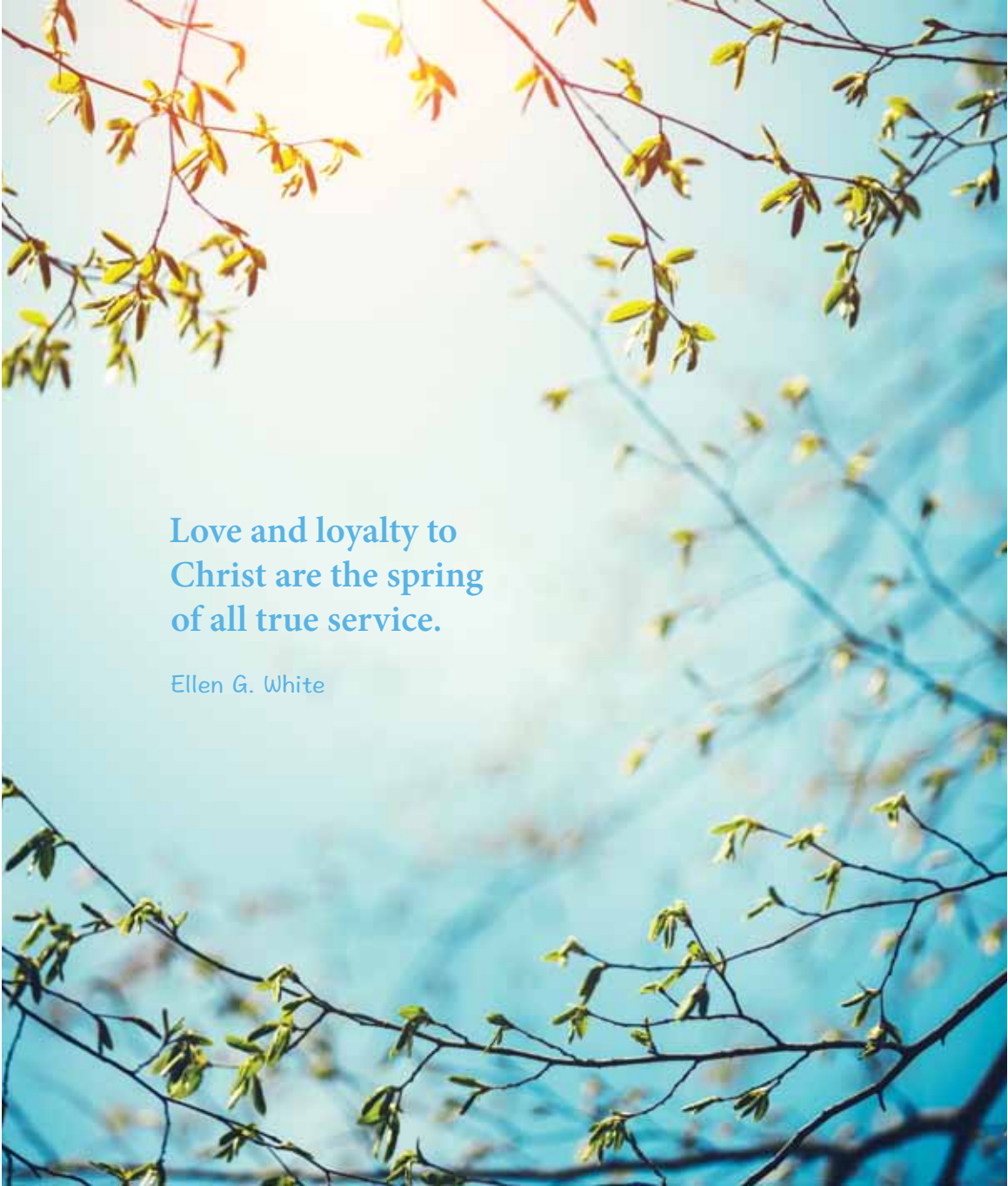


HISTORIC LANDMARKS

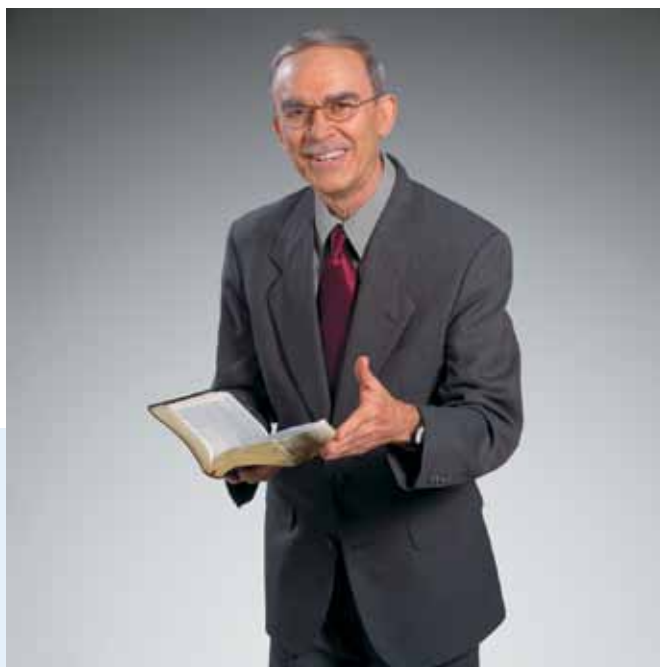
OF ADVENTISM



Love and loyalty to
Christ are the spring
of all true service.

Ellen G. White

March 2017 | \$3.50



Editor's Letter

John J. Grosboll

Conformed or Reformed

Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

"The Lord is about to punish the world for its iniquity. He is about to punish religious bodies for their rejection of the light and truth which has been given them. The great message, combining the first, second, and third angel's messages, is to be given to the world. This is to be the burden of our work. Those who truly believe in Christ will openly conform to the law of Jehovah. The Sabbath is the sign between God and His people, and we are to make visible our conformity to the law of God by observing the Sabbath. It is to be the mark of distinction between God's chosen people and the world. It

means much to be true to God. This embraces health reform. It means that our diet must be simple, that we must be temperate in all things." *The Kress Collection*, 105.

"Unless the transforming grace of Christ conforms you to His character, you will never be numbered with the family of God in heaven. Now is the testing time. Angels of God are watching the development of character. Angels of God are weighing moral worth and nothing can make a man truly great in God's estimation except being truly good, being a partaker of the divine nature, escaping the corruption of the world through lust. The world's Redeemer demands that those who are called by His name, who claim to stand under His banner shall represent His character; Christianity is intensely practical. When Christianity is brought into the circumstances of actual life, it is

a safeguard to the soul in all daily cares, perplexities, and annoyances, and then it is that the sympathy, tenderness, and gentleness of Christ is manifested in the deportment, and revealed in the character of those in whose heart God abides." *The Paulson Collection*, 390, 391.

"It is a law of heaven that as we receive we are to impart. The Christian is to be a benefit to others; thus he himself is benefited. 'He that watereth shall be watered also himself' (Proverbs 11:25). This is not merely a promise. It is a law of God's divine administration, a law by which He designs that the streams of beneficence shall be kept, like the waters of the great deep, in constant circulation, perpetually flowing back to their source. In the fulfilling of this law is the power of Christian missions." *The Review and Herald*, August 12, 1909.

LANDMARKS

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LandMarks is a magazine of Steps to Life, a ministry established in 1988 by Seventh-day Adventists. It is dedicated to the publication of the historic doctrines held by God's true people in all ages. Its special emphasis is to present truth (II Peter 1:12)—those historic doctrines espoused by Seventh-day Adventist pioneers in the nineteenth century. Its purpose is to help all of God's remnant people to press together in unity, holding high the banner on which is inscribed the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Because the powers of darkness have attempted to take control of God's last-day people through infiltration and false signs and teaching which if possible would deceive the very elect, this magazine is intended to help those believers who are contending with professed brethren over the faith once delivered to the saints. Many historic believers have established home churches where they can bring new interests and converts to hear the Three Angels' Messages instead of the New Theology. This magazine is designed to help them to defend the faith and to expose the flood of false doctrine by which the truth is being assailed in these last days.

It is the goal of *LandMarks'* editors to present articles based on truth from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Viewpoints of writers and/or contributors expressed outside of articles printed in this publication are not necessarily the views of this magazine's editors and are not endorsed by Steps to Life Ministries.

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Overcoming & Christian Perfection

By John J. Grosboll

I once heard a sermon on the necessity of Christian perfection. There was no argument about the subject or the conclusion that those ready for Jesus to come will experience Christian perfection. However, no good can come from this conclusion without showing how it will be possible. Because of our own imperfections, this subject is a very unpopular topic in the Christian world today and very few Christians would have anything to say about it during their worship.

Christian perfection is biblical. Paul told the church at Colossians, “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in

the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and irreproachable in His sight” (Colossians 1:21, 22). That sounds like a description of Christian perfection, does it not? In verse 28 he adds, “Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”

There are two general theories regarding Christian perfection. The majority view is that by simply coming to Christ and confessing your sins, the righteousness of Jesus covers you and you are made perfect. However, in reality, that is just the first step in the Christian walk.

Peter understood there was more to it when he said, “... but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’ And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear” (1 Peter 1:15–17). There are many Christian theologians and pastors who teach that the judgment is on the basis of your faith but Peter says that it is based on each one’s work, the way you live, which gives evidence of your faith.

Paul said, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets,

some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ ...” (Ephesians 4:11–15).

This text describes a process which happens over a period of time. In fact, it is the work of a person’s lifetime to become sanctified and fit to be in the presence of sinless beings.

In general, there are six points to achieving Christian perfection, or overcoming our natural sinful nature.

Memorizing Scripture

David said, “Your word I have hidden in my heart [memorized it], that I might not sin against You” (Psalm 119:11). Memorizing scripture allows you to internalize the essence of a text. The Waldenses were encouraged to memorize Scripture and if they were having trouble, to memorize one word each day. In one year over 300 words would be memorized. Some young Waldensians could quote the entire book of Matthew, John and several of the Epistles.

You will never be without words of comfort and will always have an answer to be able to speak a word in season if the promises are in your head. It will bring spiritual power into your life.

Prayer and Fasting

There was a time when the disciples brought a boy that was possessed

with the devil and even though they had cast out devils before, they could not cast out this one. When Jesus came down from the mount of transfiguration, He said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me” (Matthew 17:17). After Jesus had cast the devil out His disciples came to him privately and asked why they couldn’t cast him out. Jesus answered in verse 21: “... this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

There are some sins that will never be overcome without prayer and fasting. Examine your own prayer life to see if you are like Enoch, who talked

You may be the weakest, most sinful person around and may have been in the bondage of sin your whole life, but you can be delivered if you believe. “Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, ‘Lord, I believe; help my [struggle with] unbelief’ ” (Mark 9:24)!

Ellen White’s comment on that verse is very encouraging: “You can never perish while you do this—never.” *The Desire of Ages*, 429.

Fight

“You have not yet resisted unto bloodshed, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12:4). James says in James 4:7, “Resist the devil. ...” When tempta-

It is the work of a lifetime to become sanctified and fit to be in the presence of sinless beings.

with the Lord daily. The more he had to do, the more he had to talk to the Lord about.

Prayer and faith are closely related. Mark 9:22 tells the story of the man who brought his mute son to Jesus saying, “... often he [the demon that possessed him] has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” Many people feel hopeless like this father in their struggle to overcome their problems. Jesus told the pleading father, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes” (verse 23).

In Matthew 13:58 it says: “Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.” Again, the problem is not whether Jesus can work miracles but rather, can you believe?

tions come, put up a fight and claim the victory.

Luke 22–23 describes Jesus’ battle in the Garden of Gethsemane where His sweat was like great clots of blood falling on the ground. Truly He fought a hard battle as He “resisted unto bloodshed.”

While in college, one of my besetments was eating donuts. The sweet smell from the college bakery spilled clear out onto the sidewalk, luring me in as I walked past. I would buy a sack of donuts and have them all eaten before I got back to my room. Finally, I determined that the wise thing to do was to avoid walking past the bakery and stay away from the temptation.

Similarly, if your problem is alcohol, do not go and visit with people in the tavern. If pornography, videos, television

programs or Internet is your problem, you may need to find a mentor to keep you accountable. Jesus said to pray, "... lead us not into temptation" (Matthew 6:13 KJV). Often you can walk into temptation by not using good judgment.

Practice Health Reform

Paul said, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things" (1 Corinthians 9:24).

The word *temperate* means *exer-*

When Jesus left this earth, He said to His disciples, "You are My witnesses. You are to bear testimony. You are to bear witness for Me." You have not been called to be salesmen but witnesses of what you have seen and know.

Praise God

The last part of Nehemiah 8:10 says, "Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

"To praise God in fullness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer. We are to show to the world and to all the heavenly intelligences

into practice for many years. They are trying to practice health reform, memorizing Scripture and praying. Yet they are perplexed that they are still struggling to overcome sin. It is easy to slip off the path of truth and become like the Pharisees who tried to work out their own salvation by their good works.

"Also He [Jesus] spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'

"And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 18:9–14).

There are several points about the Pharisee who went up to pray:

1. He was full of self-praise, saying, "Oh, I am so thankful that I am not like other people." He looks it. He walks it. He even prays it.
2. He draws apart from others because he is better than they are. His body language is like the person talked about in Isaiah 65:5 which says, "... Do not come near to me, for I am holier than you!" And so, it says, "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself. ..."
3. The Pharisee felt, "Well, I'm OK, whether you are or not." He prayed

Satan will lose ground in the family where praise services are held and the joy of the Lord is your strength.

cising self-restraint. Paul continues, "Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air, But I discipline my body ..." (verses 25–27). The language he uses is stronger than anything I know how to say in English. He says, I keep my body under control. I control my eating, my drinking, my sleeping, my exercise and every area of life; I am under control.

Witnessing

Share your faith with those around you. Revelation 12:11 says, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

that we appreciate the wonderful love of God for fallen humanity and that we are expecting larger and yet larger blessings from His infinite fullness. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. After a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, our joy in the Lord and our efficiency in His service would be greatly increased by recounting His goodness and His wonderful works in behalf of His children.

"These exercises drive back the power of Satan. They expel the spirit of murmuring and complaint, and the tempter loses ground." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 299, 300.

Satan will lose ground in the family where praise services are held and the joy of the Lord is your strength.

There are many who have been endeavoring to put these principles

a prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord that he was not an extortioner [a person who takes from others by force, duress, menaces, threats, insubordination, authority, or by any undue exercise of power] like other men—unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.”

4. Instead of comparing his own character with the character of God, he judges himself against the character of other men. As a result, his mind is turned away from God to other people. He becomes self-satisfied, figuring that he is better than others. If I compare myself to you, then the worse you are, the better I look.
5. He then begins to recount his good deeds. He says, “I fast twice a week ...” Not only does he fast twice a week, but he gives tithes – plural. He is giving twenty or more percent of his income, to the church; so he figures that he is in good shape.

The problem is that this man’s religion does not touch his actual soul. It is not a matter of his heart. It is merely something he does, going through all the motions on the outside. He is not seeking for godliness of character. He is not seeking to have a heart that is filled with love and mercy. He is satisfied with a religion that has totally only to do with his outward life. And his outward life looks really good.

The apostle Paul could relate to that experience. He said, “If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless” (Philippians 3:4–6).



Share your faith with those around you. Revelation 12:11 says, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”

The righteousness of this Pharisee was the fruit of his own works and judged by a human standard. Because he trusts in himself for righteousness, he does what everybody does who trusts in their own righteousness. He despises others.

As he judges himself by other men, so he judges other men by himself, and his righteousness is estimated by theirs. The worse they are, the better he looks. Then his self-righteousness leads him to begin accusing, “I am glad I am not even like this tax collector.”

The Bible identifies the accuser of the brethren as Satan. In Revelation 12:10 KJV we are told: “... for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”

If my religion leads me to become an accuser, a fault-finder, it is a Satanic religion. We must be careful not to develop the spirit of Satan, which will make it impossible to enter into communion with God. So, Jesus said that man in the parable went down to his house the same way he came in. Those with a similar attitude today go to church and leave again in the same condition they arrived in, with no improvement whatsoever.

The Pharisee went off by himself thinking he was better than every-

body else. The tax collector went off by himself because he thought he was worse than everybody else. He did not mingle with the worshipers, because he didn’t feel worthy to unite with them in their devotions. It says he stood “afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes toward heaven, but beat his breast” (Luke 18:13, literal translation). He considered himself a terrible sinner. He was in bitter anguish and abhorred himself with the knowledge that he was sinful and polluted from the evil things that he had done.

In Jesus’ day, the worst thing a woman could do was to be a prostitute or a harlot and the worst thing a man could do was be a tax collector for the Roman government. This tax collector was at the bottom. Other people would not even associate with him and he knew not to expect pity from anybody around him. He was looked upon with contempt and he knew that he had no merit in himself to present to God.

That experience is the only way a person can be saved when they come to God.

“Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in

this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. ... It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of his shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin." *The Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889.

The tax collector understood one vital thing: he possessed no merit and no goodness whatsoever in himself. His only chance that anything good could happen to him was if God had mercy upon him, which

nesses are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6, literal translation).

Jesus said, "They that are whole do not need a physician" (Matthew 9:12, literal translation). If you do not realize your need, the Lord will not be able to help you.

The patient that the physician cannot help is the one who thinks that everything is okay. He refuses to follow advice, take medicine or do anything because he does not think he is sick. The same applies to spiritual matters. "We must know our true condition, or we shall not feel our need of Christ's help. We must understand our danger, or we shall not flee to the refuge. We must feel the pain of our wounds, or we shall

enough, give enough, or practice health reform enough. You cannot perfectly overcome by doing everything you know; you are hopeless without the Lord working a divine miracle inside.

When you come to that realization, then you know of your need to renounce self. "But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchrist-like self. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul." Ibid.

Ask the Lord to keep your heart pure because you cannot keep it. Give the Lord permission to do everything that needs to be done in your life. When you are lifted into the pure and holy atmosphere where the current of Christ's love can fall on your soul, it will change everything. Renunciation of self is to be made at every advance step heavenward.

The story of the publican and the tax collector contains the secret for overcoming for those who think it is impossible having tried everything else. The secret is not something you can do for yourself. It is something that only the Lord can do for you when you recognize your need and ask for His help.

(Unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, Bible texts are from the New King James Version.) **LM**

If my religion leads me to become an accuser, a fault-finder, it is a Satanic religion.

was his only request. His heart's desire was to be pardoned.

Jesus said, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified ..."

What does this have to do with overcoming for those who think they cannot overcome and have tried everything? Ellen White says, "But we must have a knowledge of ourselves, a knowledge that will result in contrition, before we can find pardon and peace. The Pharisee felt no conviction of sin. The Holy Spirit could not work with him." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 158.

Why was this so? He was self-righteous. He did not need anybody else's righteousness, because he had his own. The trouble is, "We are all an unclean thing, and all our righteous-

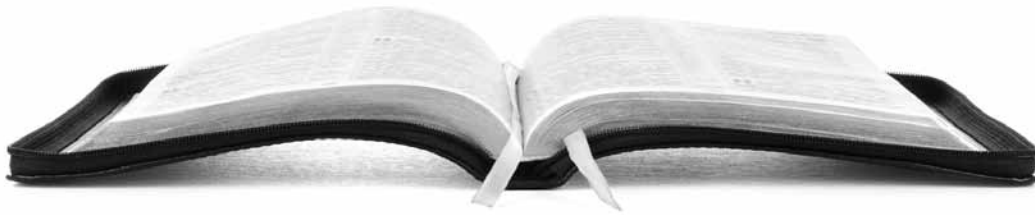
nesses are like filthy rags." *The Signs of the Times*, April 9, 1902.

The spirit of Phariseeism is the spirit of the Laodicean church. (See Revelation 3:14-22.)

"We must behold Christ. It is ignorance of Him that makes men so uplifted in their own righteousness. When we contemplate His purity and excellence, we shall see our own weakness and poverty and defects as they really are. We shall see ourselves lost and hopeless" *Christ's Object Lessons*, 159.

When you realize your hopeless condition, you are ready to recognize that you cannot save yourself. There is nothing you can do. You cannot memorize enough Scripture to save yourself, or pray enough, or witness

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UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WORD

BY IVAN PLUMMER

*"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do
His commandments: his praise endureth for ever."*

Psalm 111:10

The psalmist here states that before wisdom comes the knowledge and fear of the Lord.

What is Wisdom?

The word *wisdom* in the Hebrew language is *Chokmah*, a word which occurs 141 times in the Bible. Chokmah is comprehensive in its meaning.

- (1) technical knowledge (Exodus 28:3; 35:26)
- (2) practical, worldly wisdom (1 Kings 4:30; Isaiah 47:10)
- (3) ideal human wisdom (Psalm 111:10; Prov. 1:2)
- (4) wisdom as an attribute of God (Psalm 104:24; Proverbs 3:19; Jeremiah 10:12; 51:15)

Wisdom is distinguished from knowledge in that wisdom has to do with character and conduct, whereas knowledge is primarily intellectual enlightenment. Knowledge may be an accumulation of unrelated and unorganized facts without the ability to apply these facts to personal life. Wisdom is the faculty of being able to make a practical use of facts.

What is Understanding?

An intermediate step may be conceived of in the term understanding. Understanding implies the ability to evaluate and organize facts which is an essential framework for wisdom.

The word *understanding* as found in Psalm 111:10 originates from a He-

do His commandments: his praise endureth for ever" (Psalm 111:10).

Therefore, divine understanding cannot be separated from obedience. Obedience to God's revealed will demonstrates that a person has true understanding.

But what about those who do not know God or those who profess to believe in Him but disobey Him? Are they without understanding?

Jeremiah said, "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom ... But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the LORD ... " (Jeremiah 9:23, 24).

The man who knows not God or the man who professes to know Him but does not obey has understanding,

What Causes Complete Blindness?

Jesus taught, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matthew 6:22, 23)!

The "light" of the body is that insight that places relative value on the things of time and eternity. When Jesus used the word "eye," He was addressing the eye of the soul that gives a man heavenly vision, and that enables him to behold that which is invisible to the natural eyesight. Such eyesight is a guide to the soul in the same way that physical eyesight is a guide to the body. Hebrews 11:27 reads, "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." And 2 Corinthians 5:7 tells us, "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

Ellen White, commenting on the words of Jesus, points out, "But when the eye is blinded by the love of self, there is only darkness. 'If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness' (Matthew 6:23)." *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 91.

The apostle John tells us also what causes spiritual blindness, "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 John 2: 11).

The word *darkness* is derived from a root word which means *shadiness* or more specifically *darkness of error*.

Even among Christians are many whose understanding is darkened because of a failure to obey God.

As a reminder, "Disobedience has closed the door to a vast amount of knowledge that might have been gained from the Scriptures. Under-

Knowledge may be an accumulation of unrelated and unorganized facts without the ability to apply these facts to personal life. Wisdom is the faculty of being able to make a practical use of facts.

brew word which means, *intelligence; success; discretion; knowledge; policy; sense; wisdom*.

So while understanding has to do with the ability or power to acquire and interpret knowledge, while it has to do with the mental faculties, intelligence, and the ability to comprehend according to the Holy Scriptures, it is intimately connected to wisdom, which makes a practical use of facts, for it has to do with character and conduct.

So we read again, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that

but it is not true or divine understanding; it is that understanding that allows man to glory or that uplifts himself instead of his Creator.

Paul says of such men that while they possess understanding yet their understanding is darkened. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:17, 18).

standing means obedience to God's commandments. The Scriptures are not to be adapted to meet the prejudice and jealousy of men. They can be understood only by those who are humbly seeking for a knowledge of the truth that they may obey it." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 112.

Who causes the understanding of human beings to become darkened?

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4).

Who is the "god of this world"?

The devil claims to be the god of this world – "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:8, 9; 1 John 5:19).

He is "the god of this world" because the world is largely under his control. He rules in the hearts of most of its inhabitants – "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:1, 2).

Satan is also called by other titles: "Prince of this world." (See John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.)

"Prince of the power of the air." (Ephesians 2:2.)

Therefore it is he who darkens people's minds by way of all manner of



Sin darkens the reasoning powers, and hell is triumphing.

sinful practices. Satan's principal work is to blind or darken men's minds.

Summary of how Satan darkens human beings' minds

- By keeping them from the study of God's word.
- By deranging the power of the mind through excesses.
- By wholly occupying the mind with things of this life.
- By appealing to pride and self-exaltation.

Keep in mind – the battle between Christ and Satan is a battle for the minds of men (see Romans 7:23, 25).

Twelve Ways the Understanding Becomes Darkened!

- Sin darkens the understanding – "The enlightening of the understanding must become a part of the experience. Sin has darkened the reasoning powers, and hell is triumphing." *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 7, 22.
- "Blindness of the heart is a terrible barrier to the discerning of truth.

... Sin is the disease of the soul, in consequence of which the understanding fails to do its appointed work on the heart and memory." *Elder Daniels and the Fresno Church*, Pamphlet 28, 6, 7.

- Failure to heed the call to repentance – "During the preceding months of the Baptist's ministry, many had refused to heed the call to repentance. Thus they had hardened their hearts and darkened their understanding." *The Desire of Ages*, 136.
- By rejecting former messages – "Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second; neither were they benefited by the midnight cry, which was to prepare them to enter with Jesus by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. And by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message, which shows the way into the most holy place." *Early Writings*, 260, 261.



When the Pharisees expressed their discontent because of the class of people with whom He mingled, Jesus set the matter before them in the parable of the lost sheep. But their understanding was darkened; for Satan had power over their minds, and they arrayed themselves in opposition to Jesus.

- By the use of alcoholic/strong drink – Satan “tempts men to the use of wine and strong drink, by which the understanding is darkened, the senses confused, and the image of God defaced.” *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 187.
- Impure thoughts, actions and willful disobedience – “Impurity in thought or practice obscures spiritual vision, so that the soul can not contemplate and be charmed with the character of God. The world is full of disobedience, and the understanding of men has become so darkened by a sinful course of action that righteousness is not clearly discerned, and is not therefore appreciated above unrighteousness.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 3, 1895.
- By cherishing doubt – “There are those who walk amid perpetual doubts. They feed on doubts, enjoy doubts, talk doubts, and question everything that it is for their interest to believe. To those who thus trifle with the plain testimonies of God’s word, and who refuse to believe because it is inconvenient and unpopular to do so, the light will finally become darkness; truth will appear to the darkened understanding as error, and error will be accepted as truth. When thus shrouded in error, they will find it perfectly natural and convenient to believe what is false, and will become strong in their faith.” *The Review and Herald*, January 5, 1886.
- Because of continual transgression – “It was the love of God toward the children of men that moved Him to proclaim His law from Sinai. Because the understanding of men had become darkened by continual transgression, God, in his infinite mercy, condescended to bestow upon them the living oracles in all their original purity.” *The Signs of the Times*, December 2, 1880.
- Allowing the Devil access to our minds – “When the Pharisees expressed their discontent because of the class of people with whom He mingled, Jesus set the matter before them in the parable of the

lost sheep. But their understanding was darkened; for Satan had power over their minds, and they arrayed themselves in opposition to Jesus.” *Ibid.*, November 20, 1893.

- Because of the false theories of Satan – “The idols of the heathen stood between them and their God, obscuring God from their vision. Thus it is today. By the cunning deception of Satan false theories are made a power to rob God. Man’s spiritual understanding is darkened by Satan’s sophistry.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, 221.
- By defects of character – “By some the truth has been preached for a lifetime, but the understanding, darkened by defects of character which are not overcome, prevents them from discovering truth in its matchless loveliness.” *Ibid.*, vol. 20, 180.
- By exalting one’s idea above God’s will – “Those who exalt their own ideas above the plainly specified will of God are saying, as did Pharaoh, ‘Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice’ (Exodus 5:1)? Every rejection of light hardens the heart and darkens the understanding; and thus people find it more and more difficult to distinguish between right and wrong, and they become bolder in resisting the will of God.” *Christ Triumphant*, 109.
- Because of deliberately stifling one’s convictions of duty – “He who deliberately stifles his convictions of duty because it interferes with his inclinations, will finally lose the power to distinguish between truth and error. The understanding becomes darkened, the conscience callous, the heart hardened, and the soul is separated from God. Where the message of divine truth is spurned or slighted, there the church will be enshrouded in dark-

ness; faith and love grow cold, and estrangement and dissension enter. Church-members center their interests and energies in worldly pursuits, and sinners become hardened in their impenitence.” *The Great Controversy*, 1888, 379.

Who Is It that Enlightens the Understanding of Human Beings?

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:17, 18).

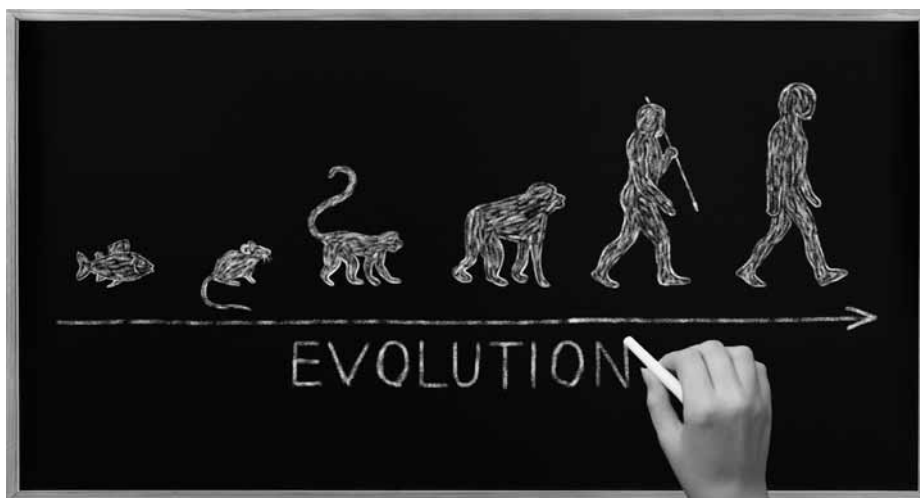
In commenting on these verses, God’s messenger records, “The ministry of the divine Spirit in enlightening the understanding and opening to the mind the deep things of God’s holy word, was the blessing which Paul thus besought for the Ephesian church.” *The Great Controversy*, 9.

The apostle John wrote, “Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (John 16:13, 14).

God’s Servant wrote, “The work of the Holy Spirit is to enlighten the darkened understanding, to melt the selfish, stony heart, to subdue the rebellious transgressor, and save him from the corrupting influences of the world.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 441.

What Should Be Our Attitude Concerning Being Enlightened?

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways ac-



Every rejection of light hardens the heart and darkens the understanding; and thus people find it more and more difficult to distinguish between right and wrong, and they become bolder in resisting the will of God.

knowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

“You should cultivate a spirit of entire submission to the will of God, earnestly, humbly seeking to know His ways and to follow the leadings of His Spirit. You must not lean to your own understanding. You should have deep distrust of your own wisdom and supposed prudence.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 361, 360.

“It is unsafe for men to lean to their own understanding; therefore they should daily seek strength and wisdom from above. God should be in all their thoughts; then all the wiles and subtleties of the old serpent cannot betray them into sinful neglect of duty. They will meet the adversary with the simple weapon that Christ used, ‘It is written,’ or will repulse him with, ‘Get thee behind Me, Satan’ (Matthew 16:23).” *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 409.

Why Is It Unsafe for Man to Lean to His Own Understanding?

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated

from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Ephesians 4:17, 18).

In *The General Conference Bulletin*, April 1, 1899, we are also given the answer, “Through the power and work of Satan, the world has mistaken and forgotten God, and is living in sin. Man’s influence works against God. His knowledge of God and His word is perverted. His understanding is darkened.”

Today, Jesus wants to do for you and I what He did for the disciples.

“And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures” (Luke 24:44, 45). **LM**

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Ecclesiastes

BY ROB HAGAR

Across

B4	This is in the word of a king	8:4
B11	Young people should often have this emotion	11:9
B17	Sorrow and grief cause this to not rest in the night	2:23
C1	It is better to what the rebuke of a wise man?	7:5
D6	Solomon saw that oppressed people had no _____?	4:1
E1	What you might do if you dig a pit	10:8
E20	This is not satisfied with seeing	1:8
F6	This affects everyone in all circumstances (three words)	9:11
G1	Some servants were what in Solomon's house?	2:7
G20	Who will bring everything we do into the judgment?	12:14
H15	We should not compare what days with the present?	7:10
I3	It is what to go to a house of mourning?	7:2
I10	What should we do with the good of our labor?	3:13
J16	Even what things we've done will be brought into judgment?	12:14
K4	"Take no _____" to everything we hear	7:21
L10	The words of the wise are like these	12:11
L17	How many sinners can destroy much good?	9:18
M1	Battles are not always won by the _____	9:11
M20	God gives this to one he deems to be good	2:26
N6	Though a wise person does this he may not find it (three words)	8:17
O20	We should eat in what season/time?	10:17
P1	Solomon could not find out some things that were exceeding _____	7:23, 24
P6	How many of our works or deeds shall be brought into judgment?	12:14
Q11	The words of the wise are like these	12:11
Q20	There is not one of these that does not sin	7:20
R1	We should do this joyfully with our spouse all our life	9:9
R17	All living people have this	9:4
S8	With what should we do everything we attempt (two words)	9:10

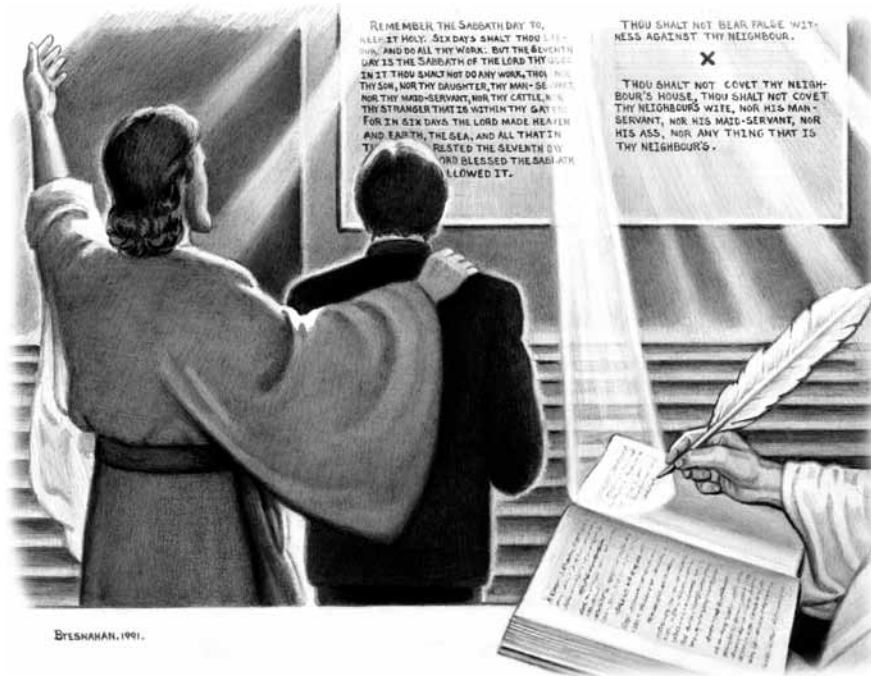
Down

A1	What do all living people know they will do?	9:5
A18	This shall fail when we have grown old	12:5
A20	Where is no work, knowledge, or wisdom?	9:10
B4	Sometimes a wicked man does this to his life in wickedness	7:15
B8	What should we do to our Creator while we still can?	12:1
B12	For the futility of it all Solomon did this to life	2:17
B14	This is not satisfied with hearing	1:8
C10	An evil one of these is more bitter than death	7:26
C16	Poor eyesight in old age causes this to be darkened	12:1, 2
E2	We must keep this reverently when in the house of God	5:1
F13	No one can straighten what God had made _____	7:13

A		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		19		21	A
B																					B
																					C
D																					D
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1	2	3		5		7	8	9	10		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		21	22

Answer key on page 26.

F17	We should not do this even in private or in our thoughts	10:20
G20	Solomon found much of this in much wisdom	1:18
H6	Wisdom does this for a wise person	7:19
J2	People and animals both become this in death	3:19, 20
J18	Solomon's search for meaning in life ended with this	12:13
K11	We should rejoice in our _____	11:9
L8	By a multitude of words is a fool's _____ known	5:3
L14	It is not good to hear this of fools	7:5
M3	The fastest runners don't always win the _____	9:11
M16	_____ are better than one	4:9–12
M20	We should live with the coming of this in mind	11:9
P2	We should put this away from us	11:10
P9	We should not be hasty or _____ with our mouth	5:2
Q11	A good one of these is better than precious ointment	7:1
R4	We should do this for strength, not drunkenness	10:17



THE LAMB OPENS THE HOLY PLACE

BY MAURICE HOPPE

Forty days after Jesus was raised from the dead, He and His disciples were walking toward Bethany. When they reached the crest of the Mount of Olives, “He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.” “He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight” (Luke 24:50, 51; Acts 1:9).

Many years later when John was on the Isle of Patmos, he was shown in vision the arrival of Jesus in heaven after His ascension.

Beginning with Revelation 4:1, John gives a detailed description of the setting in which Jesus appeared. Struggling to find words to adequately

describe the glories of the scene before him, he writes,

“After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with Someone sitting on it. And the One who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne” (Revelation 4:1–3).

Who was sitting on this throne before which the “Lamb, looking as if it had been slain” (Revelation 5:6), was standing? It is God the Father, the

Ancient of Days, the great ruler of the universe. He is the One who “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16 KJV). This is the One before whom the Lamb is standing.

“Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing” (Revelation 4:4, 5).

“As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple

of God in heaven, he beheld there 'seven lamps of fire burning before the throne' (Revelation 4:5). He saw an angel 'having a golden censer; and there was given unto Him much incense, that He should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne' (Revelation 8:3). Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the 'seven lamps of fire' and 'the golden altar,' represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth." *The Great Controversy*, 414, 415.

In the sanctuary on earth, the lampstand was located in the first apartment. So we see that Revelation 4 is a description of the scene taking place in the holy place of the sanctuary in heaven at the time Jesus ascended from this earth.

"Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

"In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. ... Day and night they never stop saying: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.' Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and worship Him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being' " (Revelation 4:8–11).

In the midst of this glorious celebration, John describes the appearance of Jesus as He comes before the Father. "Then, midway between the



throne and the four living creatures, I saw a Lamb standing among the Elders. He looked as if He had been offered in sacrifice ..." (Revelation 5:6 WNT).

In Revelation 4 and 5, John is describing the vastness and glory of the sanctuary in heaven and the inauguration of Jesus as our high priest.

"The matchless splendor of the earthly tabernacle reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple where Christ our forerunner ministers for us before the throne of God. The abiding place of the King of kings, where thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him (Daniel 7:10); that temple, filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration, could find, in the most magnificent structure ever reared by human hands, but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory." *The Great Controversy*, 414.

Ever since this celebration of the opening of the holy place in the sanctuary in heaven, Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, has been ministering His blood for the remission of our sins in this sacred place. "The point ... of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being" (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

The following is another description of this same event as recorded in *The Desire of Ages*, 833–835:

"All heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.

"As they drew near to the city of God, the challenge is given by the escorting angels –

'Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.'
Joyfully the waiting sentinels re-

spond –

'Who is this King of glory?'

"This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear the answer of exalted praise –

'The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle!
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
And the King of glory shall come in.'

"Again is heard the challenge, 'Who is this King of glory?' for the angels never weary of hearing His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply –

'The Lord of hosts;
He is the King of glory'
(Psalm 24:7–10).

“Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.

“There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion—all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.

redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished,’ He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares: Father, it is finished. I have done Thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, ‘I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am’ (John 19:30; 17:24).

“The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied. Satan is vanquished. Christ’s toiling, strug-

power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing’ (Revelation 5:12).

“Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, ‘Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever’ (Revelation 5:13).

“From that scene of heavenly joy, there comes back to us on earth the echo of Christ’s own wonderful words, ‘I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God’ (John 20:17). The family of heaven and the family of earth are one. For us our Lord ascended, and for us He lives. ‘Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them’” (Hebrews 7:25).

Excerpts from *High Priest & Coming King*, by Maurice Hoppe, pages 42–47.

(Unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, Bible texts are from the New International Version.) **LM**

Maurice Hoppe is Director of the Steps to Life training programs and a member of the Steps to Life Board. The Training Program for Ministers and Church Leaders is a correspondence course that prepares individuals to serve as pastors or Bible workers. Preparing for the Final Conflict is a correspondence course for the laity. Both of these courses teach present truth that will be an anchor for the soul during the storm of opposition and persecution just ahead. He and his wife also have a correspondence course offered through Revelation Ministry. He can be contacted at: mauricehoppe@stepstolife.org.

Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered.

“But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His Father. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails. He points to the tokens of His triumph; He presents to God the wave sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. He approaches the Father, with whom there is joy over one sinner that repents; who rejoices over one with singing. Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to

gling ones on earth are ‘accepted in the Beloved’ (Ephesians 1:6). Before the heavenly angels and the representatives of unfallen worlds, they are declared justified. Where He is, there His church shall be. ‘Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other’ (Psalm 85:10). The Father’s arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him’ (Hebrews 1:6).

“With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive



MY JOURNEY

BY JOSE LUIS SILES UGARTE

My name is Jose Luis Siles Ugarte. I am the elder of the Free Seventh-day Adventist Church in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. I am married with 3 children, Jonathan, 8, Angel, 6, and Luisiana, 4 months. I would like to share my life, how I met the Lord, and how I enrolled in the training program for ministers and church leaders course of Steps to Life Ministry.

Sucre, Bolivia



I was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia, and grew up and lived all my childhood there. I come from a poor family with poor resources. My parents are Catholic. Since childhood I have always liked the church and enjoyed getting involved with Catholic church activities. I started first as an altar boy and then taught the catechism in the childhood program. I also participated in missionary work. I have an older brother who is a Catholic priest who helped me financially with my seminary schooling. He told me that when I finished my studies, I also should be a Catholic priest. At the present time, my brother officiates at a Catholic church in La Paz.

I have always been very attached to the things of God. Even though I was unknowingly within a 'wrong' religion, I had the desire to serve in the work of evangelism. The first meeting I had with the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) religion was when my sister and her friend visited us. They kept the Sabbath and did not eat meat, which seemed very fanatical and very strange to me. I couldn't understand how they believed in that. Shortly afterward, we moved to a remote area of Santa Cruz where we met with a person who was part of an independent SDA group that had come out of the SDA organization. The preacher preached that Sunday worship is the mark of the papacy. That meeting left me very intrigued. The next day I started researching on my own to understand if what the brother told me in the meeting was true, since I felt that he was insulting my church by calling the Catholic church the beast.

To my surprise I found out that what the Catholic church teaches and believes is a lie. Although I was wishing what I had heard was wrong, I soon realized that I was blind and deceived by the Catholic church. I



I started first as an altar boy and then taught the catechism in the childhood program.

was so hurt. That night I prayed to my Lord with my heart open, Lord, I am going to worship you on the seventh day Sabbath. The next Sabbath morning I dressed myself as a Christian and attended my first Sabbath service. Shortly thereafter, I was baptized into the independent SDA group, where I met a person who became my wife. She shared the same desire I had to serve the Lord. A year later we were married. Together we are growing as Christians, but with many tests and challenges to our faith and to our marriage relationship. We did not have any counseling support within the group because there were no people designated for counseling couples or for young people to talk to who needed counsel. Because that lack in the church always worried me, I was wondering how could we as a church do the work that we need to help people like us. That year I told my wife that we needed organization in the church.

I saw many brothers who were discouraged or tired of the routine. I called for a Saturday night meeting to address the issue of church organization. I told my wife that night at home that this situation had motivated me to work with the church more closely that year. Three months later the church gave me the opportunity to work as a youth director.

I started with six young people in my department. In the course of two years, the group grew to almost 30 young people. However, the adults were decreasing in numbers; so by the end of year we were told to close the young people's class and join with the adult class.

The next year I served as a deacon, when the church got hit hard with all kinds of winds of doctrines, such as Christ is not part of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is only a power, 1844 ends in the cross, the nature of man is perverted, man cannot be holy, the Holy Spirit is not part of the Godhead, the resurrection of the Pope John Paul II, and many more mistaken ideas believed in ignorance.

I felt very confused and discouraged by the situation in the church, but did not have the knowledge to defend my beliefs. I knew that these were false doctrines, and felt bad not to be able to defend my beliefs with "it



is written.” This situation encouraged me to seek knowledge from my church family, but that did not come quickly. Many in the church were difficult to deal with. I told the church that we needed help. They responded that they had felt the same vulnerability.

At that same time, my personal life and family were being attacked from every direction, creating a situation that was very difficult in the church, to the point that the group was separating. Some left the church and others considered returning to the churches they had come from. I was invited to do the same but decided to remain in the church. After the controversy had endured for two weeks a friend of my father-in-law called to say that he knew of a pastor from USA who would help. I gave my father-in-law the contact information to request help from the American pastor. I was told that we had asked for help before from a pastor from Venezuela and this was how we got in this situation in the first place, but we agreed to present the idea to the church. The church agreed to bring Pastor Domingo Nunez from the USA.

When Pastor Nunez came he had to deal with many strange doctrines in the church. He encouraged the church families to follow the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The following times that Pastor Nunez came, the brothers in the church were strengthened and renewed their faith in the word of God given through his servant, Pastor Nunez. It was a great help to have his support and advice to organize ourselves as a church and work as such.

Then he invited the members of the church to enroll in the course for Bible workers and invited me to enroll in the training program for ministers and church leaders. I was very happy with the idea, recognizing that this



La Paz, Bolivia

Bolivia is a country of nearly 11 million inhabitants in the South American Andes. The majority of the population is Roman Catholic.

was what I needed and was what I had prayed about.

I thank God that I now have the opportunity to learn more to be able to help the church grow and be organized. That makes me so happy. I have learned quite a bit as I scrutinize each lesson very well. As a result I am increasing my faith and increasing my knowledge regarding many doctrines.

I thank God that I have received this blessing to be able to follow the course. My desire is to finish it and continue supporting the work. I'm now finishing the third unit and soon begin the fourth unit. With each lesson I have corrected past erroneous beliefs and expanded my knowledge. I enjoy sharing with the church what I am learning.

I thank God that today we are an organized church through the counsel provided by Steps to Life through Pastor Nunez.

Thanks to Pastor Nunez and Global Evangelism, we have Sabbath

school quarterlies in Spanish from which we have learned so much truth. Thanks also to Sister Hilde Nunez for sending materials for children.

The church has now managed to organize each department and wants to grow more in God's grace. Also we are happy to be affiliated with and part of Inter-America and Global Evangelism of the General Assembly of Free Seventh-day Adventists. This year we are learning gradually how to defend our faith and learn the true doctrines of the Adventist church. Thanks to God we have received much blessing. We thank also Steps to Life Ministry through Pastor Nunez for the many visits that he made to support us in a disinterested way. I hope that this testimony has encouraged you to keep trusting in God and also ask that you please pray for our church. Although small, we want to grow and be a center in Bolivia for many more churches to be born.” **LM**



Press Release from First Liberty

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM EXPERT: JUDGE GORSUCH HAS SOLID RECORD ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Dallas, Texas – Today, President Donald Trump announced his nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court. Kelly Shackelford, President and CEO of First Liberty Institute, praises Judge Gorsuch’s consistent record on religious liberty.

“As a candidate, President Trump promised to appoint pro-religious freedom judges to the Supreme Court,” Shackelford says. “Today, he took a positive step toward achieving that goal.”

“As a religious freedom law firm, we have one criterion for evaluating judicial candidates. We ask, ‘Does this candidate have a proven record of upholding the Constitution, especially as it relates to religious freedom?’ I am pleased to say that Judge Gorsuch has just such a record, authoring or joining multiple landmark opinions upholding religious freedom.”

Some of the most notable religious freedom opinions Judge Gorsuch wrote or signed as a judge on the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals include:

- **HHS Abortion Pill Mandate** – Judge Gorsuch wrote and joined opinions supporting the rights of ministries and closely-held family businesses to be free from the burden imposed by the HHS Abor-

tion Pill Mandate (*Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc. v. Sebelius* (2013), *Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Aged v. Burwell* (2015)).

- **Establishment Clause** – Judge Gorsuch wrote or signed opinions upholding the constitutionality of the public display of Ten Commandments monuments (*Summum v. Pleasant Grove City* (2007), *Green v. Haskell County Bd. of Cnty. Commissioners* (2009)).
- **Monuments and Memorials** – Judge Gorsuch wrote an opinion defending the existence of cross-shaped memorials for fallen state troopers (*American Atheists, Inc. v. Duncan* (2010)).

“America needs Supreme Court justices who will uphold the Constitution and defend the religious liberty of every American,” Shackelford says. “I am hopeful that Judge Gorsuch will live up to President Trump’s and the American people’s expectations and strongly protect our constitutional freedoms.”

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About First Liberty Institute

First Liberty Institute was founded in 1997, First Liberty Institute is the

largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to protecting religious freedom for all Americans.

They believe that true religious liberty means recognizing the fundamental right of every individual—including all ages, races, genders, and faiths—to follow their conscience and to live according to their beliefs. Because of that, our mission is simple: protect religious freedom for all.

If an American’s religious freedom is threatened, First Liberty stands ready to assist.

First Liberty attorneys partner with elite volunteer lawyers from across the nation, including the top law firms in the United States. This innovative strategy allows their clients to be represented by the nation’s top lawyers at no cost, leading First Liberty to achieve an unparalleled victory rate.

###

“The people of the United States have been a favored people; but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and ‘national apostasy’ will be registered in the books of heaven.” *The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1893. **LM**

OUT OF EGYPT

BY JUDY HALLINGSTAD

It is interesting to note that many people, when quoting the first commandment, leave off the prior verse. In fact, quoting Exodus 20:2 first would give many an understanding of verse 3 which says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

The Lord has brought us “out of Egypt” and we do not want to return. “I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exodus 20:2). Have you ever considered the kind of bondage in which you were ensnared while all the time thinking you were free? This world is full of attractions that bind the unsuspecting to its whirlwind of never-ending, time-consuming activities which, in themselves may not be that bad, but which pull your thoughts away from the heavenly attractions. It is the goal of the god of this world to attract people’s thoughts away from the God of heaven!

“Many who should be setting their tents nearer to the land of Canaan are

pitching their camp nearer to Egypt. They are not living in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. Many attend places of amusement to gratify the taste, but no spiritual strength is gained by so doing, and you will find yourself on the losing side. To encourage the love of amusement is to discourage the love of religious exercises, for the heart becomes so crowded with trifling, with what is pleasing to the natural heart, that there is no room for Jesus. . . .” *That I May Know Him*, 307.

God does not want you to slip back to Egypt—back into bondage! “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:1–3).

The God of heaven has rescued us from the land of Egypt—the world, the house of bondage. When God brought His people out of Egypt,

He asked them to follow Him, to give Him glory and worship. We can become so used to following the Egyptians, the world, their ways and habits that we continue to fall back. The question to ask ourselves is, “Are we still in Egypt and following her ways?”

Ask God to open your eyes that you may see where your heart is tending, toward the world’s ways or toward heaven’s ways. Many are steadily retreating toward Egypt. “Instead of going forward to perfection, they are going back to the darkness and bondage of Egypt. Their minds are not exercised unto godliness and true holiness.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 123.

“Let it be the ambition of those who profess to believe present truth, to be written as men whose lives are hid with Christ in God, men whom gold cannot buy, who though tempted as was Moses, like him, esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, 97. **LM**

Heavenly Father: Take my heart and keep it focused on following You. I do not want to be in bondage to the world’s activities and ways. You have brought me out of the house of bondage and have given me freedom through Jesus. Please give me the grace not to return to the attractions and whirlwind of this world. Amen.

Light-Bearers

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

*T*he only light that can illuminate the darkness of a world lying in sin, must come from Christ; and this light is granted to all who will receive it. For, said the great Teacher, “He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

Those who receive the divine radiance are in turn to become light-bearers to the world. Thus our Saviour taught His disciples: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill can not be hid. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14, 16).



Religion is not to be held as a precious treasure, jealously hoarded, and enjoyed only by the possessor. True religion can not be thus held; for such a spirit is contrary to the very principle of the Gospel. “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8), are the words of our Master; and again He bids us, “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34). If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence; it is impossible for that light to grow dim. It will grow brighter and brighter, as day by day the mists of selfishness and sin that envelop the soul are dispelled by its bright beams.

The Need of Shining Lights

The world lies in darkness. All around us there are souls going down to ruin and death. As Christ sheds the light of His love upon His followers, they are to reflect this light upon others. God’s word declares that His children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. The zeal and steadfastness of the lighthouse keeper, in his efforts to save men from destruction, put to shame the faith and devotion of many a professed Christian.

A story is told of the watchman at Calais lighthouse. He “was boasting of the brilliancy of his lantern, which can be seen ten leagues out at sea, when a visitor said to him:

“‘You speak with enthusiasm, sir, and that is well. I like to hear men tell what they are sure they have and know; but what if one of the lights should chance to go out?’

“‘Never, never! Absurd, impossible!’ replied the sensitive watchman, in consternation at the mere supposition of such a thing. ‘Why, sir,’ he continued, and pointed to the ocean, ‘yonder where nothing can be seen, there are ships going by to every



If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence; it is impossible for that light to grow dim.

port in the world. If, to-night, one of my burners were out, within six months would come a letter, perhaps from India, perhaps from Australia, perhaps from some port I never heard of before—a letter, saying that on such a night, at such an hour, at such a minute, the light at Calais burned low and dim; that the watchman neglected his post; that vessels were consequently put in jeopardy on the high seas. Ah, sir,’ and his face shone with the intensity of his thought, ‘sometimes, in the dark nights, and in the stormy weather, I look out upon the sea, and feel as if the eye of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out? Burn dim? That flame flicker low or fail? No, sir, never!’

Shine for Christ

“Shall Christians, shining for tempted sinners, allow their light to fail? Forever out upon life’s billowy sea, are souls we see not, strange sailors in the dark, passing by, struggling, it may be, amid the surges of temptation. Christ is the light, and the Christian is appointed to reflect the light. The ocean is vast, its dangers

are many, and the eyes of far-away voyagers are turned toward the lighthouse—the church of Jesus Christ. The church is set to be the light of the world. Are its revolving lamps all trimmed and brightly burning?”

Think of this, professed Christians. A failure to let your light shine, a neglect to obtain heavenly wisdom that you may have light from God, may cause the loss of a soul. What is the life lost at sea, in comparison with the eternal life which may be lost through your unfaithfulness? Can you endure the thought? Can you go on from day to day indifferent and careless, as tho there were no God, no hereafter; as tho you were not Christ’s servant; as tho you had no blood-bought privileges? It is of the highest consequence that you stand at your post, like the faithful watchman, that your light may shine out before others. You should be so impressed with the importance of your work, that to the question, “What if your light should go out?” your whole soul would respond, “Never, never! For then souls would be lost!”

The Signs of the Times, May 24, 1910. **LM**

"Thank you, thank you, thank you! I have received two of your *LandMarks*, and I'm so happy to find you! I love the Steps to Life magazine. I'm excited about ordering ministry materials. I also like to share articles with some of the many women I write to in prison. Finally, a publication that I can learn more from. Again, thank you and bless you."

—LE, California

"The vegan cracker cheese recipe in November *LandMarks* is the best substitute for cheese that I have ever tasted! Thanks for sharing it."

—SB, North Carolina

Editor: We are making the recipe available again for its popularity:

VEGAN CRACKER CHEESE

1 cup water
½ cup nutritional yeast flakes
3 Tbsp. light tabini
1 ½ tsp. or less salt
½ cup unbleached white flour
½ cup chopped red pepper
2 Tbsp. lemon juice, fresh squeezed
Optional: a few sliced olives

Blend all ingredients. Pour into small baking dish (I use a glass baking dish 7" x 5" x 1 ½"), and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes. Cool, refrigerate and slice as needed. My grandkids love it on crackers!

Crossword Puzzle (p. 15) Answers

A	D	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	A	
B	I	P	O	W	E	R					C	H	E	E	R		H	E	A	R	T	B
H	E	A	R				E	W		A		A		M	S		A		C			
D			O		C	O	M	F	O	R	T	E	R		O		I		V	D		
E	F	A	L	L			E	M	E				O	R		E	Y	E				
F	O		O		T	I	M	E	A	N	D	C	H	A	N	C	E			F		
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I		B	E	T	T	E	R		E	N	J	O	Y		S		I					
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S	T	R	O	N	G		O			U		O	T		C		J	O	Y			
N	N	A			T	H	I	N	K	T	O	K	N	O	W		L	U	N			
O				H	C		H			O		G		O		U	D	U	E			
D	E	E	P		E	V	E	R	Y						S		G		P			
Q	V			N			A		N	A	I	L	S			I	M	A	N			
L	I	V	E				S		A						H	O	P	E	R			
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		

From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

March 2017

Dear Friend,

You and I are included in the gospel commission.

"Just before His ascension, Christ gave His disciples their commission, declaring: 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world' (Matthew 28:18–20). ...

"The commission given to the first disciples is given also to those who in these last days have received increased light from heaven. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature' (Mark 16:15). This is to be our watchword. To all nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples the message of saving grace is to sound forth. A crucified and risen Saviour is to be uplifted before those in the home field and those in far-off lands who have not heard the truth. God calls for pastors and teachers and evangelists. *From door to door His servants are to proclaim the gospel message.* The knowledge of present truth is not to lead those who receive it to settle down and colonize; it is to lead them into new places. Many are to work just where they are, winning men and women to the truth by a faithful presentation in the daily life of the gospel of salvation." *The Review and Herald*, October 27, 1910. [Emphasis added.]

"The disciples were not to wait for the people to come to them. They were to go to the people, hunting for sinners as a shepherd hunts for lost sheep. Christ opened the world before them as their field of labor. They were to go 'into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature' (Mark 16:15). It was of the Saviour that they were to preach, of His life of unselfish service, His death of shame, His unparalleled, unchanging love. His name was to be their watchword, their band of union. In His name they were to subdue the strongholds of sin. Faith in His name was to mark them as Christians." *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 14, 15.

One of these days we will all have to give an account of our life and our work in fulfilling this commission. May you be able to give a good report.

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

Fireflies

Nature's Light-bearers

By Lynette Golia

There are many wonderments in the animal world, but few offer such fascination as that of a summer evening aglow with the lights of nature's miniature light-bearers.

Fireflies, also known as lightning bugs, are nocturnal insects of the beetle family *Lampyridae* which comes from the Greek *lampein* meaning *to shine*. With an exoskeleton and two pairs of wings, they tend to be brown or black and soft-bodied, with front wings more leathery than those of other beetles, and abdomens that light up. Of the more than 2,000 species of fireflies in the world, only some come equipped with the ability to glow.

The firefly begins as an egg secreted in the earth. In many species, the egg may already show a touch of luminescence. In about three weeks, the eggs hatch into larvae resembling sowbugs. At this stage also, many species glow.

The lamp of a firefly is a nature wonder, the most efficient ever made. An incandescent light bulb has an efficiency of about 10 percent; 90 percent of the power is lost in heat. The firefly turns nearly 100 percent of its lantern energy into visible light with little or no heat which scientists

call "cold light," efficient for saving energy and the prevention of self-cremation. Thirty-eight fireflies yield one candle power.

Light production in fireflies is due to a chemical reaction called bioluminescence. Light is produced when oxygen combines with the compound luciferin (named from the Latin word meaning *light bearing*), a bioluminescent enzyme called luciferase, calcium ions, and ATP, the energy-carrying molecule of all cells. The final part of the formula is uric acid crystals, which are located in the cells that make the light. Fireflies most commonly glow yellow but can also flash yellowish-orange, green, yellowish-green and pale red.

If a firefly is under stress—caught in a spider's web, for example—its taillight glows brightly. Even the shock of thunder may cause a field of fireflies to flash once in unison. But, ordinarily, the signal is used to attract a mate. In some firefly species, only one sex lights up. In most, however, both sexes glow. Males searching for mates flash a usually intermittent, species-specific pattern to announce their availability to receptive females. An interested female will then signal

a reply, helping a male locate her, but only to a male with a particularly impressive display.

According to the American Museum of Natural History, "Some flash only once. Some emit 'flash trains' of up to nine carefully timed pulses. Others fly in specific patterns, briefly dipping before sharply ascending and forming a 'J' of light. A few even shake their abdomens from side to side and appear to be twinkling." Some species synchronize their flashes. Thousands of others use simultaneous bioluminescence to flash on and off at precisely the same time over and over in a symphony of light.

No matter the life cycle, all stages of fireflies glow. As fireflies light up a dark sky on a summer eve, may the great Source of all light shine through us in all stages of our life to illuminate the gross darkness of this world. "Let us open our hearts to Heaven's light, that we may be able to flash its bright rays on the pathway of others. Let us kindle our tapers at the divine altar, that we may be light-bearers in a world of spiritual darkness." *The Signs of the Times*, September 2, 1889.

Who will be light-bearers for God?





A future church building being constructed to replace a shelter in Zambia.

Zambia & Malawi

As this magazine is going to print the Chipata Church in Zambia has made tremendous progress in completing their church. The roof is now on and it is already being used. A youth Bible conference was held for youth from Malawi and Zambia. At the end of the seminar, there were 13 souls baptized. Praise the Lord that they now have a church to hold these types of meetings and are hard at work to reach youth and adults for the Lord.

The church in Malawi is also making progress. The

foundation for the church is completed and they are currently firing bricks for the walls. All other materials for construction have been purchased and building will begin as soon as the bricks are completed. Once this occurs, this church too should come together quickly.

Continue to pray for the completion of both churches and for the work being done through these congregations. You may still help with the construction costs by designating your offering for *Zambia/Malawi Churches*.

March Sermon of the Month

Enduring Faith

By John J. Grosboll

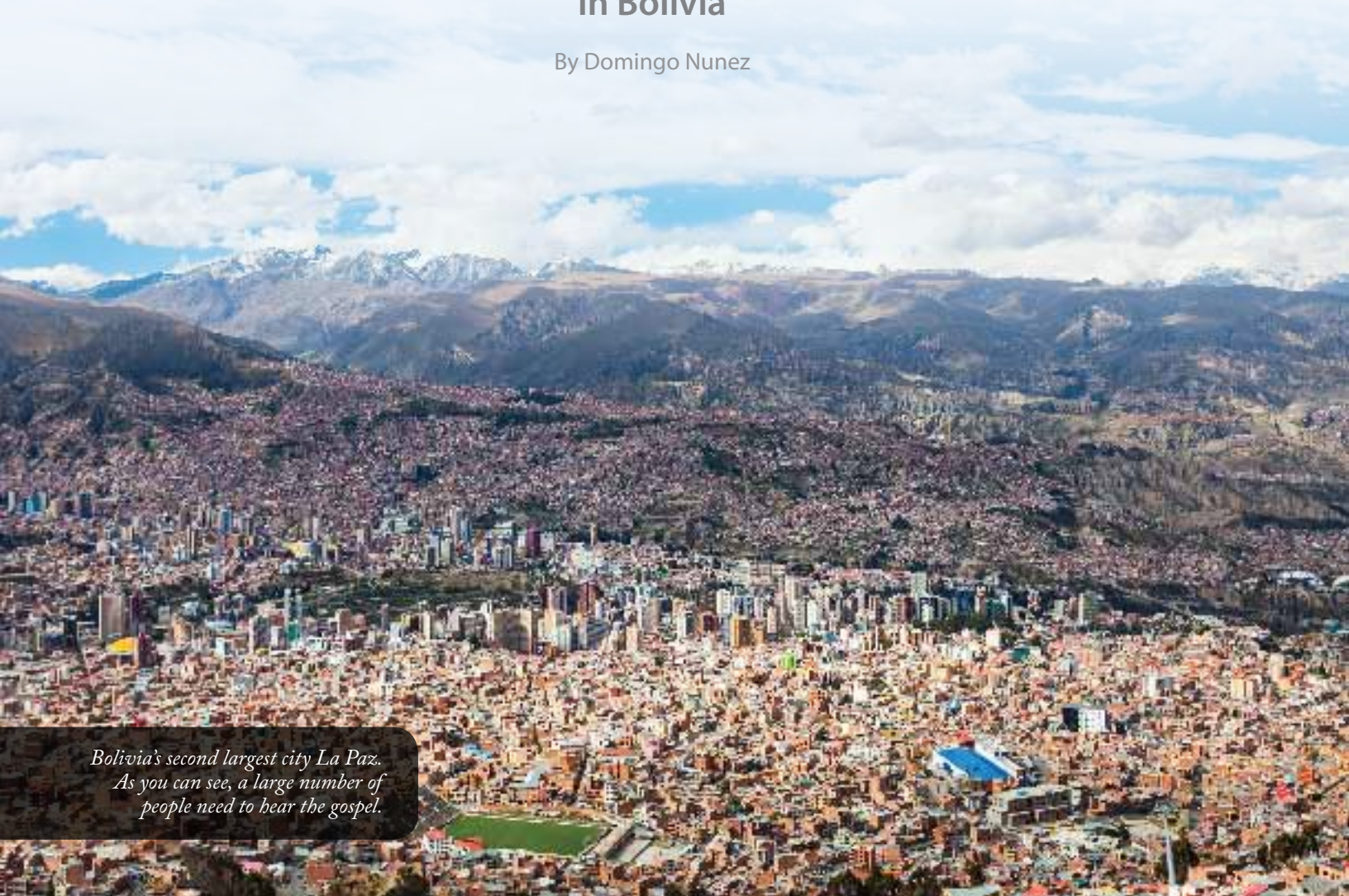
Faith and confidence in God dismisses fear and produces never failing strength to endure trials. The martyrs knew what would lessen the fierceness of the fire and the most cruel death was made bearable by beholding Christ.

All who have donated in the past month will automatically receive this Sermon of the Month free of charge.



Our Brothers and Sisters in Bolivia

By Domingo Nunez



*Bolivia's second largest city La Paz.
As you can see, a large number of
people need to hear the gospel.*



For the last several years, Pastor Domingo Nunez, the outreach director for Steps to life, has been working in Bolivia with several different Protestant churches. In the last two years, his work has been especially with the people in Cochabamba in La Paz to organize the churches there according to new testament gospel order. To organize the churches in Bolivia is hard work, especially in the city of Santa Cruz, where, by God's grace, the first Free Seventh-day Adventist Church was established. The churches there are now organized and operating properly, according to the guidance given in God's word. Jose Luis, one of the faithful members of this church, has a most encouraging testimony about his spiritual journey. Because his testimony is so encouraging, we present it in its entirety, beginning on page 19. Here we will provide a short account of the work he and his brethren have accomplished.

The church in Cochabamba has now managed to organize each department, with dedicated leadership, determined to grow more in God's grace. This church as well as the others in Bolivia that Pastor Nunez has been working with have affiliated with and come under the leadership of Inter-America and Global Evangelism of the General Assembly of Free Seventh-day Adventists. This over-sight organization provides encouragement to those Free Seventh-day Adventist churches that seek to teach and uphold the historic SDA beliefs. By virtue of membership in this organization, individuals and churches are able to use the name and writings of Ellen G. White without fear of prosecution.

This year the Free SDA churches in Bolivia are intent on growing in Christ and learning how to defend their faith in God's promises. A special emphasis will be placed on learning the true doctrines of the Adventist faith. Their dedica-

tion to learning and understanding the true will of God has produced a rich blessing on the individual members and therefore on the churches as a whole.

Because of your support of the global outreach efforts of Steps to Life as overseen by Pastor Nunez, these churches are quickly becoming beacons of light and hope in their part of the world. This support of the efforts of the churches in Bolivia to organize and become effective in spreading the three angels' messages is but one example of what can be done as God's people work together to hasten the soon return of our Lord and Saviour.

Although the efforts of these churches in Bolivia may seem small in comparison to the final worldwide work that remains, they are doing what they can in their portion of the Lord's vineyard, with a determination to grow to be a center in Bolivia for many more churches to be raised up. Please remember their work in your prayers.



Sunrise over Parinacota Volcano in Sajama National Park, Bolivia

Question

Is it worse now than when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed?

Answer

Yes.

“The flames that consumed the cities of the plain shed their warning light down even to our time. We are taught the fearful and solemn lesson that while God’s mercy bears long with the transgressor, there is a limit beyond which men may not go on in sin. When that limit is reached, then the offers of mercy are withdrawn, and the ministration of judgment begins.

“The Redeemer of the world declares that there are greater sins than that for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Those who hear the gospel invitation calling sinners to repentance, and heed it not, are more guilty before God than were the dwellers in the vale of Siddim. And still greater sin is theirs who profess to know God and to keep His commandments, yet who deny Christ in their character and their daily life. In the light of the Saviour’s warning, the fate of Sodom is a solemn admonition, not merely to those who are guilty of outbreaching sin, but to all who are trifling with Heaven-sent light and privileges. ...” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 162, 165.

“There was a coming out, a decided separation from the wicked, an escape for life. So it was in the days of Noah; so with Lot; so with the disciples prior to the destruction of Jerusalem; and so it will be in

the last days. Again the voice of God is heard in a message of warning, bidding His people separate themselves from the prevailing iniquity.

“The state of corruption and apostasy that in the last days would exist in the religious world, was presented to the prophet John in the vision of Babylon, ‘that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth’ (Revelation 17:18). Before its destruction the call is to be given from heaven, ‘Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her

plagues’ (Revelation 18:4). As in the days of Noah and Lot, there must be a marked separation from sin and sinners. There can be no compromise between God and the world, no turning back to secure earthly treasures.” *Ibid.*, 166, 167. **LM**





A LITTLE WON'T HURT!

BY JUDY HALLINGSTAD

How often have you heard somebody say, “A little won’t hurt”? Could that be true? I remember a few years ago, a friend wanted to share some beauty cream she had picked up for a good price. She had read that this would help keep her complexion free of wrinkles and looking nice. I looked at the ingredients and the last ingredient on it was *arsenic*! I told my friend I was in no way going to use that cream, and what do you think she said? “A little won’t hurt”! I did some research and learned that young ladies back in the Middle Ages used arsenic to keep their faces nice and white. What a sad thing.

Let's look at another occurrence which brings on the same reaction of "Oh, a little won't hurt." But, sad to say, a little does hurt—it is just that you cannot see the damage until it is almost too late. Many times, it is too late. That *little bit* has been ruining the fine machinery which the Lord has given to us.

A STRIKING CASE OF MODERATE DRINKING

"Here is a story that may interest you It is not hearsay but an experience in my own (I. S. Ritchie, M.D.) medical practice.

"A prominent young man of this city died recently of 'moderate' drinking. He had never been 'drunk'—only 'happy'; but after three years of it he paid for it with his life. I was called at the last minute, but nothing could be done. He did not respond to any kind of treatment. I never knew why until I saw his body opened at the autopsy and viewed his organs. His heart was but a mass of degenerative fat instead of muscle. His liver was double enlarged, pitted and hardened and scarred—chronic alcoholic hypertrophic cirrhosis. His lungs appeared sclerotic, as did his kidneys, and were irregular and pale. His stomach and bowels were pale and fatty externally, but congested and reddened and thickened throughout the mucous membrane lining. His spleen and glands were swollen and congested. I had known him for twenty years and never knew that he drank. He was never ill, but told his wife, 'If I am ever sick, call Dr. Ritchie.' And so she did, but it was too late. When I arrived I worked with might and main and called another physician, but no therapy or heart stimulation or adrenalin had any effect. I have told you the reason. The last three years they said he had drunk moderately but daily.



Alcohol is certainly a snake in the grass. It is stimulating to the senses, makes a person feel happy when he is miserable, makes him feel strong for a while, but weakness follows.

"The autopsy surgeon removed a piece of tissue from each of the above-named organs and sent these to the pathologist in charge of the laboratory of an accredited Class A Medical College. A microscopic study of these organs revealed the irreparable damage alcohol had done to the vital units or cells comprising these organs. No other cause for death could be discovered." (I. S. Ritchie, M.D., ...) *Abundant Health*, Julius Gilbert White, 273, 274, © 1951 by author.

It is often the unseen damage that will kill in the long run. We are fearfully and wonderfully made and these so-called, "little things" do affect our bodies. Whether it be a *little* kill or a *big* kill, either way it is still a kill and it is sinning against our Maker who has said, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20:13).

Another writer, Jethro Kloss, states the following:

"... Alcohol is certainly a snake in the grass, it is stimulating to the senses, makes a person feel happy when he is miserable, makes him feel strong

for a while, but weakness follows. Alcohol numbs the nerves to such an extent that a man feels warm when he is cold. It makes him quite active while he is under its hellish influence, but there is great collapse as the effects wear off. It surely mocks a man and makes a fool of him. The wisest man that ever lived said that 'wine is a mocker' (Proverbs 20:1)." *Back to Eden*, 512, by Jethro Kloss, Back to Eden Books, 1982.

The young man mentioned above who died young stated that liquor made him feel happy, but what a dreadful end that may have been prevented.

It may not seem like it while we are indulging ourselves, but "a little bit *does* hurt." When you hurt your body, which is the temple of the Lord, you are serving the god of this world who will accept your service at the cost of your health and possibly your life.

"... choose you this day whom ye will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15). **LM**



ONE GOAL, ONE WAY

BY JOHN J. GROSBOLL

Because we live in a world full of scams, it is crucial to find a dependable way to tell the difference between truth and falsehood so that we do not end up being duped. With every wind of doctrine circulating, we certainly cannot trust people's exalted professions or their fair speeches, as many have alternative motives that are not obvious on the surface. Honesty often seems a thing of the past and it is dangerous to depend on your senses. The Bible is the only sure foundation that remains firm among a cacophony of voices.

A popular belief today is that eventually everybody in the world will be saved, but nowhere in the Bible do we find such assurance. In fact, Jesus Christ Himself taught just the opposite. He said, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many that go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matthew 7:13, 14). It appears here that Jesus knew that the majority of the world would be attracted to the broad popular road where self rules and every desire of the heart can be supplied. In a world of consumerism, people desire immediate satisfaction. Few choose the road of self denial and delayed satisfaction.

Jesus said in Luke 13:24, "Seek to enter through the narrow gate because many, I say to you, will attempt to, and will not be able" (literal translation). The reason they are not able is because they cannot take along with them all of their sins, their sinful desires and their own pleasures and ambitions. Because the gate is narrow, people are in danger of being deceived and enticed onto the broad way, thinking that it will lead to the same end as the narrow way. The temptation is always, Why make it so hard for yourself? It is so much easier on the broad way.

Knowing how hard the temptation is, immediately after Jesus gave that instruction, He gave a warning that there are people in this world who are out to deceive you.

There are teachers of falsehood who will arise and draw you away from the narrow path, away from the straight gate with false promises that you can have eternal life while you are going down the broad road. He said, Watch out!

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn-bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 7:15-20).

Jesus said that we are not to prove whether they are a true or a false

by obeying Him, by being loyal to His commandments?

If we do not feel the weight of the moral law, if we make light of any of God's precepts, if we break one of the least of His commandments, we shall be of no esteem in the sight of heaven, and it may be known that our claims to be religious teachers are without any foundation at all. Those kinds of teachings originate with the prince of darkness, the enemy of God.

Not all who profess the name of Christ, who call themselves Christians, not all who wear His badge, are actually Christ's. The apostle Paul

A popular belief today is that eventually everybody in the world will be saved, but nowhere in the Bible do we find such assurance.

prophet by their fair speeches or their exalted professions. They are to be judged by the word of God. The word of God says, "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). A strict warning here is given against listening to spiritualist manifestations, or spiritual apparitions, or people claiming to speak for the dead, or being spirits of the dead, or the like (verse 19).

The wise man said in Proverbs 19:27, "Cease, my son to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." What message are you listening to? Are you listening to a message that leads you to fear and reverence God? Are you listening to a message that leads you to love God

had some very pointed things to say on this subject. Notice what He said in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."

Paul here says that there are false apostles who pretend to be teachers of righteousness, who pretend to be the apostles of Christ, but actually they are serving another master. Not all who profess His name, not all who call themselves Christians, not all who wear His badge are actually Jesus Christ's. Jesus said there will be many

people who have taught in My name, that will be found wanting at last. Notice what He said as He neared the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7:21–23).

and appears to join the winning side, calling himself Christ.

The Biblical word, *antichrist* simply means *somebody that stands in the place of Christ*. People who are actually serving antichrist, will think that they are serving Christ. The apostle Paul is very clear on this point. He wrote to the Corinthian church, “I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which

pel that would set you free from the power of sin in your life.

The apostles preached that same gospel. Paul preached it in Romans 6 and 8. The apostle John preached the same gospel and warned about the danger of having a false conception that we are followers of God when we are really not. He said, “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:3, 4). The apostle John, considered so loveable and so soft-spoken, had no mincing words to say about the person who claimed to be a Christian and who was living in violation of the law of God.

The apostle James is just as clear. He said, “If you keep the whole law, and you offend in one point, you are guilty of all. For the same person that said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ So if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those that will be judged by the law of liberty” (James 2:10–12, literal translation).

James teaches it. Jude teaches it. John teaches it. Paul teaches it. Peter teaches it in 2 Peter 3. The apostle John teaches it again in Revelation 14:12 and 22. The people of God in the last days are those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. O, friend, we are in great danger today of thinking that we are Christians while we are living in sin.

The person who lives in sin is not a New Testament Christian because New Testament Christianity gives a person victory over their besetting sins and gives the power to live a new life. If a person claims to be a Christian and continues living in sin and does not overcome his/her sins, he/she is in danger of losing eternal

Jesus said that we are not to prove whether they are a true or a false prophet by their fair speeches or their exalted professions. They are to be judged by the word of God.

These are people who call Jesus, “Lord” and call themselves “Christians.” These are not just people who come and sit in the pew at church; these are Christian workers. They say, “We have prophesied in Your name. We had the Holy Spirit. We had the gift of prophecy.” “We cast out demons in Your name.” “We worked many wonders (miracles) in Your name.”

How can that be? The Bible teaches that there is a great spiritual battle going on in this world between two supernatural forces. Christ is one, but there is another supernatural force. He has lost the battle over and over again. So, because of his defeat in the way he has operated in the past, he masquerades

you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you may well put up with it” (2 Corinthians 11:3, 4)!

It concerned Paul that the church would be deceived and receive a different spirit instead of the Spirit that the apostles had brought to them and that the church would accept a different gospel. The New Testament gospel is a gospel that delivers a person not only from his guilt, but it delivers a person from the power of sin in his life. Jesus said, “... whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a Son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed” (John 8:34, 36). Notice, the gospel that Jesus taught was the gos-

life. Jesus said that many will come to Him in that last day and say that He has made a mistake. They will claim to know that they are saved, to know that they should be in the kingdom of heaven because they claim to be His as Christians. “We prophesied in Your name and we cast out demons in Your name and we did many miracles in Your name.”

Then will come the sad answer, “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you’ ” (Matthew 7:23). It is difficult to take in the terrible shock that that would be. To think that you are serving Christ, when in reality you are serving another Jesus; to think that you have the Holy Spirit, but you have a different spirit; to think that you are following the gospel, but you are following a different gospel. And when Jesus comes, you claim to have prophesied in His name and to have cast out demons in His name, and done many miracles in His name, and He says, “I never knew you.” How shocking, indeed, that will be.

Does Christ know you? Jesus describes those He says He does not know in Matthew 7:23: “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ ” What is their problem? These are the people who believed that you can be a Christian and follow Jesus and yet continue to break His law.

In this world we are used to doing things half right or even partially right and still get along. In fact, we have schools that grade on the bell curve and you can get a pass with only 70%. However, that is not the way God’s law is. James 2:10–12 says, “Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ Now if you do not commit



In a world of consumerism, people desire immediate satisfaction. Few choose the road of self-denial and delayed satisfaction.

adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.”

You cannot be a New Testament Christian unless you commit to following Jesus all the way. Remember that Jesus said in Luke 14:33, “Whoever it is that ‘... does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.’ ” My friend, you are not going to take the riches of this world into the kingdom of heaven. All the material things here are going to burn up. God doesn’t need them for He is going to create a new world for His children to live in. The question is, Do you want what the Lord has prepared for the saved? Are you willing to go through the narrow gate and up the narrow way, and be obedient to the Lord Jesus and follow Him all the way and at last receive the gift of eternal life?

There are many people now, just as there were when Jesus spoke these original words, who want eternal life, but it seems that the price is too great to obey Jesus in everything because they will suffer some kind of a loss in this world. People felt that way then and people still feel that way today. So, before closing His Sermon on the

Mount, Jesus gave to them a most striking illustration that would predict what their future would be. This story also predicts what your future will be.

He said: “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall” (Matthew 7:24–27).

The difference is whether you choose to obey or choose not to obey, whether your life conforms to what Jesus said or whether it does not. Seven hundred years before Jesus came to the world Isaiah the prophet said, “The word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isaiah 40:8 KJV). And many years after Jesus had preached on the mountain, the apostle Peter quoted these words from Isaiah: “... this is the word by which the gospel is preached to you” (1 Peter 1:25, literal translation).

This is the word. When you receive the gospel, you receive the word of God that lasts forever. In other words, the word of God is the only steadfast thing that our world really knows. It is the sure foundation. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My word will not pass away" (Matthew 24:35, literal translation).

The great principles of the law of God, the very nature of God Himself, are enshrouded in the words of Jesus from the Mount. Whoever builds on them is building upon Christ, the Rock of Ages. In receiving His word, we receive Christ. Only those who receive His words and do them are building upon Christ. The apostle Paul said, "... other foundation can no man lay than

doing the will of our heavenly Father. Religion consists in doing the words of Christ. It is not doing them to earn God's favor, but because, all undeserving, we have received the gift of His love. Jesus places the salvation of man, not upon profession merely, but upon faith that is made manifest by works of righteousness. Doing, not merely saying, is required and expected of the followers of Christ. It is through action that character is built.

Do you desire to be a follower of Jesus? There are many people today who say, "I want to be a Christian. I want to be a follower of Jesus Christ, but I don't know how to start. I don't know how to begin. I don't know very much about the Bible."

of Christ. Remember, "The path of the just (righteous) is like a shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18, literal translation).

Jesus Christ is the sure foundation. He is the living Stone and His life is imparted to all who build upon Him, who do His words. Peter said, "... you also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house ..." (1 Peter 2:5, literal translation). Paul said, "... it's fitly framed together, growing into a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21, literal translation).

The living stones become one with the foundation because a common life dwells in all. And that building no tempest can overthrow. Every other building that is built on any other foundation will fall. If we build our character on human ideas, opinions, forms, and ceremonies, then our building will be destroyed. It will be knocked down by the fierce tempests of temptation. But right today, before the tempest comes that's going to end this world's history, the Lord says, "As I live, ... I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will you die" (Ezekiel 33:11, literal translation).

O, friend, the Lord wants to save you and He will save you if you are willing to turn to Him and follow Him with all your heart.

(Unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, Bible texts are from the New King James Version.) **LM**

Holiness is not rapture. It is the result of surrendering all to God. It is doing the will of our heavenly Father.

that which is laid, Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11, literal translation).

Peter said the same thing. "... there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12 KJV). That is the only foundation upon which you can build securely. We build on Christ by obeying His word. Jesus said, "If you do these sayings of mine, you'll be like a man who built his house on the rock and when the storm came, the house did not fall. But if you hear these sayings of Mine and you don't do them, you'd be like a man who built his house on the sand and when the storm came, his house collapsed" (Matthew 7:26, 27, literal translation).

Holiness is not rapture. It is the result of surrendering all to God. It is

You may seem to be in the dark and not know how to find the light. So here is how to get started. Simply follow what light you do understand. Whatever you understand from the word of God tell the Lord, "By Your grace, what You tell me to do I am choosing to do, to obey and follow You." If you set your heart to obey Jesus Christ, to acknowledge Him as the Lord of your life and follow Him, then, even though you may know very little right now, as you receive His word by faith, you will receive power to obey. As you start to obey the light you have, even if it is just a small amount, you will be given more light. You will be building on God's word and your character will be built after the similitude of the character

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CHRIST OUR REFUGE

There were six cities in the land of Canaan which were set apart as places of refuge, to which a man might flee if he had, either by accident or design, killed another. These cities were easy of access. Three were on the west side of the river Jordan, and three on the east side. Every year the roads leading to them were examined, to see that they were in good condition, and that there was nothing in the way to stop the man-slayer as he was running from his pursuer. At different points there were guide-boards, and on them were written, REFUGE! REFUGE!

If any man by accident killed another, and reached one of these cities before his pursuer, he was allowed to stay there until the death of the high-priest who was then living. But if in anger a man had purposely killed another, then, although he sought refuge in one of these cities, he was given up to the avenger of blood to be slain. You will find more about these cities and their names if you will read the thirty-fifth chapter of Numbers, the nineteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, and the twentieth chapter of Joshua.

But what interest can boys and girls and all older persons have in these cities?

I will try to tell you. God has different ways of teaching. A great many things about which we read in the Old Testament are what is called types.

A type, in scripture language, means a pattern or a likeness to a person who is to come, or to an event which is to take place. It is supposed to point forward to something more valuable than itself. Thus, for example, the blood of the lamb which was slain on the Jewish altar was type or a foreshadowing of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ for our salvation. Hence John the Baptist pointing to the Saviour, said to His disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The paschal lamb, which was slain to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews from the bondage of Egypt, and the lamb which was offered daily, both morning and evening, in the service of the temple, were representations of the greater sacrifice which Christ came from heaven to make for our salvation.

So the land of Canaan was a type of heaven. The lifting up of the brazen serpent on a pole was a type of our Saviour's crucifixion; and the cities of refuge were a beautiful type of Jesus Christ, who is the sinner's refuge.

You know, my dear children, that we have all sinned, and that we all need a place of safety. The avenger says, "Thou shalt surely die." Escape for thy life. But that we may not die eternally, God has given us the Bible as our guide-board; and the Bible is con-

stantly pointing to Jesus Christ as the sinner's refuge. He is our hiding-place. It is to Him Isaiah refers when he says, "And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isaiah 32:2).

The way to our city of refuge is plain. "I am the way" (John 14:6), is the Saviour's own direction. The gate is always open, and the assurance is, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

I want you to remember, dear children, that it is a great deal easier to run to this city of refuge when you are young, than it will be if you put it off until you are older. The promise of the Saviour is, "Those that seek Me early shall find Me" (Proverbs 8:17). Will you not flee to Jesus as your hiding-place? Will you not seek Him when He may be found? How sad it will be if you neglect to do so. You will need a refuge when the tempest of God's judgments shall burst upon the wicked. Oh, then how glad you will be if you can say, as David said of his trust in God, "Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance" (Psalm 32:7).

Sabbath Readings for the Home Circle, vol. 1, 148-151. **LM**





EXPERIENCE

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

In the winter of 1864, my Willie was suddenly and violently brought down with lung fever*. We had just buried our oldest son with this disease, and were very anxious in regard to Willie, fearing that he, too, might die. We decided that we would not send for a physician, but do the best we could with him ourselves by the use of water, and entreat the Lord in behalf of the child. We called in a few who had faith to unite their prayers with ours. We had a sweet assurance of God's presence and blessing.

The next day Willie was very sick. He was wandering. He did not seem to see or hear me when I spoke to

him. His heart had no regular beat, but was in a constant agitated flutter. We continued to look to God in his behalf, and to use water freely upon his head, and a compress constantly upon his lungs, and soon he seemed rational as ever. He suffered severe pain in his right side, and could not lie upon it for a moment. This pain we subdued with cold water compresses, varying the temperature of the water according to the degree of the fever. We were very careful to keep his hands and feet warm.

We expected the crisis would come the seventh day. We had but little rest during his sickness, and were obliged

to give him up into others' care the fourth and fifth nights. My husband and myself the fifth day felt very anxious. The child raised fresh blood, and coughed considerably. My husband spent much time in prayer. We left our child in careful hands that night. Before retiring my husband prayed long and earnestly. Suddenly his burden of prayer left him, and it seemed as though a voice spoke to him, and said, Go lie down, I will take care of the child. I had retired sick, and could not sleep for anxiety for several hours. I felt pressed for breath. Although sleeping in a large chamber, I arose and opened the door into a large hall,

and was at once relieved, and soon slept. I dreamed that an experienced physician was standing by my child, watching every breath, with one hand over his heart, and with the other feeling his pulse. He turned to us and said, "The crisis has passed. He has seen his worst night. He will now come up speedily, for he has not the injurious influence of drugs to recover from. Nature has nobly done her work to rid the system of impurities." I related to him my worn-out condition, my pressure for breath, and the relief obtained by opening the door. Said he, "That which gave you relief, will also relieve your child. He needs air. You have kept him too warm. The heated air coming from a stove is injurious, and were it not for the air coming in at the crevices of the windows, would be poisonous, and destroy life. Stove heat destroys the vitality of the air, and weakens the lungs. The child's lungs have been weakened by the room being kept too warm. Sick persons are debilitated by disease, and need all the invigorating air that they can bear to strengthen the vital organs to resist disease. And yet in most cases air and light are excluded from the sick room at the very time when most needed, as though dangerous enemies."

This dream and my husband's experience was a consolation to us both. We found in the morning that our boy had passed a restless night. He seemed to be in a high fever until noon. Then the fever left him, and he appeared quite well, except weak. He had eaten but one small cracker through his five-days' sickness. He came up rapidly, and has had better health than he has had for several years before. This experience is valuable to us.

I have thought for years that I was dependent upon a meat diet for strength. I have eaten three meals a

day until within a few months. It has been very difficult for me to go from one meal to another without suffering from faintness at the stomach, and dizziness of the head. Eating would remove these feelings. I seldom allowed myself to eat anything between my regular meals, and have made it a practice to often retire without supper. But I have suffered greatly for want of food from breakfast to dinner, and have frequently fainted. Eating meat removed for the time these faint feelings. I therefore decided that meat was indispensable in my case.

But since the Lord presented before me, in June, 1863, the subject of meat-eating in relation to health, I have left the use of meat. For a while it was rather difficult to bring my appetite to

the past six months. My former faint and dizzy feelings have left me. I have been troubled every spring with loss of appetite. The last spring I had no trouble in this respect. Our plain food, eaten twice a day, is enjoyed with a keen relish. We have no meat, cake, or any rich food upon our table. We use no lard, but in its place, milk, cream, and some butter. We have our food prepared with but little salt, and have dispensed with spices of all kinds. We breakfast at seven, and take our dinner at one. It is seldom I have a faint feeling. My appetite is satisfied. My food is eaten with a greater relish than ever before.

I have, since a child, been afflicted with dropsy and heart disease, occasioned by my misfortune when about

My brain has been constantly taxed, and I have had but little exercise. Yet my health has never been better than for the past six months.

bread, for which, formerly, I have had but little relish. But by persevering, I have been able to do this. I have lived for nearly one year without meat. For about six months most of the bread upon our table has been unleavened cakes, made of unbolted wheat-meal and water, and a very little salt. We use fruits and vegetables liberally. I have lived for eight months upon two meals a day. I have applied myself to writing the most of the time for above a year. For eight months have been confined closely to writing. My brain has been constantly taxed, and I have had but little exercise. Yet my health has never been better than for

nine years old. For several years, in the spring, I have had a shock of paralysis which has nearly cost me my life. But, in answer to prayer, I have recovered from its effects. The last spring I had no symptoms of this much-dreaded affliction. I have no trouble with dropsy or heart disease. I have within eight months lost twenty-five pounds of flesh. I am better without it. I have more strength than I have realized for years.

Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4a, 151-153.

*An obsolete term for elevated core temperature resulting from an infection in the respiratory system. **LM**

The Word Was God

Key Text

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

Study Help: *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 113, 114; *The Faith I Live By*, 46.

Introduction

“From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 228.

Sunday

1 JESUS, ONE WITH THE FATHER

- a. What does the Word of God say about Jesus before His incarnation? John 1:1, 2.

Note: “From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was ‘the image of God,’ the image of His greatness and majesty, ‘the outshining of His glory.’ It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world.” *The Desire of Ages*, 19.

“In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God.” *The Signs of the Times*, August 29, 1900.

“Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.

- b. How is Jesus regarded by the Father and the angels? Psalm 45:6; Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 1:6–8.

Note: “Angels are God’s ministers, radiant with the light ever flowing from His presence and speeding on rapid wing to execute His will. But the Son, the anointed of God, the ‘express image of His person,’ ‘the brightness of His glory,’ ‘upholding all things by the word of His power,’ holds supremacy over them all (Hebrews 1:3).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.

Monday

2 JESUS, THE CREATOR

- a. Who created all things? John 1:3, 10; Colossians 1:1–17.

Note: “In the beginning, God was revealed in all the works of creation. It was Christ that spread the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. It was His hand that hung the worlds in space, and fashioned the flowers of the field. ‘His strength setteth fast the mountains.’ ‘The sea is His, and He made it’ (Psalms 65:6; 95:5). It was He that filled the earth with beauty, and the air with song. And upon all things in earth, and air, and sky, He wrote the message of the Father’s love.” *The Desire of Ages*, 20.

- b. How were the worlds and the universe created? Psalms 33:6, 9; 104:1–6. What was our world like when it was created?

Note: “God spoke, and His words created His works in the natural world. God’s creation is but a reservoir of means made ready for Him to employ instantly to do His pleasure.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1081.

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.’ ‘For He spake, and it was,’ ‘He commanded, and it stood fast.’ He ‘laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever’ (Psalms 33:6, 9; 104:5).

“As the earth came forth from the hand of its Maker, it was exceedingly beautiful. Its surface was diversified with mountains, hills, and plains, interspersed with noble rivers and lovely lakes; but the hills and mountains were not abrupt and rugged,

abounding in terrific steeps and frightful chasms, as they now do; the sharp, ragged edges of earth's rocky framework were buried beneath the fruitful soil, which everywhere produced a luxuriant growth of verdure. There were no loathsome swamps or barren deserts. Graceful shrubs and delicate flowers greeted the eye at every turn. The heights were crowned with trees more majestic than any that now exist. The air, untainted by foul miasma, was clear and healthful. The entire landscape outvied in beauty the decorated grounds of the proudest palace. The angelic host viewed the scene with delight, and rejoiced at the wonderful works of God." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 44.

Tuesday

3 THE LIGHT OF THE UNIVERSE

- a. Who is the Author of all life and light? John 1:4–9; Acts 17:28.

Note: "Christ is the 'Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (John 1:9). As through Christ every human being has life, so also through Him every soul receives some ray of divine light." *Education*, 29.

"Through Christ had been communicated every ray of divine light that had ever reached our fallen world. It was He who had spoken through everyone that throughout the ages had declared God's word to man. Of Him all the excellences manifest in the earth's greatest and noblest souls were reflections. The purity and beneficence of Joseph, the faith and meekness and long-suffering of Moses, the steadfastness of Elisha, the noble integrity and firmness of Daniel, the ardor and self-sacrifice of Paul, the mental and spiritual power manifest in all these men, and in all others who had ever dwelt on the earth, were but gleams from the shining of His glory. In Him was found the perfect ideal." *Ibid.*, 73.

- b. What does Jesus say concerning Himself and what does He promise us? John 10:28; 8:12; 12:46.

Note: "In the words, 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12), Jesus declared Himself the Messiah. The aged Simeon, in the



From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God.

temple where Christ was now teaching, had spoken of Him as 'a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel' (Luke 2:32). In these words he was applying to Him a prophecy familiar to all Israel." *The Desire of Ages*, 465.

"Only through Christ can immortality be obtained. Said Jesus: 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life' (John 3:36). Every man may come into possession of this priceless blessing if he will comply with the conditions. All 'who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality,' will receive 'eternal life' (Romans 2:7)." *The Great Controversy*, 533.

"That which had been revealed in His words was revealed also in His character. He was the embodiment of the truths He taught." *The Desire of Ages*, 465.

Wednesday

4 GOD WITH US

- a. What did Isaiah prophesy about Christ's name? Isaiah 7:14.

- b. When was this prophecy fulfilled and what does it mean to us? Matthew 1:20–23.

Note: “Since Jesus came to dwell with us, we know that God is acquainted with our trials, and sympathizes with our griefs. Every son and daughter of Adam may understand that our Creator is the friend of sinners. For in every doctrine of grace, every promise of joy, every deed of love, every divine attraction presented in the Saviour’s life on earth, we see ‘God with us’ (Matthew 1:23).” *The Desire of Ages*, 24.

c. What did Jesus do to reach us in our fallen state? John 1:14; Philippians 2:5–8; Hebrews 2:14–18.

Note: “In Christ’s parable teaching the same principle is seen as in His own mission to the world. That we might become acquainted with His divine character and life, Christ took our nature and dwelt among us. Divinity was revealed in humanity; the invisible glory in the visible human form. Men could learn of the unknown through the known; heavenly things were revealed through the earthly; God was made manifest in the likeness of men. So it was in Christ’s teaching: the unknown was illustrated by the known; divine truths by earthly things with which the people were most familiar.

“The Scripture says, ‘All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; ... that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world’ (Matthew 13:34, 35). Natural things were the medium for the spiritual; the things of nature and the life-experience of His hearers were connected with the truths of the written word. Leading thus from the natural to the spiritual kingdom, Christ’s parables are links in the chain of truth that unites man with God, and earth with heaven.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 17, 18.

Thursday

5 THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH

a. What did Jesus come to do for humanity? John 1:14; 3:16, 17; Luke 19:10.

Note: “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’ (Isaiah 53:5).” *The Desire of Ages*, 25.

b. How is the sinner considered by the Father when he believes in Jesus, His only begotten Son? John 1:12, 13; 1 John 3:1, 2.

c. What relationship is restored between the sinner and the Father through Christ? Galatians 4:5–7; Hebrews 2:10.

Note: “Christ is the uniting link in the golden chain which binds believers together in God. There must be no separating in this great testing time. The people of God are, ‘fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord’ (Ephesians 2:19–21). The children of God constitute one united whole in Christ, who presents His cross as the center of attraction. All who believe are one in Him.” *Selected Messages*, Book 3, 21.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What nature has Jesus possessed since eternity?
- 2 Who spread the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth?
- 3 From whom does all true life and light emanate?
- 4 What is Jesus called in Isaiah 7:14?
- 5 What did Jesus become upon assuming our human nature?

April 9 – 15

The Lamb of God

Key Text

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 32–143; *The Faith I Live By*, 17.

Introduction

“In order to enter into His joy—the joy of seeing souls redeemed by His sacrifice—we must participate in His labors for their redemption.” *The Desire of Ages*, 142.

Sunday

1 THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

- a. What did John the Baptist declare concerning Jesus? John 1:15–18.

- b. How did John identify himself to the priests and Levites when they asked him who he was? John 1:19–23.

- c. What prophecy did John fulfill? Isaiah 40:3–5.

Note: “In every stage of this earth’s history God has had His agencies to carry forward His work, which must be done in His appointed way. John the Baptist had a special work, for which he was born and to which he was appointed—the work of preparing the way of the Lord. ... His wilderness ministry was a most striking, literal fulfillment of prophecy.”

“Ellen G. White,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1115.

“The childhood, youth, and manhood, of John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to do a special work in preparing the way for the world’s Redeemer, was marked with firmness and moral power. Satan could not move him from his integrity.” *The Review and Herald*, March 3, 1874.

Monday

2 THE LAMB OF GOD

- a. When Jesus came to John to be baptized, how did John identify Him in public? John 1:29.

- b. What prophecy did John fulfill at the baptism of Jesus? Isaiah 61:1; John 1:34.

Note: “The word of God includes the Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as of the New. One is not complete without the other. Christ declared that the truths of the Old Testament are as valuable as those of the New. Christ was as much man’s Redeemer in the beginning of the world as He is today. Before He clothed His divinity with humanity and came to our world, the gospel message was given by Adam, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, and Noah. Abraham in Canaan and Lot in Sodom bore the message, and from generation to generation faithful messengers proclaimed the Coming One. The rites of the Jewish economy were instituted by Christ Himself. He was the foundation of their system of sacrificial offerings, the great antitype of all their religious service. The blood shed as the sacrifices were offered pointed to the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. All the typical offerings were fulfilled in Him.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 126.

- c. How did John introduce Jesus to his own disciples? John 1:35, 36.

- d. What effect did the words of John have on his disciples? John 1:37.

Note: “On the following day, while two disciples were standing near, John again saw Jesus among the people. Again the face of the prophet was lighted up with glory from the Unseen, as he cried, ‘Behold the Lamb of God’ (John 1:29)! The words thrilled the hearts of the disciples. They did not fully understand them. What meant the name that John had given Him—‘the Lamb of God’? John himself had not explained it.” *The Desire of Ages*, 138.

“Those who are true to their calling as messengers of God, will not seek honor for themselves. Love for self will be swallowed up in love for Christ. They will recognize that it is their work to proclaim, as did John the Baptist, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world’ (John 1:29).” *Gospel Workers*, 56.

Tuesday

3 JESUS' FIRST DISCIPLES

- a. Who were some of Jesus' first disciples? Matthew 4:18, 21; John 1:37, 40.

Note: “Leaving John, they [the two disciples] went to seek Jesus. One of the two was Andrew, the brother of Simon; the other was John the evangelist. These were Christ's first disciples. Moved by an irresistible impulse, they followed Jesus—anxious to speak with Him, yet awed and silent, lost in the overwhelming significance of the thought, ‘Is this the Messiah?’

“Jesus knew that the disciples were following Him. They were the first fruits of His ministry, and there was joy in the heart of the divine Teacher as these souls responded to His grace. Yet turning, He asked only, ‘What seek ye?’ He would leave them free to turn back or to speak of their desire.

“Of one purpose only were they conscious. One presence filled their thought. They exclaimed, ‘Rabbi, ... where dwellest Thou?’ (John 1:38). In a brief interview by the wayside they could not receive that for which they longed. They desired to

be alone with Jesus, to sit at His feet, and hear His words.” *The Desire of Ages*, 138. [Emphasis author's.]

- b. What interest did the first disciples manifest, and how long did they stay with Him during their first meeting? John 1:38, 39.

Note: “They [Andrew and John] came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day.” *The Desire of Ages*, 139.

- c. What did the first disciples do soon after meeting Jesus? John 1:41, 42.

Note: “Andrew sought to impart the joy that filled his heart. Going in search of his brother Simon, he cried, ‘We have found the Messiah.’ Simon waited for no second bidding. He also had heard the preaching of John the Baptist, and he hastened to the Saviour. The eye of Christ rested upon him, reading his character and his life history. His impulsive nature, his loving, sympathetic heart, his ambition and self-confidence, the history of his fall, his repentance, his labors, and his martyr death—the Saviour read it all, and He said, ‘Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone’ (John 1:41, 42).” *The Desire of Ages*, 139.

Wednesday

4 MORE DISCIPLES

- a. Whom did Jesus invite to follow Him? John 1:43, 44.

- b. As soon as Phillip heard the call of Christ, what did he become?

Note: “Philip obeyed the command, and straightway he also became a worker for Christ.” *The Desire of Ages*, 139.

c. Whom did Phillip reach? John 1:45.

d. When Nathanael manifested prejudice towards Jesus, what other invitation did Phillip make? John 1:46–49.

Note: “The inhabitants of Nazareth were proverbial for their wickedness. The low estimate in which they were generally held is shown by Nathanael’s question ...” *The Desire of Ages*, 71.

“Philip called Nathanael. The latter had been among the throng when the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God. As Nathanael looked upon Jesus, he was disappointed. Could this man, who bore the marks of toil and poverty, be the Messiah? Yet Nathanael could not decide to reject Jesus, for the message of John had brought conviction to his heart. ...

“Philip entered into no controversy. He said, ‘Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!’ In surprise Nathanael exclaimed, ‘Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee’ (John 1:46–48).

“It was enough. The divine Spirit that had borne witness to Nathanael in his solitary prayer under the fig tree now spoke to him in the words of Jesus. Though in doubt, and yielding somewhat to prejudice, Nathanael had come to Christ with an honest desire for truth, and now his desire was met. His faith went beyond that of the one who had brought him to Jesus. He answered and said, ‘Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel’ (Verse 49).” *Ibid.*, 139, 140.

Thursday

5 AN OPEN HEAVEN

a. What promise did Christ make to Nathanael? John 1:50, 51.

b. What is the significance of Christ’s promise?

Note: “[John 1:50, 51 quoted.]

“Here Christ virtually says, On the bank of the Jordan the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove upon Me. That scene was but a token that I am the Son of God. If you believe on Me as such, your faith shall be quickened. You shall see that the heavens are opened, and are never to be closed. I have opened them to you. The angels of God are ascending, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed to the Father above, and descending, bringing blessing and hope, courage, help, and life, to the children of men.” *The Desire of Ages*, 142, 143.

c. What is available to those who accept Jesus as their Saviour, and what becomes their burden? John 4:14, 15; Revelation 22:17.

Note: “When one has received the truth in the love of it, he will make this manifest in the persuasion of his manner and the tones of his voice. He makes known that which he himself has heard, seen, and handled of the word of life, that others may have fellowship with him through the knowledge of Christ. His testimony, from lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, is truth to the receptive heart, and works sanctification upon the character.” *The Desire of Ages*, 142.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 According to prophecy, what was the mission of John the Baptist?
- 2 How did prophecy predict the birth and mission of Jesus?
- 3 What commendable qualities did the first disciples reveal?
- 4 Describe the conversion of Nathanael.
- 5 What does the expression “hereafter ye shall see heaven open” mean?

April 16 – 22

The Marriage at Cana

Key Text

“His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it” (John 2:5).

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 144–153; *Temperance*, 97, 98.

Introduction

“Jesus began the work of reformation by coming into close sympathy with humanity.” *The Desire of Ages*, 150.

Sunday

1 THE BEGINNING OF CHRIST’S MINISTRY

- a. Where did Jesus begin His ministry on the earth? John 2:1, 2.

Note: “Jesus did not begin His ministry by some great work before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. At a household gathering in a little Galilean village His power was put forth to add to the joy of a wedding feast. Thus He showed His sympathy with men, and His desire to minister to their happiness. In the wilderness of temptation He Himself had drunk the cup of woe. He came forth to give to men the cup of blessing, by His benediction to hallow the relations of human life.” *The Desire of Ages*, 144.

- b. What happened long before the end of the wedding feast? John 2:3.

Note: “It was the custom of the times for marriage festivities to continue several days. On this occasion, before the feast ended it was found that the supply of wine had failed. This discovery caused much perplexity and regret. It was unusual to dispense with wine on festive occasions, and its absence would seem to indicate a want of hospitality.” *The Desire of Ages*, 145, 146.

Monday

2 CHRIST AND HIS MOTHER

- a. What was the answer of Christ to His mother? John 2:4.

Note: “As a relative of the parties, Mary had assisted in the arrangements for the feast, and she now spoke to Jesus, saying, ‘They have no wine.’ These words were a suggestion that He might supply their need. But Jesus answered, ‘Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come’ (John 2:3, 4).

“This answer, abrupt as it seems to us, expressed no coldness or discourtesy. The Saviour’s form of address to His mother was in accordance with Oriental custom. It was used toward persons to whom it was desired to show respect. Every act of Christ’s earthly life was in harmony with the precept He Himself had given, ‘Honour thy father and thy mother’ (Exodus 20:12). On the cross, in His last act of tenderness toward His mother, Jesus again addressed her in the same way, as He committed her to the care of His best-loved disciple. Both at the marriage feast and upon the cross, the love expressed in tone and look and manner interpreted His words.” *The Desire of Ages*, 146.

- b. What did Christ’s mother say to the servants and what is the application of these words today? John 2:5.

Note: “As the guests assemble, many seem to be preoccupied with some topic of absorbing interest. A suppressed excitement pervades the company. Little groups converse together in eager but quiet tones, and wondering glances are turned upon the Son of Mary. As Mary had heard the disciples’ testimony in regard to Jesus, she had been gladdened with the assurance that her long-cherished hopes were not in vain. Yet she would have been more than human if there had not mingled with this holy joy a trace of the fond mother’s natural pride. As she saw the many glances bent upon Jesus, she longed to have Him prove to the company that He was really the Honored of God. She hoped there might be opportunity for Him to work a miracle before them.” *The Desire of Ages*, 145.

“Christ’s dignity and officework are in imposing such conditions as He pleases. ... God has provided divine assistance for

all emergencies to which our human resources are unequal.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 414, 415.

Tuesday

3 THE FIRST MIRACLE

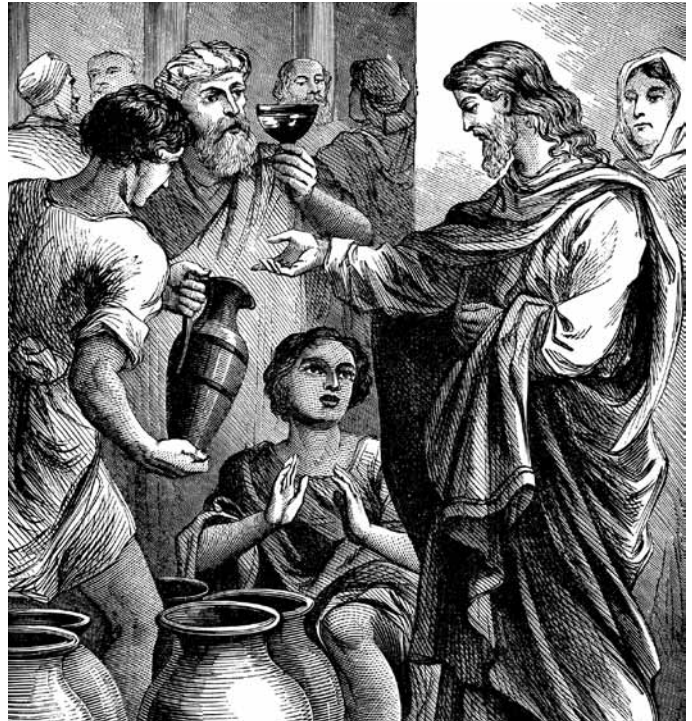
- a. What did Jesus tell the servants at the wedding to do? John 2:6–8.

Note: “Beside the doorway stood six large stone water jars, and Jesus bade the servants fill these with water. It was done. Then as the wine was wanted for immediate use, He said, ‘Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast’ (John 2:8). Instead of the water with which the vessels had been filled, there flowed forth wine.” *The Desire of Ages*, 148.

- b. What was the reaction of the governor of the feast? John 2:9, 10.

Note: “Neither the ruler of the feast nor the guests generally were aware that the supply of wine had failed. Upon tasting that which the servants brought, the ruler found it superior to any he had ever before drunk, and very different from that served at the beginning of the feast. Turning to the bridegroom, he said, ‘Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now’ (John 2:10).

“As men set forth the best wine first, then afterward that which is worse, so does the world with its gifts. That which it offers may please the eye and fascinate the senses, but it proves to be unsatisfying. The wine turns to bitterness, the gaiety to gloom. That which was begun with songs and mirth ends in weariness and disgust. But the gifts of Jesus are ever fresh and new. The feast that He provides for the soul never fails to give satisfaction and joy. Each new gift increases the capacity of the receiver to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of the Lord. He gives grace for grace. There can be no failure of supply. If you abide in Him, the fact that you receive a rich gift today insures the reception of a richer gift tomorrow. The words of Jesus to Nathanael express the law of God’s dealing with the



His power was put forth to add to the joy of a wedding feast.

children of faith. With every fresh revelation of His love, He declares to the receptive heart, ‘Believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these’ (John 1:50).” *The Desire of Ages*, 148.

Wednesday

4 THE GOOD WINE

- a. What type of wine did Christ provide? Isaiah 65:8.

Note: “The wine which Christ provided for the feast, and that which He gave to the disciples as a symbol of His own blood, was the pure juice of the grape. To this the prophet Isaiah refers when he speaks of the new wine ‘in the cluster,’ and says, ‘Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it’ (Isaiah 65:8).” *The Desire of Ages*, 149.

- b. What did Christ say, through the wise man, regarding fermented wine? Proverbs 20:1; 23:29–32.

Note: “It was Christ who in the Old Testament gave the warning to Israel, ‘Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise’ (Proverbs 20:1). And He Himself provided no such beverage. Satan tempts men to indulgence that will becloud reason and benumb the spiritual perceptions, but Christ teaches us to bring the lower nature into subjection. His whole life was an example of self-denial. In order to break the power of appetite, He suffered in our behalf the severest test that humanity could endure. It was Christ who directed that John the Baptist should drink neither wine nor strong drink. It was He who enjoined similar abstinence upon the wife of Manoah. And He pronounced a curse upon the man who should put the bottle to his neighbor’s lips. Christ did not contradict His own teaching. The unfermented wine which He provided for the wedding guests was a wholesome and refreshing drink. Its effect was to bring the taste into harmony with a healthful appetite.” *The Desire of Ages*, 149.

“Let every soul remember that he is under sacred obligations to God to do his best for his fellow-creatures. How careful should everyone be not to create a desire for stimulants. ... Many incidents have come to my attention in which through some simple advice, men and women have become the slaves of the drink habit. Physicians are responsible for making many drunkards. Knowing what drink will do for its lovers, they have taken upon themselves the responsibility of prescribing it for their patients. Did they reason from cause to effect, they would know that stimulants would have the same effect on every organ of the body as they have on the whole man. What excuse can doctors render for the influence they have exerted in making fathers and mothers drunkards?” *The Review and Herald*, May 29, 1894.

Thursday

5 CHRIST AT SOCIAL GATHERINGS

- a. What objectives were achieved through Christ’s presence at the wedding feast at Cana? John 2:11.

- b. What did Christ demonstrate through His ministry? Matthew 11:29.



How careful should everyone be not to create a desire for stimulants.

Note: “The ministry of Christ was in marked contrast to that of the Jewish elders. Their regard for tradition and formalism had destroyed all real freedom of thought or action. They lived in continual dread of defilement. To avoid contact with the ‘unclean,’ they kept aloof, not only from the Gentiles, but from the majority of their own people, seeking neither to benefit them nor to win their friendship. By dwelling constantly on these matters, they had dwarfed their minds and narrowed the orbit of their lives. Their example encouraged egotism and intolerance among all classes of the people.

“Jesus began the work of reformation by coming into close sympathy with humanity. While He showed the greatest reverence for the law of God, He rebuked the pretentious piety of the Pharisees, and tried to free the people from the senseless rules that bound them. He was seeking to break down the barriers which separated the different classes of society, that He might bring men together as children of one family. His attendance at the marriage feast was designed to be a step toward effecting this. ...

“A Jewish marriage was an impressive occasion, and its joy was not displeasing to the Son of man. By attending this feast, Jesus honored marriage as a divine institution.” *The Desire of Ages*, 150, 151.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What spiritual fruits did Christ’s miracle at Cana bear?
- 2 What is the significance of Christ’s words to His mother: “Woman, what have I to do with thee?”
- 3 Why did the governor of the feast show surprise?
- 4 What wine is appropriately a symbol of Christ’s blood?
- 5 What was Jesus’ purpose in being present at social gatherings?

April 23 – 29

The Temple

Key Text

“The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him” (Habakkuk 2:20).

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 154–166; *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 491–500.

Introduction

“The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 494.

Sunday

I THE TEMPLE DEFILED

- a. What situation prevailed in the temple of Jerusalem at the beginning of Christ’s earthly ministry? John 2:13, 14.

Note: “The dealers demanded exorbitant prices for the animals sold, and they shared their profits with the priests and rulers, who thus enriched themselves at the expense of the people. The worshipers had been taught to believe that if they did not offer sacrifice, the blessing of God would not rest on their children or their lands. Thus a high price for the animals could be secured; for after coming so far, the people would not return to their homes without performing the act of devotion for which they had come.” *The Desire of Ages*, 155.

“In the defilement and cleansing of the temple we have a lesson for this time. The same spirit that existed among the Jews, leading them to substitute gain for godliness, and outward pomp for inward purity, curses the Christian world today. It spreads like a defiling leprosy among the professed worshipers of God. Sacred things are brought down to a level with the vain matters of the world. Vice is mistaken for virtue, and righteousness for crime. Temporal business is mingled with the worship of God. Extortion and wicked speculation are practiced by those who profess to be servants of the Most High.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, 123.

- b. What effect did the iniquitous trading have upon the temple services? Ezekiel 22:26, *first part*.

Monday

2 REVERENCE IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

- a. How does God consider the place where He manifests His presence? Exodus 3:1–5.

- b. How should we conduct ourselves in God’s house and in His divine presence? Habakkuk 2:20.

- c. What command did the Lord give when He descended upon Mount Sinai? Exodus 19:12, 13.

Note: “When the Lord descended upon Mount Sinai, the place was consecrated by His presence. Moses was commanded to put bounds around the mount and sanctify it, and the word of the Lord was heard in warning: ‘Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live’ (Exodus 19:12, 13). Thus was taught the lesson that wherever God manifests His presence, the place is holy. The precincts of God’s temple should have been regarded as sacred.” *The Desire of Ages*, 155, 156.

“It is too true that reverence for the house of God has become almost extinct. Sacred things and places are not discerned; the holy and exalted are not appreciated. Is there not a cause for the want of fervent piety in our families? Is it not because the high standard of religion is left to trail in the dust? God gave rules of order, perfect and exact, to His ancient people. Has His character changed? Is He not the great and mighty God who rules in the heaven of heavens? Would it not be well for us often to read the directions given by God Himself to the Hebrews, that we who have the light of the glorious truth shining upon us may imitate their reverence for the house of God? We have abundant reason to maintain a fervent, devoted spirit in the worship of God. We have reason even to be more thoughtful and reverential in our worship than had the Jews. But an enemy has been at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian worship. ...

“The moral taste of the worshipers in God’s holy sanctuary must be elevated, refined, sanctified.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 495, 496.

Tuesday

3 THE TEMPLE, AN OBJECT LESSON

- a. What was the Lord’s purpose in establishing His sanctuary among His people? Exodus 25:8.

Note: “That temple, erected for the abode of the divine Presence, was designed to be an object lesson for Israel and for the world. From eternal ages it was God’s purpose that every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator.” *The Desire of Ages*, 161.

- b. What does it mean that we are the temple of God? 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; Isaiah 57:15.

Note: “Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God. Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. God dwells in humanity, and through saving grace the heart of man becomes again His temple.” *The Desire of Ages*, 161.

“By a most beautiful and impressive figure, God’s word shows the regard He places upon our physical organism and the responsibility resting on us to preserve it in the best condition: ‘Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own.’ ‘If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are’ (1 Corinthians 6:19, R.V., margin; 3:17).

“Let pupils be impressed with the thought that the body is a temple in which God desires to dwell, that it must be kept pure, the abiding place of high and noble thoughts. As in the study of physiology they see that they are indeed ‘fearfully and wonderfully made’ (Psalm 139:14), they will be inspired with reverence. Instead of marring God’s handiwork, they will have an ambition to make all that is possible of themselves, in order to fulfill the Creator’s glorious plan. Thus they will come to regard obedience to the laws of health, not as a matter of sacrifice or self-denial, but as it really is, an inestimable privilege and blessing.” *Education*, 200, 201.

“It is a duty to know how to preserve the body in the very best condition of health, and it is a sacred duty to live up to the light which God has graciously given.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 70.

Wednesday

4 JESUS PURIFIES THE TEMPLE

- a. What was Christ’s reaction towards the desecration of the temple? John 2:15, 16.

Note: “As Jesus came into the temple, He took in the whole scene. He saw the unfair transactions. He saw the distress of the poor, who thought that without shedding of blood there would be no forgiveness for their sins. He saw the outer court of His temple converted into a place of unholy traffic. The sacred enclosure had become one vast exchange. ...

“Slowly descending the steps, and raising the scourge of cords gathered up on entering the enclosure, He bids the bargaining company depart from the precincts of the temple. With a zeal and severity He has never before manifested, He overthrows the tables of the money-changers. The coin falls, ringing sharply upon the marble pavement. None presume to question His authority. None dare stop to gather up their ill-gotten gain. Jesus does not smite them with the whip of cords, but in His hand that simple scourge seems terrible as a flaming sword. Officers of the temple, speculating priests,

brokers and cattle traders, with their sheep and oxen, rush from the place, with the one thought of escaping from the condemnation of His presence.” *The Desire of Ages*, 157, 158.

- b. What is the extent of Christ’s act in purifying the temple? Malachi 3:1–3.

Note: “In the cleansing of the temple, Jesus was announcing His mission as the Messiah, and entering upon His work. ... God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to the high destiny open to every soul. But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride. They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit. The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts. In cleansing the temple from the world’s buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin—from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul.” *The Desire of Ages*, 161.

Thursday

5 PURIFYING THE LIVING TEMPLE

- a. What is it that individuals cannot accomplish by their own efforts? Jeremiah 2:22; 13:22; Job 14:4.

Note: “No man can of himself cast out the evil throng that have taken possession of the heart.” *The Desire of Ages*, 161.

- b. What does the Lord intend to do for and in us? Ezekiel 36:25–27; Zechariah 3:3–5.



The same spirit that existed among the Jews, leading them to substitute gain for godliness, and outward pomp for inward purity, curses the Christian world today.

Note: “Only Christ can cleanse the soul temple. But He will not force an entrance. He comes not into the heart as to the temple of old; but He says, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him’ (Revelation 3:20). He will come, not for one day merely; for He says, ‘I will dwell in them, and walk in them; ... and they shall be My people.’ ‘He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea’ (2 Corinthians 6:16; Micah 7:19). His presence will cleanse and sanctify the soul, so that it may be a holy temple unto the Lord, and ‘an habitation of God through the Spirit’ (Ephesians 2:21, 22).” *The Desire of Ages*, 161, 162.

“While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth.” *Ibid.*, 166.

“I call upon everyone who claims to be a son of God never to forget this great truth, that we need the Spirit of God within us in order to reach heaven, and the work of Christ without us in order to give us a title to the immortal inheritance.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 442.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Who were the leaders of the iniquitous trade in the temple?
- 2 What should be the attitude of anyone who comes to God?
- 3 What spiritual significance did the temple at Jerusalem have?
- 4 What did Christ announce in cleansing the temple?
- 5 Who only can cleanse the human heart?

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A Nut that is not a Nut!

By Judy Hallingstad

Most people like to chew on nuts and cook with nuts. There is one nut that is not a nut but acts like a nut and all consider it a nut. What could that be? The peanut!

“... the peanut is actually a legume, native to South America, that happens to look and taste like a nut. Nutritionally, peanuts act like nuts, too. About half their weight comes from fat, with the rest split fairly evenly between protein and carbohydrate (with fiber). About half of their total fat comes from monounsaturated fat, the kind that is linked to more healthful blood lipid levels. One-third of the fat comes from polyunsaturated fat (all of which is omega-6 fatty acid, not the



super healthy omega-3). About 14% of the fat is naturally saturated.” *www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/nutty-about-peanut-butter#1*

“As American as apple pie, peanut butter has made its mark on American cuisine since the early 1900s. Whether it’s partnering with jelly on bread or is the featured ingredient in cookie

dough, it’s an enduring favorite. Most households have a jar of it in the kitchen at all times.

“But is peanut butter good for you? Well, like most nut butters, peanut butter is high in fat and calories (with around 190 calories and 16 grams of fat per 2 tablespoons). But the good news is, you get a lot of nutrition for your 190-calorie investment.

Nuts and nut butters are a great source of protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals.

“In 2003 the FDA approved a qualified health claim for peanuts and certain tree nuts. It basically says that scientific evidence suggests that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts (as part of a diet low in saturated fat

and cholesterol) may reduce the risk of heart disease.

“Most of the research suggesting health benefits to nuts has involved lowering the risk of heart or cardiovascular disease or their risk factors. But there is some evidence nuts may help with other diseases as well. For example, peanuts are a source of the phytochemical resveratrol (also

found in grape skins and red wine). A recent German study explored resveratrol’s possible cancer-preventing effects in colorectal cells.” Ibid.

The next time you chew on a peanut or spread the peanut butter, remember, you are chewing on a legume and you are spreading legume butter. It does sound more appetizing to say peanut butter. Enjoy! **LM**



Recipe

Healthy Nutty Banana Spread

½ cup crunchy peanut butter

½ cup mashed banana

½ cup orange juice (fresh squeezed is best)

Basically use equal amounts of each ingredient. Combine peanut butter and orange juice. Add the mashed banana and mix well. This is easy, healthy and good on toast or crackers.

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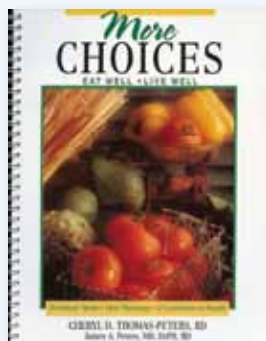


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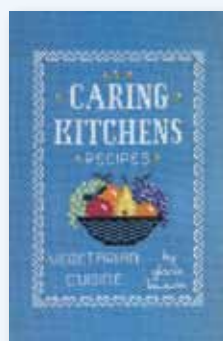


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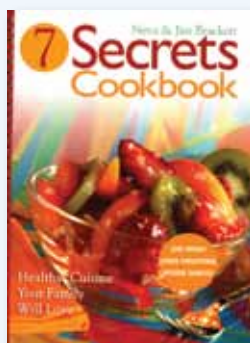


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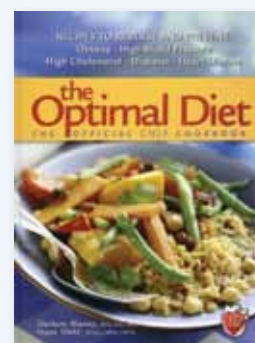


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