T 295.

End time perspective #2: “Truths have been committed to our trust more sacred than were ever imparted to mortals upon earth, yet we have not as a people been faithful to our trust. Unfaithful Sabbath-keepers are the worst enemies the truth can have. If those who profess the truth would live it out, then the Lord would magnify his name among them, and make them a powerful people. RH, November 26, 1861.

Editor's Note: Sadly to say an Adventist Today magazine published an article entitled “Letting Roman Catholics Off the Hook” By Loren Siebold. Siebold gives 7 reasons why Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) should no longer trust Ellen White, the original pillars of the faith, or Scriptures themselves.

One thing can save America: An Awakening to God

End time perspective: “Paul verily thought that he was doing God service when he was persecuting the followers of Christ and putting them to death. He was sincere in his belief; but sincerity will not make error truth, nor truth error.” R&H Jan. 5, 1886. Editor's Note: We need an awakening to God, but the right kind. Persecution will come to Sabbath Keepers through professing Christians.

5. Mobilisation for the protection of Sunday at European level

A Conference to relaunch the debate on Sunday protection at European level will be held on 24 March in the European Parliament in Brussels. It is organised by the MEP's Thomas Mann (EPP, Germany) and Patrizia Toia (S&D, Italy) together with the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation. Several European trade unions, civil society organisations and Churches support the conference. László Andor, the new EU Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs will take the floor, as well as numerous experts and MEPs.

The European Commission will soon be presenting a new draft of the „Working Time Directive“. In its initial 1993 version the Directive stipulated that Sunday should be »in principle« the weekly day of rest for European workers. This reference had been withdrawn in 1996 by the European Court of Justice, on the grounds that the European legislator had not given sufficient reasons as to a link between a work-free Sunday and the protection of workers’ health.

Meanwhile, recent studies[1] have demonstrated the existence of a strong link between workers’ health and a work-free Sunday. Furthermore, a common weekly rest day for the whole of society allows families to spend time with each other, and all citizens to engage in cultural, spiritual and social activities. Sunday moreover strengthens the social cohesion of our societies, which has been undermined by the current economic crisis. It therefore represents a precious achievement, which should be recognised as a pillar of the European Social Model.

End-time Perspective: To a large degree the religious world is following in the path of the Jews. The Pharisees taught for doctrine the commandments of men, making the word of God void by their traditions, and this the teachers of today are doing by upholding the first day of the week, a day that bears not the divine credentials. They clothe their false Sabbath with a garb of sanctity, and many would compel its observance by imprisonment and fine. Under the enemy's training, their zeal will grow until, like the Jews, they will think they are doing God a service by heaping reproach on those who have the moral courage to keep his commandments. RH, March 8, 1898.
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“In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” LS 196.

“The old standard bearers knew what it was to wrestle with God in prayer, and to enjoy the outpouring of His Spirit. But these are passing off from the stage of action; and who are coming up to fill their places? How is it with the rising generation? Are they converted to God? Are we awake to the work that is going on in the heavenly sanctuary, or are we waiting for some compelling power to come upon the church before we shall arouse? Are we hoping to see the whole church revived? That time will never come.

“There are persons in the church who are not converted, and who will not unite in earnest, prevailing prayer. We must enter upon the work individually. We must pray more, and talk less. Iniquity abounds, and the people must be taught not to be satisfied with a form of godliness without the spirit and power. If we are intent upon searching our own hearts, putting away our sins, and correcting our evil tendencies, our souls will not be lifted up unto vanity; we shall be distrustful of ourselves, having an abiding sense that our sufficiency is of God.” 1SM 122.

“A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer.” 1SM 121.

“Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children.” GC 464.

“Let the people of God arise out of sleep and begin in earnest the work of repentance and reformation; let them search the Scriptures to learn the truth as it is in Jesus; let them make an entire consecration to God, and evidence will not be wanting that Satan is still active and vigilant. With all possible deception he will manifest his power, calling to his aid all the fallen angels of his realm.” GC 398.

“At every revival of God’s work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.” GC 593.

“The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people of God at the present time.” 3T 252.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Professors of religion are not willing to closely examine themselves to see whether they are in the faith; and it is a fearful fact that many are leaning on a false hope. Some lean upon an old experience which they had years ago; but when brought down to this heart-searching time, when all should have a daily experience, they have nothing to relate. They seem to think that a profession of the truth will save them. When they subdue those sins which God hates, Jesus will come in and sup with them and they with Him. They will then draw divine strength from Jesus, and will grow up in Him, and be able with holy triumph to say: ‘Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had never named His name. They are a continual weight to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a stumbling block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home or abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him.” IT 188.
Let none think, because they cannot explain the meaning of every symbol in the Revelation, that it is useless for them to search this book in an effort to know the meaning of the truth it contains. The One who revealed these mysteries to John will give to the diligent searcher for truth a foretaste of heavenly things. Those whose hearts are open to the reception of truth will be enabled to understand its teachings, and will be granted the blessing promised to those who “hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.”

Will not those who profess to have a knowledge of the truth read the testimony given to John by Christ? Here is no guesswork, no scientific deception. Here are the truths that concern our present and future welfare. What is the chaff to the wheat?