

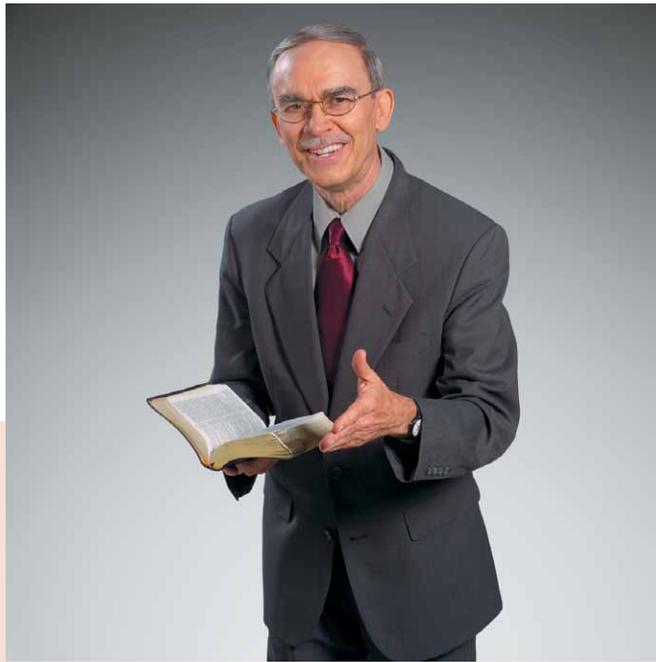
HISTORIC  
**LANDMARKS**

OF ADVENTISM

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April 2018 | \$3.50



## Editor's Letter

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John J. Grosboll

### The Coming Struggle

“Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Luke 13:24 KJV). “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in there: because strait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:13, literal translation).

We see in these words of Jesus that we have a part in the great struggle for everlasting life. We must respond to the work of the Holy Spirit and we must struggle to break all connection with the powers of darkness. Every evil that is connected to us allows Satan an avenue with which to approach and tempt us.

At the close of His life Jesus entered into a great struggle in the garden of Gethsemane.

“Christ’s last great struggle with the power of darkness should ever be kept fresh in the minds of all who believe in Him as the propitiation for the sins of the world. God would have us study the lesson taught by the experience of the children of Israel, when they were bitten by serpents. Those bitten were directed to look at the brazen serpent which had been uplifted in the camp, and those who looked in faith lived. Today we are standing in a position similar to that of the children of Israel. As we look upon the world in its moral defilement, we see the poisonous serpents abroad, ready to sting us to death. To the cross of Calvary, bearing a dying Saviour, we must look. ‘As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up’ (John 3:14). Only the Lamb of God can take away our sins.

We should think more of this than we do. Our eternal interests demand that we show faith in Christ.” *The Review and Herald*, November 4, 1902.

Just as Jesus entered into a great struggle with the powers of darkness at the end of His earthly sojourn, in these last days there is a great struggle before us such as the world has never seen. Earthly powers will engage in a last great struggle to destroy those who keep God’s law: “It is on the law of God that the last great struggle of the controversy between Christ and His angels and Satan and his angels will come, and it will be decisive for all the world. This is the hour of temptation to God’s people; but Daniel saw them delivered out of it, every one whose name is written in the Lamb’s book of life.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1884.

## 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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## CORPORATE REPENTANCE

By John J. Grosboll

**W**hatever the sins of your fathers have been, no matter what your past has been, remember this: God can save you if you commit your life to Him. Do not let the devil deceive you by getting you to think that your past is so bad that there is no hope for you. That is a delusion of the devil to get you discouraged. There is hope.

Ellen White wrote, “Our divine Lord is equal to any emergency. With Him nothing is impossible” (Luke 1:37). *In Heavenly Places*, 17. God has promised to save everyone who comes to Christ Jesus. Jesus said, “He that comes to Me, I will in no case cast out” (John 6:37, literal translation). So if you come to Him and are cast out, that would prove Him a liar. Jesus Christ is able to save. The problem is that it takes a full commitment. It is wrong to think you can give half of your heart to the Lord and expect the plan of salvation to work. It will not work.

Every sin you commit, both before and after your child is born, has an effect on the children. This effect ripples down to the third and fourth generations. If you are a father, there comes a time when, as a father, you begin to see your own sins reproduced in your children. It is not a pleasant realization when you see your own sins reproduced in your children. We are told in *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 9, 236: “Parents have a more serious charge than they imagine. The inheritance of children is that of sin. Sin has separated them from God. Jesus gave His life that He might unite the broken links to God. As related to the first Adam, men receive from him nothing but guilt and the sentence of death. But Christ steps in and passes over the ground where Adam fell, enduring every test in man’s behalf. He redeems Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall by coming forth from the trial untarnished. This places man on vantage ground with God. It places him where through accepting Christ as His Saviour, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Thus he becomes connected with God and Christ. Christ’s perfect example and the grace of God are given him to enable him to train his sons and daughters to be sons and daughters of God.”

The next paragraph, a very valuable paragraph for anyone who is a parent or going to be, is having to do with raising children. Where do the children get this sinful nature and in spite of that, how can they become overcomers and be saved? Notice carefully. Ellen White tells us how this is done.

She says, “It is by teaching them, line upon line, precept upon precept, how to give the heart and will up to

on His name’ (John 1:12). This is the work, the grand and holy work of parents. They are to keep before their children the great and vital work of receiving Christ, of believing on Christ as their Redeemer, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is the instruction they are to give to their children.” Ibid. Do not wait until they are grown up or think that they will get instruction in preparation for baptism. Teach them

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*Whatever the sins of your fathers have been, no matter what your past has been, remember this: God can save you if you commit your life to Him.*

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Christ, that Satan’s power is broken.” Ibid. Satan’s power is broken by teaching the children line upon line, how to give the heart to Christ, how to yield their will to Christ. That is how Satan’s power is broken. Unless the children learn to yield their will to Christ, Satan’s power is not broken.

The heart is the seat of emotions, affections, feelings, passions, and appetite. These must be given over to Christ, both heart and will. The will is the kingly power in a man that is the power to make decisions.

When you yield your will to Christ so that He has control of your mind, and you have given your heart to Him so He has control of your feelings, affections, passions, and emotions, “... Satan’s power is broken.” This yielding of the will is what we need to teach children how to do.

“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe

when they are just learning to talk, how to yield to Christ. “All who will accept Christ by living faith will take His life as their pattern.” Ibid.

“After the Fall Christ became Adam’s instructor. He acted in God’s stead toward humanity, saving the race from immediate death. He took upon Him the office of mediator. Adam and Eve were given a probation in which to return to their allegiance, and in this plan all their posterity were embraced. In the fullness of time Christ was to be revealed in human form. He was to assume the position of head of humanity by taking the nature, but not the sinfulness of man.

“Satan is the originator of evil. He swerved from his allegiance to God. Those who persisted in sympathizing with him in his disaffection were, with him, shut out of heaven.

“Implacable hatred against God fills Satan’s mind. Persistently he has used his influence to efface from the

human family God's image, and in its place to stamp his own satanic image. His effort to deceive our first parents was successful. Made in the image of God, the human family lost their innocence, became transgressors, and as disloyal subjects began their downward career. Satan gained control of man's power of action. Through the senses he influenced the mind.

"Thus it has been from the beginning of the world. Instead of remaining under God's influence in order that he might reflect the moral image of his Creator, man placed himself under the control of Satan's influence, and was made selfish. Thus sin became a universal evil. And what a dreadful evil is sin!" *Ibid.*, 237.

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*Do not let the devil deceive you by getting you to think that your past is so bad that there is no hope for you.*

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The secret to breaking Satan's power is to teach our children line upon line, precept upon precept. That means to go over it, and over, and over, and over again on how to yield both heart and will to Christ. That is the only hope and the only way of escape your children have.

When you begin to see your own sins reproduced in your children you will not want to see your children repeat all of your own mistakes.

When my son was just a small child, I used to ride a motorcycle. Working in the emergency room at Loma Linda, I saw many motorcycle accidents come in and I decided that motorcycle riding was not a wise thing to do so I quit. I did not want

my son seeing me ride and develop the same desire.

The time comes when you are a parent that you do not want your children to make every mistake you have made, and you want their mistakes to be corrected. In other words, what you would like to see is corporate repentance in your family. And this was Jacob's experience. Remember, Jacob lied to his father. As a result of lying to his father, his brother Esau became so angry that he decided when his father died that he was going to kill Jacob.

Isaac, Rebecca and Jacob were afraid that Esau would not even wait till Isaac was dead to kill his brother. They decided that it would be better if Jacob

would flee for his protection. So, Jacob made preparations and fled on foot. He was all alone with his guilty conscience. He knew the reason he was in this trouble was because he had sinned. He was separated from his family never to see his mother again, for by the time he came back 20 years later his mother had already passed away.

At his mother's suggestion, Jacob went to Laban, his mother's brother. God did not work a miracle to keep him from reaping the consequences of what he himself had done. While there he was deceived by Laban into marriage with the sister of the one he loved. It was a very cruel deception. Laban suggested the problem could be solved by Jacob taking Rachel, whom

he really wanted, as a second wife. Jacob decided to agree to this arrangement but his domestic happiness was destroyed for just about his whole life.

I do not know how to impress on the minds of young people the consequences of unwise decisions. Often young people with the least experience and judgment make decisions that will destroy the rest of their life, or at the least make it much less happy than it could have been if they had not made those unwise decisions.

Ellen White says: "Laban understood the wrong of polygamy, although it was alone through his artifice that Jacob had taken two wives." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, 116. Laban was covetous of money and saw that Jacob was such a good manager. By his devious plan he kept Jacob working for him to reap some benefits himself from Jacob's industrious skill as a shepherd.

Now Jacob found himself married to two wives. The jealousy of the sister-wives and their handmaids resulted in terrible defects in the children. The children of Rachel, Leah and their two handmaids spent more time with each other than with their father. The jealousy they bore toward each other in regard to their positions and relationship with Jacob were the cause of the brother's problems with jealousy, revenge, and hatred.

Most people know the story of Joseph. One reason his brothers had so much trouble with him was that they all knew Rachel had been Jacob's favorite wife. Joseph was Rachel's first-born son, and the other brothers who were older knew that the birthright would be given to him as the first-born son of his favorite wife. This knowledge caused contention and when Joseph related to them his dreams that appeared to indicate that

he would have a high position over them, they really got angry.

What happened to Dinah was wrong. What happened with Shechem was wrong. (See Genesis 34.) Shechem should have been punished, but was it righteous to kill a whole city full of people because of the rash sin of a young man? It was a grievous sin.

In Genesis 34:30 it says, “Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, ‘You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I.’”

Just before his death, Jacob said, “Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. Let not my soul enter their council; let not my honor be united to their assembly; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel” (Genesis 49:5–7).

He prayed and interceded with the Lord asking what to do so that his family would be protected. God told Jacob to go back to Bethel, the place he had first slept as he fled from Esau. It was there that he had the dream of the ladder that went up to heaven. The Hebrew word *Beth* means *house*, and *el* is *God*. So Bethel is house of God.

Jacob decided before they went to Bethel that his family needed to have a corporate repentance. Where there is corporate sin, there needs to be corporate repentance. He gathered his family together and he related to them about what had happened when he had to flee from his brother Esau.



*Every sin you commit, both before and after your child is born, has an effect on the children. This effect ripples down to the third and fourth generations. If you are a father, there comes a time when you begin to see your own sins reproduced in your children. It is nothing pleasant.*

He told his family that because of his sin and what he had done, he was so discouraged and had such a guilty conscience that he laid down to sleep. While he slept, God gave him a dream, and he saw a ladder that went all the way from the earth where he was clear up to heaven. Angels ascended and descended the ladder. God spoke to him in his dream and said, “I will be with you. And I will bring you back to this place.” As Jacob told his whole family the dream he was touched with emotion and it had a softening effect on their hearts. Right there they experienced corporate repentance.

Genesis 35:1–4 says, “Then God said to Jacob, ‘Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother.’ And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, ‘Put away the foreign gods that

are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.’ So they gave Jacob all their foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.”

Look at the steps that were involved in Jacob’s family obtaining corporate repentance.

**I** There was an acknowledgment of what was wrong by the father, the leader. It is not impossible but very difficult for corporate repentance to occur if the leader, the father of the family, is not involved.

An example of that would be the ten tribes. God sent them message after message by the prophet, but

they never corporately repented. Finally, they committed the unpardonable sin and they were scattered among the nations. Their tribal identity has subsequently been lost.

Contrary to that, the nation of Judah and Benjamin corporately repented several times. Several good kings listened to the appeals of God's messengers, the prophets.

The position of the father in the family carries with it awesome responsibility. Jacob, the father, led out in this desire to repent and he appealed to his family to repent

control your actions. You need to put away the foreign gods and purify yourself. You need to be in control of your life.

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8). The prophet Isaiah expressed it this way: “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:16, 17).

In Genesis 35, not only did they put away their false gods, purify themselves, and change their garments, but notice what it says in verse 4: “So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.”

Their repentance involved quitting to wear their jewelry. Jewelry itself is not wrong. God gave Lucifer lots of jewelry. It was beautiful, but was part of the reason for his fall. Lucifer was so beautiful that his heart was lifted up because of his beauty (see Ezekiel 28).

God made the jewels, and in heaven when the sin problem is solved, God is going to give His children more jewels than anybody has in this world. The jewels are not the problem but the pride of the wearer is where the error lies. The New Jerusalem, the holy city, is full of gold and precious stones and jewels. The problem is, because of his beauty, Lucifer's heart became lifted up with pride. And what does the Bible say about the end of pride? It says in Malachi 4 that the days are going to come when it is going to burn like an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, are going to burn up.

Pride is a huge problem among beautiful women. Thus God has given counsel to all of His children since sin began not to wear jewelry and artificial beauty applications. By the way, how did Jacob know, how did his children know, that they should take this jewelry off and give it to Jacob and not wear it anymore?

The wearing of jewelry ever since the beginning of time has been associated with idolatry and immorality. Prostitutes in general wear lots of jewelry and make-up and color to give them beauty. This is very clear in the

*It is very difficult for corporate repentance to occur if the leader, the father of the family, is not involved.*

also. Telling them his own story softened their hearts and led them in repentance.

**2** An appeal was made to forsake the evil. Jacob told them that the idols they had were foreign gods and not the God of heaven. He said, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you.” Quit worshipping them and purify yourselves.

Concerning those who are expecting, as Christians, to go home with the Lord, the apostle John says that “everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (1 John 3:3). Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8 NIV). O, you cannot just go on living, doing whatever comes naturally, letting your appetites and passions

Walk in God's way. Many say, We do not have any false gods. “It is as easy to make an idol of false doctrines and theories as to fashion an idol of wood or stone. ... With many, a philosophical idol is enthroned in the place of Jehovah. ... Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah.” *The Great Controversy*, 583.

False doctrines, false teachings, become false gods and therefore idols. Idolatry has the effect to make people feel secure, but they are not secure. Have you met somebody who believes “once saved they are always saved”? If you try to show them what the Bible says about the Sabbath, they say, “I am saved. I do not have to worry about that.” That person worships a philosophical idol more than the word of God.

Bible. Let's look at Jezebel, a very evil woman, in 2 Kings 9:30, to see how she was adorned. It says, "Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she put paint on her eyes ... ." Using color around eyes is nothing new. Jezebel did that thousands of years ago.

The use of jewelry and all kinds of ornaments to look beautiful is going to be a special problem among God's remnant people in the very last days. Isaiah 2:2 says, "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days ... ." And then he begins to give a prophecy about what is going to happen. This prophecy continues clear through for several chapters. Then in chapter 3 starting in verse 13: "The LORD stands up to plead, and stands to judge the people. The LORD will enter into judgment ... . Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes ..." (verses 13, 14, 16). Then Isaiah talks about all their different ornaments they wear to make themselves beautiful. This prophecy continues clear through chapter 4, and it says in verses 3 and 4, "And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning."

The filth that the Lord washes away is the pride that He described in chapter 3:16–25. Notice: The wearing of jewelry and artificial adornment is going to be a special problem among God's remnant people, God's chosen people, in the very last days of earth's history. Isaiah predicts this in this prophecy.



*Pride is a huge problem among beautiful women. Thus God has given counsel to all of His children since sin began not to wear jewelry and artificial beauty applications. The wearing of jewelry ever since the beginning of time has been associated with idolatry and immorality.*

Jeremiah talks about it in Jeremiah 4:30: "When you are plundered, what will you do? Though you clothe yourself with crimson, though you adorn yourself with ornaments of gold, though you enlarge your eyes with paint, in vain you will make yourself fair; Your lovers will despise you; they will seek your life."

Ezekiel talks about it also in Ezekiel 23:40: "Furthermore you sent for men to come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and there they came. And you washed yourself for them, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with ornaments."

And in the book of Revelation, you have a description of two women, a pure righteous woman who is clothed with the sun (Revelation 12), and a description of a harlot woman, a prostitute who is wearing all manner of gold and precious stones and jewels. In Revelation 17:4 it says, "The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication."

In Genesis when Jacob's family had a corporate repentance, they took off their jewelry. At the end of the Bible in the book of Revelation, we see the very same thing again. Two women, one pure, clothed with the sun, not wearing any jewels at all, the other, a prostitute covered with jewelry and expensive clothing.

Here is what the apostle Paul said about it in 1 Timothy 2:9: "In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls, or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works."

In 1 Peter 3:1–5, Peter said, "Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the

heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.”

My dear friends in Adventism, we talk about having revival and reformation so that the Lord can come, but in the last 30 years, the wearing of jewelry has escalated. It has come in among Adventist people like an overwhelming tide, so much so that we now even have ministers and their wives wearing rings. By the way, when I was a young minister in the North

repentance. You can read about that in Exodus 32 and 33.

Exodus 33:4–6 says, “And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. For the LORD had said to Moses, ‘Say to the children of Israel, “You are a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.”’ So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb.”

They corporately repented. Did you notice? They had to put away the golden calf and their false gods, just

get to heaven, you are going to have more jewelry than anybody has in this world. That is not the problem. Jewelry itself is not sinful. The problem is the pride it invokes.

The Bible says the heart is deceitful above all things and incurably wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). Pride is like cancer. Some of you have worked in medical situations and are aware of the fact that cancer itself does not hurt. What hurts is the nerve that the tumor is pressing against. There have been many people who were just a few weeks away from death before they even knew they had cancer. Pride is like that. You can be full of it and you do not even know it. Can you afford to take a chance when God tells you in His word not to do something because it could cause pride to develop in your heart?

When I was a child, my father used to kneel down in our family worship and pray that our family would be saved without the loss of one. In other words, my father wanted to have corporate salvation for our family. And by the way, if you are a father, I believe that is a prayer that is appropriate for you to pray, “Lord, I want for my family to be saved as a corporate unit, without the loss of one.”

The Lord wants everyone in your family to be saved. And there are going to be corporate family units that will all be saved. Would it not be nice if your family was one of them?

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

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*Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah.*

Dakota conference, no minister was ever allowed to baptize a woman who had a wedding ring on. That is the way it used to be and now the ministers themselves and their wives are wearing wedding rings.

Ellen White says the outward appearance is an index to the heart. We cannot read the heart, but we can see what is hanging and dangling on the outside and that is evidence that we are not having revival and reformation but the opposite. We are going deeper into apostasy.

Another example of corporate repentance was after the golden calf apostasy of the children of Israel just six weeks or so after the giving of the Ten Commandments. After Moses came down there was corporate

like Jacob’s children did. In addition to that, they took off all the jewelry that was hanging from their ears and wrists and ankles, and every other kind of adornment.

Friends, if there was ever a time when it would not matter too much for God’s children to wear a little bit of jewelry it would not be on the Day of Atonement when your name comes up and your eternal destiny is going to be decided. We cannot afford to do anything that is contrary to God’s word that might cause us to have pride in our heart and ultimately lose our soul.

We need to pray between the porch and the altar for God’s professed people. Like I say, the jewelry itself is not the problem. When you



## LUTHER & LAODICEA

BY BRENDA DOUAY

*“Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.”*

Psalm 97:11 NKJV

*“But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”*

Proverbs 4:18



*The Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world's history.*

On our Christian walk, we are either constantly growing, receiving, learning, gaining new light and understanding, or we are dying, stagnating, losing light and understanding, and locking ourselves into spiritual darkness and eternal death. This principle is exhibited in nature. Is there such a thing as a plant that simply stays at the exact same point of growth? No, it is either growing, or it is dying.

This same instruction God has given throughout inspiration. We could look at this principle throughout history, but we are going to study a little in inspiration from the life and example of Luther and how God views his work and the work of future generations.

Most Christians are familiar with the reformer Martin Luther and his lifelong striving and gaining greater light and truth from the Holy Scriptures. Those things which he understood in his later years were not even thought of or supposed when he first

began his quest for truth. He was constantly seeking a better understanding of God's word, and because of his faithfulness and earnest desire for truth, God opened up tremendous truth to him.

In the message of God to Laodicea as found in Revelation 3:14–22, Laodicea is content with the “knowledge” that she has. She considers herself “rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing” (verse 17).

Is there not a stark contrast between these two principles, these two attitudes? Which one does God value? Which one does He require?

“The Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world's history. Luther had a great work to do in reflecting to others the light which God had permitted to shine upon him; yet he did not receive all the light which was to be given to the world. From that time to this, new light has been continually shining upon the Scriptures, and new truths

was their work to break the fetters of Rome, and to give the Bible to the world; yet there were important truths which they failed to discover, and grave errors which they did not renounce.” Ibid., 180.

Was it safe to stop with the light that was revealed to Luther and his co-laborers? No. They still retained grave errors. Does God want us in error? No. He wants us in the purity of His truth, untainted with error.

“The infinite God, whose throne is in the heavens, condescends to address His people, ‘Come now, and let us reason together’ (Isaiah 1:18); but frail, erring men proudly refuse to reason with their brethren. They stand ready to censure one who accepts any light which they have not received—as though God had pledged himself to give no more light to any one than he had given to them. This is the course pursued by opposers of the truth in every age. They forget the declaration of the Scriptures, ‘Light is sown for the righteous’ (Psalm 97:11). ‘The

*Martin Luther was constantly seeking a better understanding of God's word, and because of his faithfulness and earnest desire for truth, God opened up tremendous truth to him.*

have been constantly unfolding.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 123.

“Luther and his co-laborers accomplished a noble work for God; but, coming as they did from the Roman Church, having themselves believed and advocated her doctrines, it was not to be expected that they would discern all these errors. It

path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day’ (Proverbs 4:18). It is a sad thing when a people claiming to be reformers cease to reform.” Ibid., 185.

The following is a powerful and wonderful promise of God, and note the condition for that promise, which begins with the mighty word “if.” “If

professed Christians would but carefully and prayerfully compare their views with the Scriptures, laying aside all pride of opinion and desire for the supremacy, a flood of light would be shed upon the churches now wandering in the darkness of error. As fast as His people can bear it, the Lord reveals to them their errors in doctrine and their defects of character. From age to age He has raised up men and qualified them to do a special work needed in their time. But to none of these did He commit all the light which was to be given to the world. Wisdom does not die with them. It was not the will of God that the work of reform should cease with the going out of Luther's life; it was not His will that at the death of the Wesleys the Christian faith should become stereotyped. The work of reform is progressive. Go forward, is the command of our great Leader—forward unto victory." Ibid., 186.

Dare I say that it is not the will of God that the work of reform should cease with the going out of Ellen White's life; it was not His will that at the death of Ellen White the Christian faith should become stereotyped.

What is our attitude? Do we prayerfully compare our views with the Scriptures and lay aside all pride of opinion and desire for supremacy? Or, do we, when new ideas are presented immediately defend our position, our way of thinking. In this respect, I must ask a question here. If I genuinely want to understand something better, will I continually be giving my interpretation, my understanding, or will I be eagerly asking questions of those who know with a genuine desire to understand what is being presented? How do you approach "new light"?

Do you think it dangerous to broach "new light" with candor and

a desire to understand the position of what is being presented? I submit to you, according to the Lord, it is dangerous to broach "new light" in any other way, or to refuse to broach it at all.

"We shall not be accepted and honored of God in doing the same work that our fathers did. We do not occupy the position which they occupied in the unfolding of truth. In order to be accepted and honored as they were, we must improve the light which shines upon us, as they improved that which shone upon them;

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*As fast as His people can bear it, the Lord reveals to them their errors in doctrine and their defects of character.*

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we must do as they would have done, had they lived in our day. Luther and the Wesleys were reformers in their times. It is our duty to continue the work of reform. If we neglect to heed the light, it will become darkness; and the degree of darkness will be proportionate to the light rejected.

"The prophet of God declares that in the last days knowledge shall be increased. There are new truths to be revealed to the humble seeker. The teachings of God's word are to be freed from the errors and superstition with which they have been encumbered. Doctrines that are not sanctioned by the Scriptures have been widely taught, and many have honestly accepted them; but when the truth is revealed, it becomes the duty of every one to accept it. Those who allow worldly interests, desire

for popularity, or pride of opinion, to separate them from the truth, must render an account to God for their neglect." Ibid., 186, 187.

"Those who received the great blessings of the Reformation did not go forward in the path so nobly entered upon by Luther. A few faithful men arose from time to time, to proclaim new truth, and expose long-cherished error; but the majority, like the Jews in Christ's day, or the papists in the time of Luther, were content to believe as their fathers believed, and to live as they lived. Therefore religion again

degenerated into formalism; and errors and superstitions which would have been cast aside had the church continued to walk in the light of God's word, were retained and cherished. Thus the spirit inspired by the Reformation gradually died out, until there was almost as great need of reform in the Protestant churches as in the Roman Church in the time of Luther. There was the same spiritual stupor, the same respect for the opinions of men, the same spirit of worldliness, the same substitution of human theories for the teachings of God's word. Pride and extravagance were fostered under the guise of religion. The churches became corrupted by allying themselves with the world. Thus were degraded the great principles for which Luther and his fellow-laborers had done and suffered so much." Ibid., 194.



*From age to age God has raised up men and qualified them to do a special work needed in their time. But to none of these did He commit all the light which was to be given to the world.*

“The church cannot measure herself by the world nor by the opinion of men nor by what she once was. Her faith and her position in the world as they now are must be compared with what they would have been if her course had been continually onward and upward. The church will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. If her moral character and spiritual state do not correspond with the benefits and blessings God has conferred upon her, she will be found wanting. The light has been shining clear and definite upon her pathway, and the light of 1882 calls her to an account. If her talents are unimproved, if her fruit is not perfect before God, if her light has become darkness, she is indeed found wanting. The knowledge of our state as God views it, seems to be hidden from us. We see, but perceive not; we hear, but do not understand; and we rest as unconcerned as if the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, rested upon our sanctuary. We profess to know God, and to believe the truth, but in works deny Him. Our deeds are directly adverse to the principles of truth and righteousness, by which we profess to be governed.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 83, 84.

“Unless the church will follow on in His opening providence, accepting every ray of light, performing every

duty which may be revealed, religion will inevitably degenerate into the observance of forms, and the spirit of vital godliness will disappear. This truth has been repeatedly illustrated in the history of the church. God requires of His people works of faith and obedience corresponding to the blessings and privileges bestowed. Obedience requires a sacrifice and involves a cross; and this is why so many of the professed followers of Christ refused to receive the light from Heaven, and, like the Jews of old, knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44). Because of their pride and unbelief, the Lord passed them by, and revealed His truth to men in humble life, who had given heed to all the light they had received.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 200, 201.

God’s words of inspiration are not only rich with warning and rebuke, but filled with treasures and promises for the true and faithful.

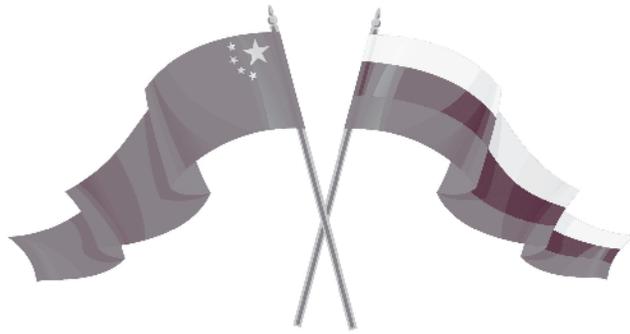
“If the followers of Christ were but earnest seekers after divine wisdom, they would be led into rich fields of truth, as yet wholly unknown to them. Whoever will give himself to God as fully as did Moses, will be guided by the divine hand as verily as was the great leader of Israel. He may be lowly and apparently ungifted;

yet if with a loving, trusting heart he obeys every intimation of God’s will, his powers will be purified, ennobled, energized; his capabilities increased. As he treasures the lessons of divine wisdom, a sacred commission is intrusted to him; he is enabled to make his life an honor to God and a blessing to the world. “The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple” (Psalm 119:130).” *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 417, 418.

Do we live by the principles that governed Luther, seeking new light, new revelations from the word of God, or do we exhibit the principle found in Laodicea, satisfied with our current position, “rich and increased with goods.” My friends, we have studied God’s view of both. It is impossible to hold to both principles. Where are you? Are you with Luther, or are you with Laodicea? Your works will tell the tale, not your words. It is time we deal honestly with our souls, for the night is far spent, and the morning cometh.

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

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## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DENIED

### China

Freedom of religion is supposedly guaranteed in China. However, Beijing's leaders are deeply suspicious of any organization which does not come under its rigid controls.

Many of China's 60 million Christians refuse to join the churches that are sanctioned by the Communist Party and instead choose to worship at independent churches, sometimes known as house churches.

A huge church purportedly built with almost £2 million raised from local worshippers in one of China's poorest regions has been demolished by authorities, the latest flashpoint between religious groups and the officially atheist Communist Party.

The Golden Lampstand Church in the city of Linfen in the northern Shanxi province was destroyed with dynamite and heavy machinery, witnesses and overseas campaign groups said.

Chinese state media dismissed the demolition as part of routine removal of illegal buildings, but critics fear a more political motivation.

Officials have removed crosses from more than 1,200 churches in the eastern province of Zhejiang since early 2014. Many other churches have been demolished in the province.

[www.yahoo.com/news/chinese-authorities-demolish-well-known-evangelical-church-061029917.html](http://www.yahoo.com/news/chinese-authorities-demolish-well-known-evangelical-church-061029917.html)

### Russia

Russia has placed the Jehovah's Witnesses on its register of banned "extremist" organizations.

The Christian sect's administrative center near St Petersburg and 395 local organizations were added to the list by the justice ministry on Thursday.

Believers can now be charged for proselytizing or gathering together.

In April [2017], Russia's Supreme Court decided in favor of the justice ministry's characterization of members of the Jehovah's Witnesses as posing "a threat to the rights of the citizens, public order and public security."

The denomination's properties, known as Kingdom Halls, will also be seized by the state. *The Independent*, August 22, 2017

The Lord has shown us how to prepare for the time when these freedoms are taken away. "As religious aggression subverts the liberties of our nation, those who would stand for freedom of conscience will be placed in unfavorable positions. For their own sake, they should, while they have the opportunity, become intelligent in regard to disease, its causes, prevention, and cure. All those who do this will find a field of labor anywhere. There will be suffering ones, plenty of them, who will need help, not only among those of our own faith, but largely among those who know not the truth. The shortness of time demands an energy that has not been aroused among those who claim to believe the present truth." *Counsels on Health*, 506. **LM**





## A Parable from the Leaves

BY L. A. REED

**I**t is not difficult to discover that in autumn the leaves fall. This is such a common thing, so plain and manifest, that even a child observes it. Neither is it difficult to go a step further, and moralize upon their fall; for the Scripture has set us an example, and in moralizing we have but to repeat the words, “We all do fade as a leaf” (Isaiah 64:6).

It is well for us to remember our frailties. To know our limitations is one secret of power, one of the foundation-stones of success. We are weak; without Him we can do nothing: “We all do fade as a leaf.”

“The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever” (Isaiah 40:6–8).

The voice of God cries out to every person gifted with the power of speech: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; and he that hath voice to cry, let him cry. “Cry,” says the voice of God to us; and when, in wonder and questioning, we ask, “What shall I cry?” there comes this answer to our questioning: “All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.”

And so, if we cry at all as the Word bids us cry, we must declare the weakness and frailty of man. But this is not all the commission. We must not stop here; having said so much, we have only begun. So far there is no whisper of hope, no thought for courage. Obeying the Word that bids us cry, and having given so much of the message, we must proclaim the rest. “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but [oh, the glory of its truth!] THE WORD OF OUR GOD SHALL STAND FOREVER.”

This is the whole message; it is twofold—the weakness and frailty and failure of things earthly, and the power and permanency and steadfastness of the things of God.

It is a suggestion of this twofold message that is given us in the life and death of the leaves. The leaves fade and fall away; and drawing the parallel, we say that we, too, must cease our labors and pass from our places. But this is but one side of the message; there is another, for the message is twofold.

The leaves fade and fall away, it is true, but they leave behind them mighty monuments of their labors. Not one leaf lives through the summer days, but, when it fades, leaves behind that which may stand for years, perhaps ages.



*What the leaves leave behind must in turn perish and pass away, but not so that which human lives may leave behind. It is our privilege to leave behind us an immortal heritage.*

The leaves fade, but there abideth that which, through the leaves, God has built. While the leaves lived, they worked to build up the tree, which remains when the leaves are gone. Gray trunks and naked limbs are the mute testimony of the gigantic task wrought by the leaves.

The work of the leaf is not in vain; something is left behind that shall laugh at the fierceness of the storm, that shall brave the cold of winter, and that shall continue the growth of the tree until its circuit is accomplished.

While we remember that the leaves of autumn fade, let us not forget that the leaves of summer work. And it is the work that is of importance. By their labor they rear the beautiful maples, the stately elms, the giant oaks. By their fading they show us how weak was the instrument through which the Creator worked.

So it may be with us.

We, too, like the leaves, do fade. All the people are but grass; all flesh is like the fading, dying verdure of autumn, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. One withers, the other fades; both are alike lost.

But our failure is not the only thing for us to consider. The great question with each of us should be: Have I, in life's summer days, done with faithfulness the work that God

gave me to do? It is the work that is of importance.

Our failure—our dying and passing from the work of life—shows how weak are the instruments that God uses for the accomplishing of His purposes. But what we leave behind, the memories of an unselfish life, the souls helped by us out into a better life—these remain to show what God can do through humble instruments.

What the leaves leave behind must in turn perish and pass away, but not so that which human lives may leave behind. It is our privilege to leave behind us an immortal heritage.

What sort of monument are you building? What kind of memorial are you erecting? If you live as you may, there shall something abide; for “the word of our God shall stand forever,” God will still carry on the work in which for a time He has given us a place. Without us, after our fall, as without the leaves after their fall, His work goes on. Of those who do His work it is said, when the fading time comes, “They rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Revelation 14:13).

Faithfully let us work the works of Him that sent us, “while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4).

*The Youth's Instructor*, December 13, 1900. **LM**

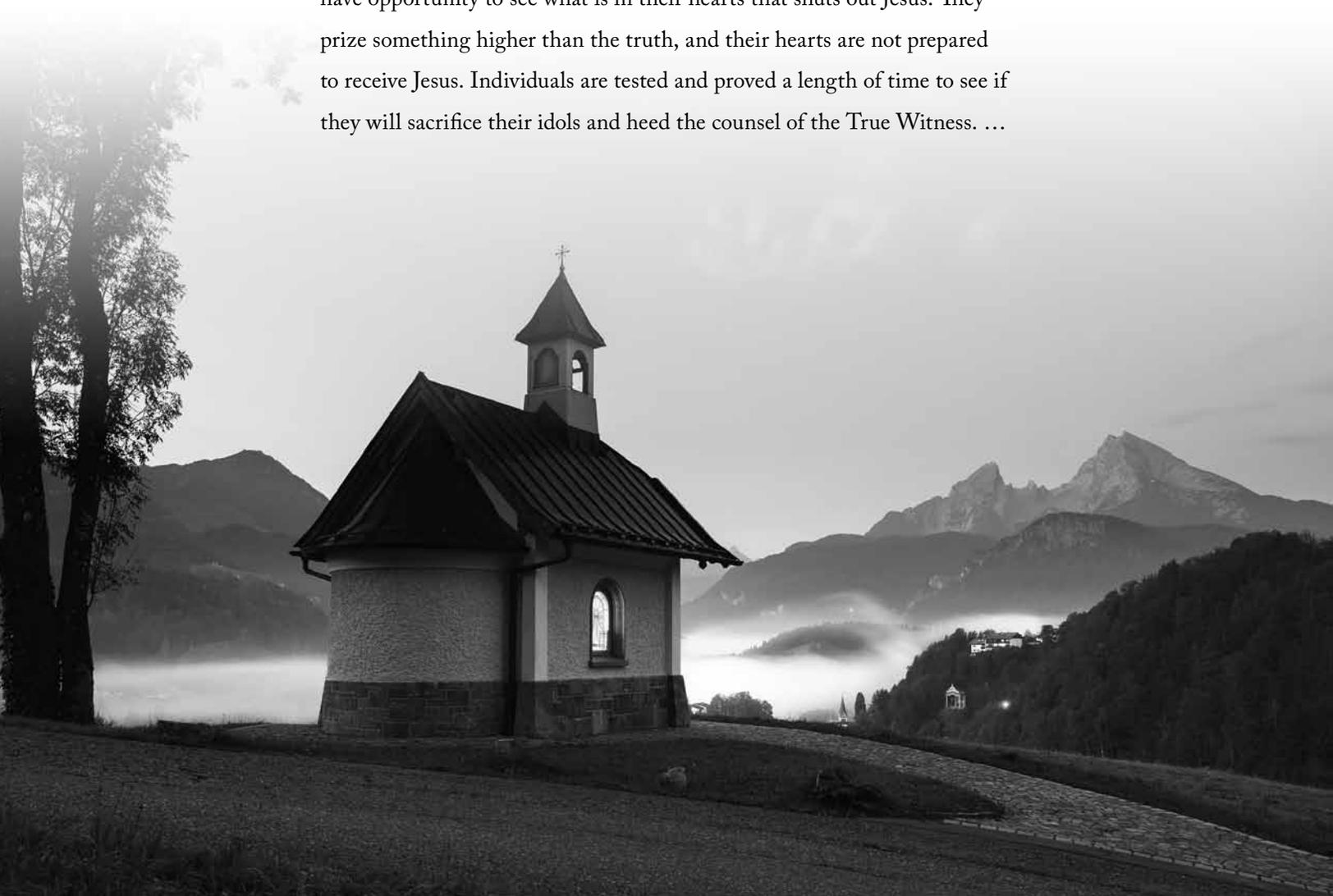
## THE TWO CHURCHES

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### MILITANT & TRIUMPHANT

BY MAURICE HOPPE

“God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people.’ Some are willing to receive one point; but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find that it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shuts out Jesus. They prize something higher than the truth, and their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus. Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. ...



“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 187.

### The Church Militant

Some are teaching that the church militant will become the church triumphant at the coming of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain, the refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Other people believe that the church militant changes to the church triumphant when they receive their crown from Jesus at the entrance of the gates to the Holy City. Others are not sure when this transformation occurs.

The importance of a correct understanding of this subject is seen in the influence it has on the type of character preparation individuals make for the closing events. An incorrect belief concerning the beginning of the church triumphant may lead many to make a false preparation for the crowning deception, the final test and the time of Jacob's trouble. Only when it is too late to make the necessary changes will the tragic results of this belief be realized.

“The church of Christ may be fitly compared to an army. The life of every soldier is one of toil, hardship, and danger. On every hand are vigilant foes, led on by the prince of the powers of darkness, who never slumbers and never deserts his post. Whenever a Christian is off his guard, this powerful adversary makes a sudden and violent attack. Unless the members of the church are active and vigilant, they will be overcome by his devices. ...

“The church is to conduct an aggressive warfare, to make conquests for Christ, to rescue souls from the

power of the enemy. God and holy angels are engaged in this warfare. Let us please Him who has called us to be soldiers.” *The Review and Herald*, July 17, 1883.

“Christians are engaged in a warfare. The church militant is not the church triumphant. The followers of Christ, marching toward Zion, must fight at every step. His adversary is the one who once stood in the heavenly courts as the first of the covering cherubs. The beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God, once rested constantly upon him. But, not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he began to covet the glory with which the Father had invested the Son. Lu-

“God's workers today constitute the connecting link between the former workers, the church of history, and the church that is to be called out (from the world and prepared to meet their Lord). The tide of spiritual life is to flow through the appointed channels, as in the history of the past. From age to age the light which God has for the world has been imparted to the church militant, and God is continuing to impart precious light. All who receive light are to diffuse it to those who sit in darkness. All the excellencies that have come through the belief of the truth from past ages to the present time, are to be treated with the utmost respect. Let not the truth entrusted to our keeping lose its force and power

*The church of Christ may be fitly compared to an army. The life of every soldier is one of toil, hardship, and danger.*

cifer desired to be first in heaven. Thus he introduced sin into the universe. Entering the Garden of Eden after his expulsion from heaven, he succeeded in deceiving our first parents. Ever since he has claimed this world. Declaring that no human being can keep the law of God's kingdom, he claims all men as his subjects.” *The Signs of the Times*, June 10, 1903.

### The Church Militant

1. Are Christians engaged in warfare
2. Is not the church triumphant
3. Are followers of Christ who are marching toward Zion
4. Began its warfare in the Garden of Eden

through our careless misuse of body or mind.” *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers*, No. 7, 11.

1. **Three time periods of the church militant are here brought to view**
  - a) The church of history
  - b) The church of the present time
  - c) The church that is to be called out
2. **The church militant**
  - a) Of the present time is the connecting link between the church militant of history and the church militant that is to be called out
  - b) Is the recipient of the light God has for the world

c) Is to diffuse this light to those who sit in darkness

3. **The phrases “from age to age” and “from past ages” are both consistent with the previous reference that places the beginning of the church militant in the Garden of Eden**

“The church is yet militant in a world that is apparently in midnight darkness, and growing worse and worse. While the requirements of a plain ‘Thus saith the Lord’ remain unheeded by the worldly element in the church, the voices of God’s faithful servants are to be strengthened to give the solemn message of warning. The works that should characterize the church militant and the works of the church that has had the light of truth for this time, do not correspond. The Lord calls upon church-members to clothe themselves with the beautiful garments of Christ’s righteousness. Praise and prayer and thanksgiving should now be heard coming daily from converted hearts and lips.” *Review and Herald*, April 22, 1909.

The church militant is composed of two groups

1. **God’s faithful servants who**

- a) Give the solemn message of warning
- b) Have works that correspond with the light of truth for this time
- c) Clothe themselves with the garments of Christ’s righteousness

2. **The worldly element who**

- a) Do not heed the plain requirements of God
- b) Have “had the light of truth for this time” but whose works “do not correspond”

“Whatever may be the needed discipline of the church militant amid

the dragon’s wrath against those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the benediction is pronounced upon all who love and obey God. The words are positive, but mark their significance. The Alpha and Omega does not utter words that will lead any soul to suppose that a profession of faith without willing, genuine love and obedience, will secure to him the entrance into the Holy City and a right to the tree of life. The Lord declares, ‘This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me’ (Matthew 15:8). This is mockery to God, speaking with a mouth of guile.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, 90.

This reference gives additional characteristics of the two groups in the church militant

1. **God’s faithful servants**

- a) Need discipline, even amid the dragon’s wrath
- b) Keep the commandments of God
- c) Have the faith of Jesus
- d) Love and obey God

2. **The worldly element in the church**

- a) Make a profession of faith, without willing, genuine love and obedience
- b) Draw nigh to God with their mouth, but their heart is far from Him
- c) Are a mockery to God

“God has a church upon the earth, who are His chosen people, who keep His commandments. He is leading, not stray offshoots, not one here and one there, but a people. The truth is a sanctifying power; but the church militant is not the church triumphant. There are tares among the wheat. ‘Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?’ was the question of the

servant; but the master answered, ‘Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them’ (Matthew 13:28, 29). The gospel net draws not only good fish, but bad ones as well, and the Lord only knows who are His.” *The Review and Herald*, September 12, 1893.

“Let every one who is seeking to live a Christian life, remember that the church militant is not the church triumphant. Those who are carnally minded will be found in the church. They are to be pitied more than blamed. The church is not to be judged as sustaining these characters, though they are found within her borders. Should the church expel them, the very ones who found fault with their presence there, would blame the church for sending them adrift in the world; they would claim that they were treated unmercifully. It may be that in the church there are those who are cold, proud, haughty, and unChristian, but you need not associate with this class. There are many who are warmhearted, who are selfdenying, selfsacrificing, who would, were it required, lay down their lives to save souls. Jesus saw the bad and the good in church relationship, and said, ‘Let both grow together until the harvest’ (Matthew 13:30, *first part*). None are under the necessity of becoming tares because every plant in the field is not wheat. If the truth were known, these complainers make their accusations in order to quiet a convicted, condemning conscience. Their own course of action is not wholly commendable. Even those who are striving for the mastery over the enemy, have sometimes been wrong and done wrong. Evil prevails over good when we do not trust wholly in Christ, and abide in Him. Inconsistencies of character will then be manifested that would

not be revealed if we preserved the faith that works by love and purifies the soul." Ibid., January 16, 1894.

More specific details are given in the two paragraphs above concerning the two groups in the church militant:

#### 1. God's faithful servants

- a) Are His chosen people
- b) Keep His commandments
- c) Are called wheat
- d) Are not to sustain the carnally minded
- e) Need not associate with this class (worldly element)
- f) Are warm-hearted, self-denying, self-sacrificing
- g) Are willing to lay down their lives to save souls
- h) Are striving for the mastery over the enemy
- i) Preserve the faith that works by love and purifies the soul

#### 2. The worldly element

- a) Are called tares
- b) Are carnally minded
- c) Are found within the borders of the church militant
- d) Are not part of the church militant although within her borders
- e) Are complainers and accusers
- f) Are those whose actions are not wholly commendable

#### 3. The wheat and tares grow together until the harvest

Note: That they "grow together" of necessity needs to be understood that they do not work or "associate" together. The characteristics of each group are not compatible. This prevents a working relationship. God's people are not to work with those who are "a mockery to God." It is better understood to mean that they exist together within the borders of the church militant.



*Whenever a Christian is off his guard, this powerful adversary makes a sudden and violent attack.*

#### 4. The church militant is not the church triumphant

- a) This point is emphasized in both references
- b) The reason given in both of these statements is that the "worldly element" is present
- c) The worldly element (tares) will be removed at the harvest

Note: After this worldly element is removed, the church militant becomes the church triumphant. See *The Great Controversy*, 644–646, for a clear description of the transition of the people of God from the church militant to the church triumphant. This reference is in the setting of the Battle of Armageddon. Following the first resurrection the people of God are taken from this earth to the Holy City to join the church triumphant which is in heaven.

"The work is soon to close. The members of the church militant who have proved faithful will become the church triumphant. In reviewing our past history, having traveled over

every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." *The Review and Herald*, October 12, 1905.

"The life of Christ was a life charged with a divine message of the love of God, and He longed intensely to impart this love to others in rich measure. Compassion beamed from His countenance, and His conduct was characterized by grace, humility, truth, and love. Every member of His church militant must manifest the same qualities, if He would join the church triumphant. The love of Christ is so broad, so full of glory, that in comparison to it, everything that men esteem as great, dwindles into insignificance. When we obtain a view of it, we exclaim, O the depth of the riches of the love that God bestowed upon men in the gift of His only begotten Son!" Ibid., November 17, 1891.

**"The work is soon to close"**

1. This sentence is a reference to the close of probation
2. The faithful members of the church militant join the church triumphant after the close of probation
3. If they would join the church triumphant, the members of the church militant must manifest the qualities of
  - a) Grace
  - b) Humility
  - c) Truth
  - d) And love

"What if half the soldiers in an army were idling or asleep when ordered to be on duty; the result would be defeat, captivity, or death. Should any escape from the hands of the en-

*The church is to conduct an aggressive warfare, to make conquests for Christ, to rescue souls from the power of the enemy.*

emy, would they be thought worthy of a reward? No; they would speedily receive the sentence of death. And if the church of Christ is careless or unfaithful, far more important consequences are involved. A sleeping army of Christian soldiers—what could be more terrible! What advance could be made against the world, who are under the control of the prince of darkness? Those who stand back indifferently in the day of battle, as though they had no interest and felt no responsibility as to the issue of the contest, might better change their course or leave the ranks at once." *Ibid.*, July 17, 1883.

**SUMMARY****The church militant**

1. Began at the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden
2. Will continue until "the harvest" (the second coming of Jesus – Revelation 14:14–20)
3. Is composed of two groups
  - a) God's "chosen people, who keep His commandments" – "the wheat"
  - b) The "worldly element" – "the tares" – "the carnally minded"
4. Has "the carnally minded" "within her borders" but she "is not to be judged as sustaining these characters"
5. Must manifest the same conduct which characterized Christ's life if they are to join the church triumphant

6. Are those "who have proved faithful" and these "will become the church triumphant" when they are transported from this earth to heaven

**The Church Triumphant**

Some are teaching at the present time that the people of God who receive the Holy Spirit in the latter rain will at that time become the church triumphant. In this study we will consider instruction from the Spirit of Prophecy relating to this subject.

"The Lord desires us to realize that it is of great importance that we stand in these last days upon the

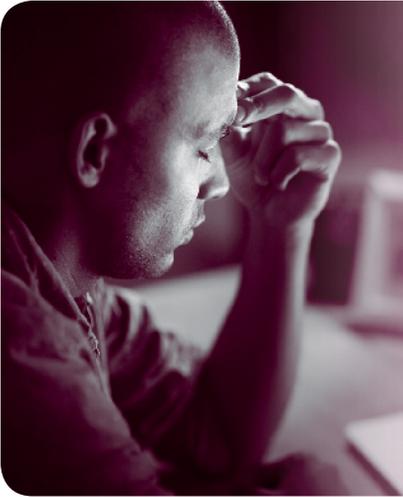
platform of eternal truth. Those who think that the church militant is the church triumphant make a great mistake. The church militant will gain great triumphs, but it will also have fierce conflicts with evil, that it may be firmly established upon the platform of eternal truth. And every one of us should be determined to stand with the church upon this platform." *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, 340.

1. God considers it of great importance that His people in these last days stand on the platform of eternal truth
2. The church militant
  - a) Is not the church triumphant
  - b) Will gain great triumphs
  - c) Will have fierce conflicts with evil
  - d) Must be firmly established on the platform of eternal truth
3. It is a great mistake to think that the militant church is the church triumphant

"We need to remember that the church militant is not the church triumphant. The difference between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the world is to be carefully considered, else we shall draw threads of selfishness into the web that we are weaving." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, 312.

1. The statement "the church militant is not the church triumphant" is repeated more than ten times in the Spirit of Prophecy
2. In this reference
  - a) The church triumphant is related to the "kingdom of Christ"
  - b) The church militant is related to the "kingdom of this world"

*Continued on page 36*



*Heavenly Father, my family and friends will not hear of the heavenly paths which you have opened up for their safety. It is so hard to watch them turn away to walk in the paths of this world and to suffer the consequences. Father, the path they have chosen is so very dangerous and ends in eternal death. Please alert them to their danger—they will not listen to me. Save them Lord! Amen.*

## HEART-WRENCHING

BY JUDY HALLINGSTAD

- It is a heart-wrenching experience to know a better way but to have loved ones turn away to the world in which the devil has usurped temporary ownership and has caused much loss of eternal life.
- It is a heart-wrenching experience to give loved ones freedom of choice because you love them, even though you know it is the wrong road they are choosing to travel.
- It is a heart-wrenching experience knowing that the decisions they make will turn into disaster, loss of health, or loss of life.
- It is a heart-wrenching experience knowing that your help is not wanted.

Our Lord knows this heart-wrenching experience much more deeply than we can ever know. We must learn to turn our sorrow and heart-wrenching experiences over to Him. Before we leave this earth, our hearts will be wrung with sorrow and the only thing we will have to cling to is Jesus.

God knows our every tear and when He comes, these tears will be washed away. But until then we must be strong in the Lord and continue to pray for those who have shut their ears and their lives to heavenly wisdom and from heavenly paths.

Jesus stood upon Mount Olivet overlooking Jerusalem and with yearning heart, wept, knowing that many were to suffer and to die an eternal death because they had turned away from Him. We are to follow in our Master's footsteps, which at times will be filled with heart-wrenching sorrow.

"They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Psalm 40:31).

Waiting on the Lord is the key to our strength. He says, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Isaiah 46:10).

Know that through each heart-wrenching experience, God may be exalted. God tells us to "be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:9). You gain that courage and strength for each day in His presence first thing in the morning and each step throughout the day.

We are also told to "Be strong, and quit yourselves like men" (1 Samuel 4:9). As we are standing in the Lord's army, the army of Satan will try to distract you, dishearten you and break you through heart-wrenching experiences with family and friends! Are you bracing yourself in the strength of Jesus Christ? "Soon the last prayer for sinners will have been offered, the last tear shed, the last warning given, the last entreaty made, and the sweet voice of mercy will be heard no more." *In Heavenly Places*, 312.

Pray to God who loves our families and friends more than we could ever love them. Ask Him to work on the hearts of family and friends to break satanic control over them. Remember, freedom of choice is given to us and is also given to them. **LM**

# MOSES, POWERFUL THROUGH FAITH



BY ELLEN G. WHITE

Younger than Joseph or Daniel was Moses when removed from the sheltering care of his childhood home; yet already the same agencies that shaped their lives had molded his. Only twelve years did he spend with his Hebrew kindred; but during these years was laid the foundation of his greatness; it was laid by the hand of one little known to fame.

Jochebed was a woman and a slave. Her lot in life was humble, her burden heavy. But through no other woman, save Mary of Nazareth, has the world received greater blessing. Knowing that her child must soon pass beyond her care, to the guardianship of those who knew not God, she the more earnestly endeavored to link his soul with heaven. She sought to implant in his heart love and loyalty to God. And faithfully was the work accomplished. Those principles of truth that were the burden of his mother's teaching and the lesson of her life, no after influence could induce Moses to renounce.

From the humble home in Goshen the son of Jochebed passed to the palace of the Pharaohs, to the Egyptian princess, by her to be welcomed as a loved and cherished son. In the schools of Egypt, Moses received the highest civil and military training. Of great personal attractions, noble in form and stature, of cultivated mind and princely bearing, and renowned as a military leader, he became the nation's pride. The king of Egypt was also a member of the priesthood; and Moses, though refusing to participate in the heathen worship, was initiated into all the mysteries of the Egyptian religion. Egypt at this time being still the most powerful and most highly civilized of nations, Moses, as its prospective sovereign, was heir to the highest honors this world could bestow. But his was a nobler choice. For the honor of God and the deliverance of His downtrodden people, Moses sacrificed the honors of Egypt. Then, in a special sense, God undertook his training.

Not yet was Moses prepared for his lifework. He had yet to learn the lesson of dependence upon divine power. He had mistaken God's purpose. It was his hope to deliver Israel by force of arms. For this he risked all, and failed. In defeat and disappointment he became a fugitive and exile in a strange land.

In the wilds of Midian, Moses spent forty years as a keeper of sheep. Apparently cut off forever from his life's mission, he was receiving the discipline essential for its fulfillment. Wisdom to govern an ignorant and undisciplined multitude must be gained through self-mastery. In the care of the sheep and the tender lambs he must obtain the experience that would make him a faithful, long-suffering shepherd to Israel. That

he might become a representative of God, he must learn of Him.

The influences that had surrounded him in Egypt, the affection of his foster mother, his own position as the grandson of the king, the luxury and vice that allured in ten thousand forms, the refinement, the subtlety, and the mysticism of a false religion, had made an impression on his mind and character. In the stern simplicity of the wilderness all this disappeared.

Amidst the solemn majesty of the mountain solitudes Moses was alone with God. Everywhere the Creator's name was written. Moses seemed to stand in His presence and to be overshadowed by His power. Here his

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*Of great personal attractions, noble in form and stature, of cultivated mind and princely bearing, and renowned as a military leader, Moses became the nation's pride.*

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self-sufficiency was swept away. In the presence of the Infinite One he realized how weak, how inefficient, how short-sighted, is man.

Here Moses gained that which went with him throughout the years of his toilsome and care-burdened life—a sense of the personal presence of the Divine One. Not merely did he look down the ages for Christ to be made manifest in the flesh; he saw Christ accompanying the host of Israel in all their travels. When misunderstood and misrepresented, when called to bear reproach and insult, to face danger and death, he was able to endure “as seeing Him who is invisible” (Hebrews 11:27).

Moses did not merely think of God, he saw Him. God was the constant vision before him. Never did he lose sight of His face.

To Moses faith was no guesswork; it was a reality. He believed that God ruled his life in particular; and in all its details he acknowledged Him. For strength to withstand every temptation, he trusted in Him.

The great work assigned him he desired to make in the highest degree successful, and he placed his whole dependence upon divine power. He felt his need of help, asked for it, by faith grasped it, and in the assurance of sustaining strength went forward.

Such was the experience that Moses gained by his forty years of training in the desert. To impart such an experience, Infinite Wisdom counted not the period too long or the price too great.

The results of that training, of the lessons there taught, are bound up, not only with the history of Israel, but with all which from that day to this has told for the world's progress. The highest testimony to the greatness of Moses, the judgment passed upon his life by Inspiration, is, “There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face” (Deuteronomy 34:10).

*Education*, 61–64. **LM**

“Hope all is well with each one of you. I so appreciate all the writers to *LandMarks*. You do a GREAT job! May our Father bless each one.”

—JA, Colorado

“I enjoy the *LandMarks* magazine, especially the Bible questions and the crossword puzzles.”

—BK, Illinois

“I hope you are all well. Thank you for sending me the *LandMarks* magazine. Please continue praying for me as I pray also for you.”

—TM, Texas

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From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

April 2018

Dear Friend,

Many years ago my good friend whom I worked with in prison ministry, asked me, “What if there was no plan of redemption and you knew that all the future held in store for you was an eternal death some day?” Since that morning I have thought about that question many times. In the context of that question, if you had no knowledge of how to be saved and somebody else did know, would you want that person to tell you about it?

If no one told you and you ended up being lost, would you be unhappy? This is going to be the experience of many: “In the visions of the night a very impressive scene passed before me. I saw an immense ball of fire fall among some beautiful mansions, causing their instant destruction. I heard someone say: ‘We knew that the judgments of God were coming upon the earth, but we did not know that they would come so soon.’ Others, with agonized voices, said: ‘You knew! Why then did you not tell us? We did not know.’ On every side I heard similar words of reproach spoken.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 28.

“We do not half appreciate the grandeur of the plan of salvation. He who was one with the Father stepped down from the glorious throne in heaven, laid aside His royal robe and crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, thus bringing himself to the level of man’s feeble faculties. ... Infinite was the sacrifice on the part of the Father; infinite the sacrifice of the Son! The highest gift that Heaven could bestow was given to ransom fallen humanity. O, what divine benevolence! It would have been far easier to crush the world out of existence than to reform it. ... The Son of God understood the desperate situation, and Himself came to our world, that man through Him might have eternal life. Son of the Most High though He was, He submitted Himself to insult, mockery, and a cruel death because He loved man, and would save Him from ruin.” *The Review and Herald*, December 11, 1888.

When the mission report is given in heaven’s Sabbath School on Sabbath morning, will you be happy to share the story of how God worked in your life to bring the message to others? It is not only Noah and Paul and Martin Luther who will have a story to tell. Every one of God’s saved ones will have a story to tell because none of us will be going to heaven alone.

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

# Starfish

By Judy Hallingstad

There are 2,000 species of starfish, also known as sea stars or Asteroidea, living in the world's oceans. Though these invertebrates have no brains or blood, they're more than capable of reproducing; females can even spawn up to 65 million eggs at once. With an average lifespan of 35 years in the wild, that's a whole lot of starfish in the ocean.

Starfish babies are extremely tiny and nearly invisible to the naked eye; they measure a whopping 1 millimeter (.04"). ...

After a month or two infant starfish begin looking less like tiny blobs of jelly and more like small sea stars. ... They start growing a variety of tubes, which will eventually become their arms, in order to catch and feed on algae. ...

Excerpts from: <http://animals.mom.me/starfish-babies-2518.html>

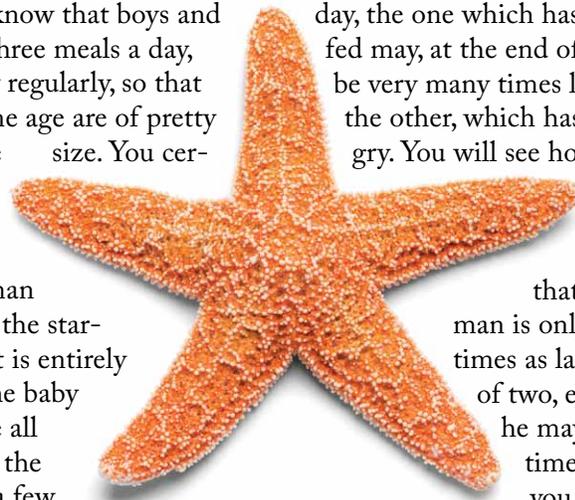
## Baby Starfishes

"How old is a starfish? Sometimes you find one no bigger than the head of a pin, and again one as large as a soup-plate. Did you ever

wonder how many days or years old either one of them might be? Or whether the larger one might be the older brother or great-great-grandfather of the little one? Curiously enough, nobody has been able, till within a year or two, to answer these questions. But now, fortunately, we are wiser. You know that boys and girls eat their three meals a day, and grow fairly regularly, so that boys of the same age are of pretty much the same size. You certainly would

never mistake a child of three for a man of thirty. With the starfish, however, it is entirely different; for the baby stars, which are all hatched late in the spring, within a few weeks of one another, may go through the entire summer with virtually nothing to eat. All this time they remain perfectly healthy, but grow scarcely at all; and at the end of six months they

are not so very much larger than a pinhead. If, on the other hand, the starfish happens to be born where he can find plenty of barnacles and small clams and mussels, he does little except eat, and grows astonishingly fast. Thus it may happen that, of two starfishes hatched the same day, the one which has been well fed may, at the end of half a year, be very many times larger than the other, which has gone hungry. You will see how remarkable



this is if you will remember that a grown man is only about five times as large as a child of two, even though he may be twenty times as old. So, you see, a starfish of average size may be a very young animal, which has been well fed, or a very old one, which has lived on short rations." Author unknown. *The Youth's Instructor*, July 18, 1901.

*Steps to Life*

# Bible Correspondence School

For those involved in any ministry to be effective in their efforts to open the truths of God's word to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, they must engage others in Bible study. That effort has been a vital part of Steps to Life since its founding, 30 years ago.

Since its founding, Bible workers from Steps to Life have contacted hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals in and around Wichita, Kansas, with offers for free personal Bible studies. We also offer these studies on our weekly television

program, which has resulted in contacts with many seekers in south central Kansas. Many others have enrolled in our Bible correspondence school after a friend or relative has shared with them their own lessons. Still others have enrolled through our website ([stepstolife.org](http://stepstolife.org)), where they can sign up to complete the lessons on line, by email or via U.S. mail.

To assist us in making this edifying opportunity available on a continuing basis, please designate your Thirteenth Sabbath offering *BCS*.



## April Sermon of the Month

### The Great Controversy

By Marshall Grosboll

The war between Christ and Satan has raged since before this world was formed. Satan's greatest fear is that someone will break his devious code and those living on this earth will become acquainted with his devices and overcome him in the name of the Lord.

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



*Carol Walston pauses from her work grading and responding to students' letters.*

## **Steps to Life** **Bible Correspondence School** Connecting People with God's Word

**T**he Steps to Life Bible Correspondence School (BCS) began as a means of preparing a people for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The program consists of three parts:

1. Establishing a belief in the Bible as God's word and belief in Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour as the only means of justification.
2. Gaining an understanding of the role of Jesus in His new-covenant ministry and of the three angels' messages.
3. Becoming a part of Christ's remnant people by overcoming the natural heart and forming a character in the image of Christ through obedience to His word.



*Materials for the Know Your Bible correspondence course ready to be mailed to students. Accompanying booklets are in the foreground.*



*Supplies of the prophecy series lessons and accompanying answer sheets await distribution.*

New students are enrolled in the Know Your Bible (KYB) series and are sent two lessons at a time. When the first two lessons are returned, the answers are graded, and the next two lessons are then sent along with the graded answer sheets from the previous two lessons. During the course of these studies, students are given a brief introduction to Bible prophecy, but the major thrust of these lessons is establishing a foundation for belief in God's word and faith in Jesus as the only intercessor between man and God.

Anyone who has been privileged to conduct a Bible study program has learned that it is a rare student who follows through to completion. Most commonly, students stop corresponding after the first few lessons. Although frustrating, it is important to remember that the seed has been planted and it is the responsibil-

ity of the Holy Spirit to provide the growth. Who can know this side of the Jordan when and how that growth will occur? There are undoubtedly many individuals in whom that growth into the full stature of followers of Jesus will not occur until the mandatory decision must be made between following God's law or man's law.

Following successful completion of the KYB course, interested students can enroll in the Prophecy Series, which consists of 52 lessons and provides an in-depth study of Bible prophecy, concentrating, of course, on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

Individuals who successfully and prayerfully complete these two courses should be fully prepared to greet the return of Jesus with joyful hearts and not be among those who hide themselves in the clefts of the rocks and pray for the rocks to fall on them.

One valuable benefit of these two courses is the use that prisoners can make of them. There are many who turn to Jesus while in prison, perhaps initially because of the abundance of time they have to reflect on their particular situation. Often it is when people are at their lowest that they hear the appeal of the Holy Spirit most clearly and distinctly. What might begin as a means of occupying time can become the means of salvation as the students respond to the yearnings of a sinful heart for a more meaningful existence.

For the second quarter of 2018, we are appealing for your support in assisting us to make the lessons for these two courses available to those who recognize that they are bound by the snares of Satan—whether in the world or in prison. To provide support for those hungering and thirsting for the truth, please mark your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering *BCS*.

## Question

Please explain what is meant by “kick against the pricks” in Acts 9:5.

## Answer

The reference here means to go against your conscience. God pricks the conscience, the impressions of which are often resisted. See the following examples:

“And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to *kick against the pricks*” (Acts 9:5).

“‘And he [Saul] trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do’ (Acts 9:6). No doubt entered the mind of Saul that this was Jesus of Nazareth who spoke to him, and that He was indeed the long-looked-for Messiah, the Consolation and Redeemer of Israel. And now this Jesus, who had, while teaching upon earth, spoken in parables to His hearers, using familiar objects to illustrate His meaning, likened the work of Saul, in persecuting the followers of Christ, to *kicking against the pricks*. Those forcible words illustrated the fact that it would be impossible for any man to stay the onward progress of the truth of Christ. It would march on to triumph and victory, while every effort to stay it would result in injury to the opposer. The persecutor, in the end, would suffer a thousand-fold more than those whom he had persecuted. Sooner or later his own heart would condemn him; he would find that he had, indeed,

been kicking against the pricks.” *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 23, 24.

“Their knowledge of the truth makes it hard for them to indulge in sinful pleasures, for they cannot altogether put out of the mind the claims of God upon them. There is a feeling of impatience at the restraint which is thus imposed. They try to get away from this admonitory voice; but they find themselves *kicking against the pricks*, piercing themselves through with many sorrows. Oh, that they would come to the Fountain of living waters before they shall have grieved away the Spirit of God for the last time!” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 626.

“When you and your husband left the sanitarium, it was because you were not willing to humble yourselves before God. In leaving the sanitarium you acted very unwisely. What influence will this have on the patients and nurses who as yet know nothing of the matter? What interpretation will they place on your actions except that you thought yourself abused? But it is not true that you have been abused. God has been dealing with you, and you have been *kicking against the pricks*. It is not you who has been wronged, but the Lord Jesus. He has been dishonored by your course of action. Are you willing to meet your record in the judgment?” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, 267, 268.

[All emphasis supplied.] **LM**



## CHARCOAL

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### USE IT MORE!

Recent studies about the use and effects of charcoal have yielded some amazing results.

Dr. Thomas Janossy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences reported about a Russian study in which they put the charcoal into the drinking water of a control group of rats. These study subjects drank black water their whole lives. The lifespan and the health differences were striking. The “charcoal rats” lived 40% longer and were far healthier than their control counterparts. That makes sense because charcoal adsorbs poisons in the body. Dr. Janossy said that it controls the pathogenic bacteria in the gut. Because charcoal helps heal the gut, its ability to absorb nutrients is enhanced. Because it helps in removing the waste material from the whole body, it lowers the toxic load. So, charcoal is one product that targets so many things and so many processes. (See *CharcoalRemedies.com*, p. 60.)

## Charcoal and Cerebral Malaria

“It is estimated there are 400–600 million cases of malaria each year in Africa and that between one half and one million African children die each year as a direct result of malaria. Up until recently the standard treatment had been the use of the powerful toxic alkaloid drug Quinine. Considering the list of lethal side effects and 31% failure rate, it is debatable which was worse, the disease or the cure. ...

“Three observations led researchers to examine a potential role for activated charcoal (AC) in the treatment of severe malaria. First, a number of studies have demonstrated that AC is highly effective at adsorbing a range of cytokines ... AC is able to remove these cytokines from the blood including the tumor necrosis factor (TNF) which is associated with malaria. Second, the lethal effect of TNF is associated with its delivery to the intestinal lumen via the bile duct. This raises the possibility that AC in the intestinal lumen might directly reduce cytokine availability. Third, oral AC has for many years been used in the clinic to suppress chronic kidney disease, by indirectly controlling inflammation.

“With these facts researchers designed a study to calculate 1) to what degree AC would prevent Cerebral Malaria and 2) because AC dramatically reduces the effect of Quinine, to determine to what degree AC might interfere with the effectiveness of the malaria treatment of choice, artemisinin.

“The result? Researchers concluded: ‘We found that oral AC *provided significant protection against* ... Experimental Cerebral Malaria (ECM), increasing overall survival time (95%) compared to untreated mice ...’

“... By the way charcoal also works for cholera, typhoid, infections, dysentery, poisonous insects, wounds ...” Excerpts from *www*.



*Activated charcoal works by trapping toxins and chemicals in its millions of tiny pores.*

*charcoalremedies.com/charcoal\_prevents\_malaria* [Emphasis supplied.]

Charcoal has often been put into the closet and forgotten about. If charcoal can adsorb the poisons and remove them from the system, why would you not want to take something that may improve overall health? The following is a little history you may not have heard before—interesting!

“A chemist in the year 1813 surprised everyone when he swallowed five grams of arsenic trioxide poison that was mixed with charcoal with no adverse effect. This mysterious property of charcoal was discovered around 1500 B.C. by the Egyptians and since then it has been part of industrial and medicinal purposes. An activated carbon is potent in absorbing [sic] any gas or fluid most effectively compared to other natural products.

“There is an old history behind the discovery of activated carbon. The first recorded use of this miraculous product was in 1500 B.C. when the Egyptians used them to absorb [sic] foul odor from the putrefying parts within the intestinal tract. ...

“Later in 1700s, the charcoal emerged again and was used for

absorbing [sic] excessive bile secretions in the body. By the mid 1800s, the charcoal was prominently used by the army and navy surgeons to relieve their soldiers from different types of open cancer and for soothing pain. Charcoal was admitted in the London Pharmacopoeia for the general use of army and naval military hospitals and civil hospitals.”

Excerpts from *www.medindia.net/patients/patientinfo/medicinal-properties-of-activated-charcoal.htm*

Praise God for natural ways to aid the body in healing over abnormal, artificial ways which may harm the body. Truly we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14).

NOTE: “Activated charcoal works by trapping toxins and chemicals in its millions of tiny pores. ...

“It doesn’t *absorb* the toxins, however. Instead it works through the chemical process of *adsorption*. In the body, *absorption* is the reaction of elements, including nutrients, chemicals and toxins, soaked up and assimilated into the blood stream. *Adsorption* is the chemical reaction where elements bind to a surface.” <https://draxe.com/activated-charcoal-uses/> [Emphasis supplied.] **LM**

## WORSHIP GOD

BY JOHN J. GROSBOLL

Racial prejudice is nothing new. It has existed in the world for thousands of years. In fact, we read about racial prejudice clear back in the book of Genesis, thousands of years before the time of Christ. In the time of Christ, racial prejudice between different nations and races of people was as strong as ever. Two groups of people prejudiced against each other were the Jews and the Samaritans. Once when Jesus asked a Samaritan woman for a drink, “The woman of Samaria said to Him, ‘How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans” (John 4:9).



During the conversation, the woman wanted Jesus to tell her where to worship, in Jerusalem according to the Jews, or the mountain where the Samaritans believed was the right place to be. Those kinds of prejudices have continued right up to the present day, not just among Jews and Samaritans, or Jews and Gentiles, but also between various Christian groups, so much so, that we find many instances of two nations, both calling themselves Christian nations, at war with one another.

Racial prejudice is a terrible thing which Jesus addressed more than once during His time here on earth. Jesus had just entered Capernaum, a city that had become a headquarters for His work, where many of His most mighty and powerful miracles had been worked. The Bible records that a centurion, a Roman soldier who was over a hundred other soldiers, “pleaded with Him, saying, ‘Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘I will come and heal him.’ The centurion answered and said, ‘Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, “Go,” and he goes; and to another, “Come,” and he comes; and to my servant, “Do this,” and he does it.’ When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!’” (Matthew 8:6–10)

Jesus then made a statement that to the Jews around Him was absolutely astonishing. This text shows us that many of the people that we tend to be prejudiced against are going to be saved but the people that have prejudice will be lost. Notice what it says

in Matthew 8:11, 12: “I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

Here Jesus addressed, very directly, the problem of racial prejudice. However, the disciples were slow to learn the lesson. Jesus told them again just before He ascended that they were to take the gospel, not just to the Jews, but even to other nations that the Jews despised. Jesus said, “But you shall

same love and compassion for people of all races. Another Roman centurion is mentioned in Acts 10:1–4: “There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. About the ninth hour of the day [3 p.m.] he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, ‘Cornelius!’ And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, ‘What is it, lord?’ So he said to him, ‘Your prayers and your alms have

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*Racial prejudice is nothing new. In the time of Christ, racial prejudice between different nations and races of people was as strong as ever.*

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receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem ...,” to the Jews, “... and in all Judea ...,” to the Jews, “... and Samaria ...” to the Samaritans, “... and to the end of the earth...,” the Gentiles (Acts 1:8).

But the disciples were Jews. This prejudice had been received as a part of their society and culture since birth. When you have learned something and believed it all of your life, it is difficult to change your beliefs. So, the disciples preached the gospel to the Jews, but they were slow to learn the lesson that they were also to preach it to the Gentiles, not just to some Gentiles, but to all the Gentiles to the end of the earth.

Jesus had no racial prejudice toward people of other nations. He had the

come up for a memorial before God.’”

God knows about every detail of every life. Cornelius’ generous deeds did not go unnoticed by God. He does not miss anything. Every good deed you do to help your fellow men, God knows about. He saw that Cornelius was an honest man who feared the Lord and wanted to do what was right. He did not know the gospel and he did not know about Jesus or the sacrifice that had been paid on the cross of Calvary that could take away all of his sin and the sins of his family and make it possible for him to have eternal life. But he was a God-fearing man and the Lord decided that He would arrange for this man to receive more light.

If you are living up to all the light that you have, then you put yourself

in a position so that God can reveal to you more spiritual truth. But why should God send more light to anyone who is not living up to the light that they already have? The important thing to consider is not how much spiritual light you have, but that you are living up to the light you do have. Cornelius was living up to all the light he had.

The Lord said to Cornelius, through the angel, “‘Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do.’ And when the angel who

and had received information on how abhorrent idolatry is to Him.

Notice what it says in Deuteronomy 4:15–19: “Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything the creeps on the ground or the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth. And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven,

ies of this law, but said that there are certain things that are not acceptable.

The 7th commandment says to not commit adultery and spelled out through Moses exactly what that meant (see Leviticus 18, 20; Deuteronomy 22). It does not mean just stealing someone else’s spouse.

The Jews understood, but the Greeks did not. The Greeks knew it was wrong to steal someone else’s wife, but were not concerned about having sexual relations with someone else who was not married—fornication. The Jews and the Greeks had these barriers because of their differences in habits and because of the sins with which the Gentile world was permeated.

Another issue was food. God gave to the children of Israel laws concerning what they should eat and what they should not eat (see Deuteronomy 14; Leviticus 11). The Lord had told the Jews which foods are permitted and which foods are unclean: “You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps; nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, lest you be defiled by them. For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate [sanctify] yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Leviticus 11:43, 44).

The disciples were Jews and they were very strict in the observance of these food laws. They were also commanded, “It’s to be a law throughout your generations that you are to never eat blood or fat” (Leviticus 3:17, literal translation). The Gentiles ate anything, including the blood and fat. The Jews sacrificed their animals in a way that drained all of the blood to comply with their food laws. The disciples were familiar with all these laws and kept them. Peter had never

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*Jesus had no racial prejudice toward people of other nations. He had the same love and compassion for people of all races.*

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spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa” (verses 5–8).

Part of the reason for the awful racial prejudice that exists in the world is our difference in habits and culture. This was one of the main reasons for the prejudice that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans and between the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews looked upon the Gentiles as unclean, and it is true that the Gentile world was steeped in every kind of sin. Sin is what makes a person spiritually unclean. The Gentiles were involved in idolatry. The Jews had received the law of God

and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.”

The Lord had said, “Watch out that you do not get involved in idolatry.” The Jews abhorred idolatry. It was idolatry that caused them to incur Babylonian captivity before they had learned that lesson. The Greeks and the Gentiles were steeped in worshipping all manner of idols. Not only that, but God, the Creator of the human body, has a right to tell us how to take care of the human body and how to live. He gave instructions in the law written by His finger about how to live for our best benefit. He gave us perfect freedom within the boundar-

disobeyed any, but now these men from Cornelius were on their way to Joppa and Peter does not know what is going to happen, but he is going to have a little surprise.

It says in Acts 10:9–16, “The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour [noon]. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. And a voice came to him, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ But Peter said, ‘Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.’ And a voice spoke to him again the second time, ‘What God has cleansed you must not call common.’ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.”

Then Peter woke up and he did not understand what he had seen in the vision. He wondered what his dream meant. It says, “Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon’s house, and stood before the gate. And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there. While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, ‘Behold, three men are seeking you. Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.’ Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, ‘Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?’ And they said, ‘Cornelius the centurion, a just man,



*Every good deed you do to help your fellow men, God knows about.*

one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you.’ Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him” (verses 17–23).

So Peter goes to visit a Gentile, a Roman, a person against whom he has been very prejudiced all of his life. The Jews called the Gentiles unclean, but Peter was told that what God has cleansed, he was not to call unclean.

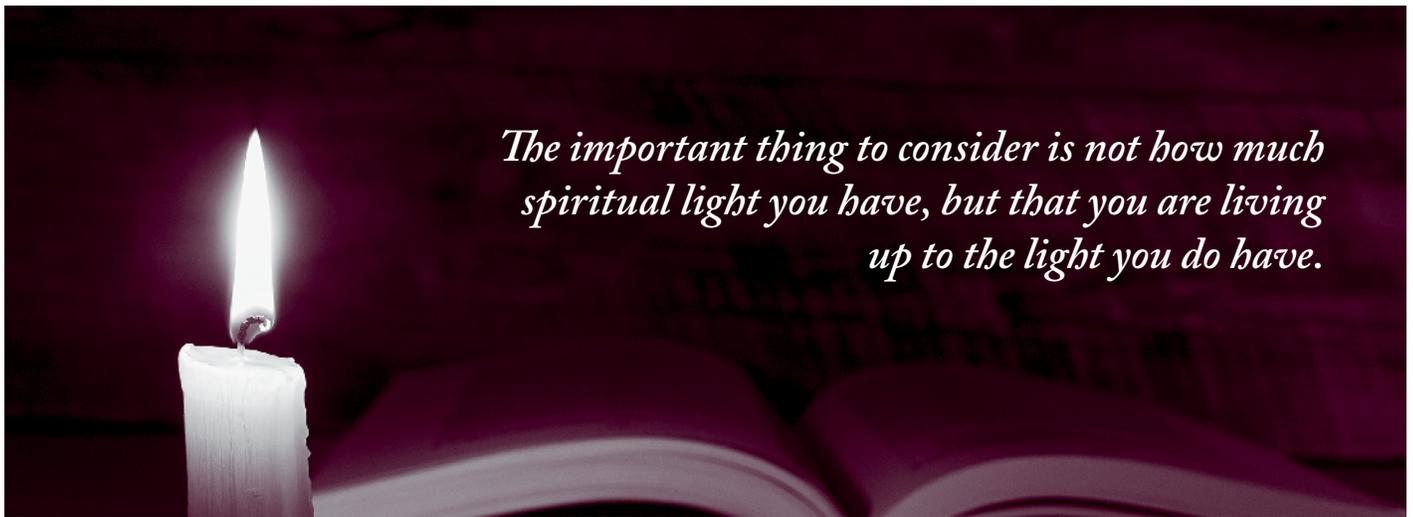
“The following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, ‘Stand up; I myself am also a man’” (verses 24–26).

This was the apostle Peter, a leading apostle. He enters into a Gentile’s house. This man wanted so much to hear what this man would tell him that he falls down and worships him,

but Peter won’t allow it. The Bible teaches that not only are we not to worship Peter, not only are we not to worship anyone who could call himself a successor of Peter, we are not to even worship an angel.

John wrote in Revelation 19:10, “I [John] fell at his [the angel’s] feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’” Notice, it was an angel from heaven who gave John the message, and when the apostle falls down to worship him, the angel told him not to worship him, but to worship God only.

This happens two times. Revelation 22:8, 9 says, “Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.’”



*The important thing to consider is not how much spiritual light you have, but that you are living up to the light you do have.*

Peter would not allow anyone to fall down and worship him; an angel from heaven would not allow anyone to fall down and worship him. But we are living in a world today where the whole world is full of idolatry—people worship. Today, people may not worship physical idols of gold and silver, maybe they worship living idols. If you are worshiping another human being, or an angel from heaven, then you are worshiping a living idol, but it is still an idol. Nothing or any person is to be worshiped, only the God of heaven.

These two are the commandments that have been almost universally broken by mankind, both by Christians and non-Christians alike.

Revelation 22:14 says, “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.” God’s people have been commanded in all ages to be obedient, to be loyal, to be true to His law. God’s people in the last days will not be worshiping any idols. They will not be worshiping idols of gold or silver. They will not be worship-

their spouses. Others worship religious leaders of various kinds. It all comes under idolatry. Peter would not allow a Roman centurion to worship him.

Revelation 22:14, 15 say, “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”

Do you want to be saved? If so, you must forsake all idolatry and worship God alone. Surrender your life to the Lordship, the sovereignty of Jesus Christ and follow Him as your Lord and Saviour. It is worth everything to gain eternal life. To have eternal life, all idolatry must be forsaken. There will be no idolatry in the Kingdom of Heaven. What is your goal?

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

*If you are worshiping another human being, or an angel from heaven, then you are worshiping a living idol, but it is still an idol.*

Did you know that the second longest commandment in the law of God deals with idolatry? There are some commandments that in the Hebrew language are only two words long, the 6th and the 7th. But there are two that are much longer than the rest.

ing philosophical idols. You can make an idol of philosophy, human intelligence, just as much as you can make an idol of wood or stone, or gold or silver. God’s people in the last days will not be worshiping living idols. There are some people who worship

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## THE WATERLOGGED CANOE

Jason lived on a farm near a lake. He loved the water and the green corn fields that grew right up to its very edge. He loved to hear the stories his dad told about the country where the farm was located. He learned that long before his grandfather and grandmother had settled on the farm, Indians had camped along the lake shore. Jason knew that was true because he had found many Indian relics on the farm. He had found sharp pointed arrowheads. He had found what was left of stone tomahawks. He had also found beads and broken pieces of Indian dishes.

Many people weren't able to find Indian beads and pieces of pottery. But Jason had trained his eyes so that when he walked along a corn row his eyes would spot them right away. When he walked along the lake shore he could tell when the sun shone on a stone whether it was an arrow tip or just a flat piece of stone.

One day as Jason walked along the side of the lake he made a strange discovery. The lake was crystal clear. Jason could see the bottom without any trouble at all. He saw the reeds that grew among the stones. He saw

minnows dart back and forth between the reeds. Suddenly he stopped. *What was that?* he asked himself. It couldn't be, but it surely looked like a canoe. It was—a dugout canoe like those used by Indians long ago.

Jason ran to tell his dad. Dad called neighbor Browne to come along.

After a lot of tugging and prying the canoe was loosened so it could be pulled to shore. It wasn't at all like the canoes we see today. It was really a log that had been scooped out to make a boat.

"Do you think it will float?" Jason wanted to know.

"I'm afraid not," Dad answered. "You see it's been soaked with water so long its wood is soft and spongy. I don't think it would ever dry out enough so it could float. When something gets soaked like that we say it is waterlogged. But I believe the state museum would be interested in seeing it."

That's where the canoe finally landed. And Jason was glad because then many people could see how the Indians made their canoes.

And he'd almost forgotten he had ever found it until one day he heard his minister say that some Christians didn't do much for the Lord because

they were *waterlogged* with things of this world. Then Jason thought about the canoe. It sank because it was waterlogged. No doubt people would sink, too, if they were waterlogged with sin.

How can a person be waterlogged with things of the world? A canoe is meant to ride on top of the water. It is not meant to be filled with water. In the same way Christians are meant to live in the world but not to let the world fill them. What are the things you must be careful not to let become a part of your life?

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

We thank You, dear God, because You have taught us to walk in the world without being a part of it. Show us the dangers we face as we go through life. Help us to keep our hearts and minds pure and clean that we might serve You as we should. Help us to choose which things to watch, which friends to make, which books to read. Don't let us become waterlogged by sin. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Happy Moments With God*, Copyright 1962, Margaret Anderson, 166, 167. **LM**

*Continued from page 22*

“The Church militant is not the church triumphant, and earth is not Heaven. The church is composed of erring, imperfect men and women, who are but learners in the school of Christ, to be trained, disciplined, educated for this life, and for the future, immortal life. No one of us can in our own strength

3. **This working relationship confirms that the church triumphant already exists in heaven**

“The church militant is not in this world the church triumphant. From generation to generation, the enemy has been marshaling his forces against God. ... But God’s children will not be frightened from their purpose by

*Lucifer desired to be first in heaven. Thus he introduced sin into the universe.*

represent the character of Christ; but if Jesus lives in the heart, the spirit dwelling in Him will be revealed in us; all our lack will be supplied.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 4, 1883.

1. **In this reference, the church militant is again related to this earth**
2. **It is implied that the church triumphant is in heaven**

“The members of the church triumphant—the church in heaven—will be permitted to draw near to the members of the church militant, to aid them in their necessity. Let us ever remember that we are laborers together with God. In this heavenly union we shall carry forward His work with completeness, with singing and rejoicing.” *The Southern Watchman*, September 8, 1903.

1. **This reference plainly states that the “church triumphant” is “the church in heaven”**
2. **The members of the “church triumphant” in heaven are permitted to aid the members of the “church militant” on earth**

the proud, presumptuous opposition of evildoers. By faith they see a crown of life awaiting those who are victorious, and they press forward toward the mark for the prize of their high calling in Christ Jesus.” *The Review and Herald*, July 26, 1898.

1. **This reference clearly states that the church triumphant is not in this world**
2. **God’s children are in the warfare of the church militant in this world**
3. **By faith they see a crown of life awaiting those who are victorious, and they press toward the mark**

Following is a description of the church militant receiving their crown of victory and entering into the church triumphant.

“Before entering the city of God, the Saviour bestows upon His followers the emblems of victory and invests them with the insignia of their royal state. The glittering ranks are drawn up in the form of a hollow square about their King, whose form rises in majesty high above saint

and angel, whose countenance beams upon them full of benignant love. ... Upon the heads of the overcomers, Jesus with His own right hand places the crown of glory. For each there is a crown, bearing his own ‘new name’ (Revelation 2:17), and the inscription, ‘Holiness to the Lord.’ In every hand are placed the victor’s palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the harp strings with skillful touch, awaking sweet music in rich, melodious strains. Rapture unutterable thrills every heart, and each voice is raised in grateful praise: ‘Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever’ (Revelation 1:5, 6).

“Before the ransomed throng is the holy city. Jesus opens wide the pearly gates, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. ... Then that voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, is heard, saying, ‘Your conflict is ended.’” *The Great Controversy*, 645, 646.

In this scene, we see that at the entrance to the city of God

1. **The saints receive their crown of victory**
2. **Jesus places the crown of glory on the heads of the overcomers**
3. **The voice of Jesus is then heard saying, “Your conflict is ended.”**
4. **It is at this time that the church militant joins the church triumphant in heaven**

“The work is soon to close. The members of the church militant who have proved faithful will become the church triumphant. In reviewing our past history, having travelled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As

I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment and with confidence in Christ as Leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history. We are now a strong people, if we will put our trust in the Lord; for we are handling the mighty truths of the word of God.

We have everything to be thankful for. If we walk in the light as it shines upon us from the living oracles of God, we shall have large responsibilities, corresponding to the great light given us of God." *The General Conference Daily Bulletin*, January 29, 1893.

1. **Only the faithful members of the church militant will join the church triumphant**
2. **The conditions are**
  - a) If we will put our trust in the Lord
  - b) If we walk in the light as it shines upon us from the living oracles of God

"The Church militant is not the Church triumphant. Unless the people of God wage a valiant warfare against every species of sin, they will never pass through the portals of the holy city. And we shall have no second trial. Now is the accepted time, the time in which we are to obtain the education that will enable us to live in the heavenly courts. The whole heavenly universe is watching with the deepest interest to see who in this primary school is practicing the lessons of Christ." *The Review and Herald*, December 31, 1901.

"God knows what is best for His people, and He will help them when they fall into difficulty. We wish we had heaven here below, but we have not. The church militant is not the church triumphant. The church militant must

wrestle and toil. She must strive against temptations and fight severe battles, because Satan is not dead." *The General Conference Bulletin*, April 22, 1901.

"Christians are engaged in a warfare. The church militant is not the church triumphant. The followers of Christ, marching toward Zion, must fight at every step." *The Signs of the Times*, June 10, 1903.

"The injunction to each one of us is, 'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth' (Colossians 3:2). The ardent desire of the

apostles was to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. Jesus lives; He is before the Father in the heavenly courts, making intercession for those who are still upon the earth in the turmoil and strife of life; for the church militant is not yet the church triumphant." *Ibid.*, July 24, 1893.

### **The church militant**

1. **Must wage a valiant warfare against sin**
  2. **If they don't, they will never enter the holy city to join the church triumphant**
  3. **Will "have no second trial"**
  4. **Must wrestle and toil**
  5. **Must strive against temptations**
  6. **Must fight severe battles**
  7. **Must fight at every step**
  8. **Must set her "affection on things above, not on things on the earth"**
- Christ's work as intercessor ceases at the close of probation (*The Great Controversy*, 613)

- The turmoil and strife of life ends after the time of Jacob's trouble, at the date to kill God's people (*Ibid.*, 635)
- The church militant becomes the church triumphant after the above events have taken place (*Ibid.*, 644–646)

### **Summary**

1. **The church militant is not the church triumphant**
2. **The church militant is on this earth**

*It is of great importance that we stand in these last days upon the platform of eternal truth.*

3. **The church triumphant is in heaven**
4. **The faithful members of the church militant will join the church triumphant when Jesus bestows on them their emblems of victory—the crown of glory, the victor's palm and the shining harp—at the gates to the holy city. **LM****

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# Abraham's True Children

## Key Text

“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham” (Galatians 3:7).

**Study Help:** *Our High Calling*, 75–79; *Prophets and Kings*, 367–372.

## Introduction

“Everyone who will humble himself as a little child, who will receive and obey the word of God with a child’s simplicity, will be among the elect of God.” *Our High Calling*, 77.

## Sunday

### 1 ABRAHAM'S TRUE CHILDREN

- a. Whom does the Bible regard the true children of Abraham as true Israelites? Romans 9:6–8; Galatians 3:7–9.

**Note:** “To Isaiah it was given to make very plain to Judah the truth that among the Israel of God were to be numbered many who were not descendants of Abraham after the flesh. This teaching was not in harmony with the theology of his age, yet he fearlessly proclaimed the messages given him of God and brought hope to many a longing heart reaching out after the spiritual blessings promised to the seed of Abraham.” *Prophets and Kings*, 367.

- b. How can the Gentiles, who are not children by literal descent, now be regarded as Abraham’s true seed? Romans 9:30; 4:11, 12, 16, 17.

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**Note:** “All who through Christ should become the children of faith were to be counted as Abraham’s seed; they were inheritors of the covenant promises; like Abraham, they were called to guard and to make known to the world the law of God and the gospel of His Son.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 476.

## Monday

### 2 ABRAHAM'S ADOPTED CHILDREN

- a. Through faith in Christ as Abraham’s promised seed, into what family are we adopted? Romans 8:14–16; Galatians 4:4–7.

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**Note:** “God wills that all men should be saved; for ample provision has been made, in giving His only begotten Son to pay man’s ransom. Those who perish will perish because they refuse to be adopted as children of God through Christ Jesus. The pride of man hinders him from accepting the provisions of salvation.” *Our High Calling*, 78.

- b. How does the sacrifice of Jesus Christ make one a child of God, even a child of faith, and to whom does this apply? Galatians 3:27–29.

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**Note:** “Men may perform great deeds in the eyes of the world; their achievements may be many and of a high order in the sight of men, but all the talent, all the skill, all the ability of the world will fail to transform the character and make a degraded child of sin a child of God, an heir of heaven. Men have no power to justify the soul, to sanctify the heart. ... The highest gift of heaven, even the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, is alone able to redeem the lost. ... The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s cross is a consideration that surpasses all the overwhelming power of sin; and when a sense of sin presses upon the heart of the sinner, and the burden seems intolerable, Jesus invites him to look to Him and live.” *The Signs of the Times*, May 2, 1892.

- c. Explain why Abraham’s children are from every tribe and nation instead of just from Israel. Revelation 7:9, 10; Genesis 17:4–6; Acts 10:34, 35.

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*Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed.*

**Note:** “Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of all the gifts of heaven and to exclude the rest of God’s family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 190.

**Tuesday**

**3 ABRAHAM’S FALSE CHILDREN**

- a. Why did most of Abraham’s literal descendants disqualify themselves from being true Israelites in the eyes of God? Romans 10:1–4.

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**Note:** “The Jews were, by their sins, separating themselves from God. They were unable to discern the deep spiritual significance of their symbolic service. In their self-righteousness they trusted to their own works, to the sacrifices and ordinances themselves, instead of relying upon the merits of Him to whom all these things pointed. Thus ‘going about to establish their own righteousness’ (Romans 10:3), they built themselves up in a self-sufficient formalism. Wanting the Spirit and grace of God, they tried to make up for the lack by a rigorous observance of religious ceremonies and rites. Not content with the ordinances which God Himself had appointed, they encumbered the divine commands with countless exactions of their own devising. The greater their distance from God, the more rigorous they were in the observance of these forms.” *Prophets and Kings*, 708, 709.

- b. What is the only way we can be justified before God? Galatians 3:11,12; 2:16. What change will be evident in the life of those who have been justified by faith?

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**Note:** “Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do.” *Faith and Works*, 20.

“The proud heart strives to earn salvation; but both our title to heaven and our fitness for it are found in the righteousness of Christ. The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow.” *The Desire of Ages*, 300.

“He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.” *Ibid.*, 172.

**Wednesday**

**4 ABRAHAM’S SERVANTS**

- a. Those who do not embrace the faith of Abraham in Christ as the promised seed, are regarded as servants, instead of sons or daughters. What will happen to them? Genesis 16:3–6; Galatians 4:30, 31.

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**Note:** “Noah and his household were within the ark, ‘and the Lord shut him in’ (Genesis 7:16). ... The massive door, which it was impossible for those within to close, was slowly swung to its place by unseen hands. Noah was shut in, and the rejecters of God’s mercy were shut out. The seal of Heaven was on that door; God had shut it, and God alone could open it. So when Christ shall cease His intercession for guilty men, before His coming in the clouds of heaven, the door of mercy will be shut. Then divine grace will no longer restrain the wicked, and Satan will have full control of those who have rejected mercy.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 98.

b. To whom and to what are they really servants? John 8:31-35, 39-44.

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**Note:** “ ‘To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey’ (Romans 6:16). If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. ‘No man can serve two masters’ (Matthew 6:24). If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ.” *The Review and Herald*, November 15, 1887.

c. Why will the rejecters of Christ never be able to enter into the land of Canaan that was promised to Abraham and his seed? Hebrews 3:17-19; Acts 4:10-12; Galatians 3:9.

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**Note:** “For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the Lord’s professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years.” *Evangelism*, 696.

**Thursday**

**5 A WARNING TO THE CHURCH**

a. What warning was given to the church at Galatia, and why? Galatians 3:1-6; 4:7-11.

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**Note:** “The redemption that was wrought out for us by our Lord on the cross of Calvary was to bring us to obedience to the law of God, making it possible, through His righteousness imputed to us, to keep the law of God. ...

“There is nothing so offensive to God as sin. Instead of making void the law of God by continuing in sin, every truly converted soul will be walking in the path of humble obedience to all of God’s commandments. They will search the Scriptures that they might know the truth. Who hath bewitched the impenitent, the transgressor, that sin is chosen rather than obedience? It is the power of Satan that came to Adam and Eve in Eden, the deceiving, bewitching power of the fallen angel.” *The Upward Look*, 209.

b. How do Abraham’s struggles with his own faith stand as a lesson to us? Genesis 15:3-6; 17:17, 18; Hebrews 4:1, 2. On the other hand, what does true faith give us? 1 John 5:4, 5.

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**Note:** “The Christian’s life should be one of faith, of victory, and joy in God. ... God is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the strength they need, and to give them the wisdom that their varied necessities demand. He will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him.” *The Faith I Live By*, 126.

**Friday**

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1 How important is faith to a Christian?
- 2 Why can a Christian call God his or her Father?
- 3 How can we avoid being cursed by God?
- 4 What is the difference between being Abraham’s servant and his son or daughter?
- 5 How can we be bewitched by the devil in corrupting our faith?

May 6 – 12

# The Everlasting Covenant

## Key Text

“I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee” (Genesis 17:7).

**Study Help:** *The Faith I Live By*, 76–78, 360–364.

## Introduction

“The covenant of grace is not a new truth, for it existed in the mind of God from all eternity. This is why it is called the everlasting covenant.” *The Signs of the Times*, August 24, 1891.

## Sunday

### I THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

- a. What shows that the covenant made to Abraham is the same as the one ratified by Christ at Calvary? Genesis 22:16; Hebrews 6:13–18; 9:16.

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**Note:** “The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the ‘second,’ or ‘new,’ covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant. That the new covenant was valid in the days of Abraham is evident from the fact that it was then confirmed both by the promise and by the oath of God—the ‘two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie’ (Hebrews 6:18).” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 371.

- b. What was promised under this covenant and how did Abraham respond? Genesis 17:1–8; 15:6; 26:5; compare Galatians 3:8, 16; Romans 4:20–22.

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**Note:** “To all men this covenant offered pardon and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God’s law.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 370.

“The law of God was the basis of this covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God’s law.” *Ibid.*, 371.

## Monday

### 2 AN EVERLASTING RELATIONSHIP

- a. In what way did God express the covenant relationship He established with Abraham and his seed? Leviticus 26:12. Compare with Genesis 17:7, 8; Deuteronomy 14:2; 29:13.

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- b. What did God give to Abraham as a seal of the covenant relationship, and why? Genesis 17:11; Romans 4:11.

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**Note:** “At this time the rite of circumcision was given to Abraham as ‘a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised’ (Romans 4:11). It was to be observed by the patriarch and his descendants as a token that they were devoted to the service of God and thus separated from idolaters, and that God accepted them as His peculiar treasure.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 138.

“It [circumcision] was a sign that those who received it were devoted to the service of God—a pledge that they would remain separate from idolatry and would obey the law of God.” *Ibid.*, 363.

- c. What essential experience must we have today in order to enter into the same “new” covenant relationship with God? Deuteronomy 10:16; Colossians 2:11; Hebrews 8:10; 2 Corinthians 6:16, 17.

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**Note:** “We are to believe that we are chosen of God, to be saved by the exercise of faith, through the grace of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit; and we are to praise and glorify God for such a marvelous manifestation of His unmerited favor. It is the love of God that draws the soul to Christ, to be graciously received, and presented to the Father. Through the work of the Spirit the divine relationship between God and the sinner is renewed. The Father says: ‘I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people. I will exercise forgiving love toward them and bestow upon them My joy. They shall be to Me a peculiar treasure; for this people whom I have formed for Myself shall show forth My praise’ (Hebrews 8:10; Exodus 19:5; Isaiah 43:21).” *The Signs of the Times*, January 2, 1893.

“The condition of being received into the Lord’s family is coming out from the world, separating from all its contaminating influences.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 57.

**Tuesday**

**3 AN EVERLASTING PRIESTHOOD**

- a. Why is Christ called a priest after Melchizedec and not after Aaron? Hebrews 5:5, 6; 7:11–16; Matthew 1:1, 2.

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**Note:** “The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This order of priesthood was not to pass to another, or be superseded by another.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 930.

- b. In what way does Melchisedec’s priesthood relate to Christ’s everlasting priesthood, and why is it a superior priesthood to Aaron’s? Compare Hebrews 7:1–3 with Hebrews 7:20–25; 6:18–20.

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**Note:** “It was Christ that spoke through Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Melchizedek was not Christ, but he was the voice of God in the world, the representative of the Father.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 409.

“The name of that helpless little babe ... was the hope of fallen humanity. The child for whom the redemption money had been paid was He who was to pay the ransom for the sins of the whole world. He was the true ‘high priest over the house of God,’ the head of ‘an unchangeable priesthood,’ the intercessor at ‘the right hand of the Majesty on high’ (Hebrews 10:21; 7:24; 1:3).” *The Desire of Ages*, 52, 55.

- c. What parallel is there in the meal that God’s priest offered to Abraham? Compare Genesis 14:18–20 with 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23–26.

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**Note:** “The bread and the wine represent the body and the blood of Christ. As the bread was broken, and the wine poured out, so on the cross Christ’s body was broken, and His blood shed to save us.

“By eating the bread and drinking the wine, we show that we believe this. We show that we repent of our sins, and that we receive Christ as our Saviour.” *The Story of Jesus*, 98.

**Wednesday**

**4 AN EVERLASTING POSSESSION**

- a. What everlasting land, which the earthly land was but a shadow, did God promise Abraham? Genesis 17:8; Hebrews 11:8–10; Revelation 21:2.

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**Note:** “The varied experience of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people in these days review with a humble heart and teachable spirit the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 293.

“Let all that is beautiful in our earthly home remind us of the crystal river and green fields, the waving trees and the living fountains, the shining city and the white-robed singers, of our heavenly home—that world of beauty which no artist can picture, no mortal tongue describe.” *The Faith I Live By*, 279.

- b. When and how will Abraham and his seed receive their eternal inheritance? **Matthew 25:31, 34; John 14:1-3, Daniel 7:27.**
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*By eating the bread and drinking the wine, we show that we repent of our sins, and that we receive Christ as our Saviour.*

**Note:** “The broken, uneven surface of the earth now looked like a level, extensive plain. God’s entire universe was clean, and the great controversy was forever ended. Wherever we looked, everything upon which the eye rested was beautiful and holy. And all the redeemed host, old and young, great and small, cast their glittering crowns at the feet of their Redeemer, and prostrated themselves in adoration before Him, and worshiped Him that liveth forever and ever. The beautiful new earth, with all its glory, was the eternal inheritance of the saints. The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was then given to the saints of the Most High, who were to possess it forever, even forever and ever.” *Early Writings*, 295.

“The full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world. ‘The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,’ is to be given to ‘the people of the saints of the Most High’ (Daniel 7:27). They shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them ‘from the foundation of the world’ (Matthew 25:34). And Christ will take to Himself His great power and will reign.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 108.

“There [in heaven], there is no disappointment, no sorrow, no sin, no one who shall say, ‘I am sick.’ There, there is no burial train, no mourning, no death, no parting, no broken hearts; and Jesus is there, peace is there. ... In His presence is fullness of joy, at His right hand there are pleasures forevermore!” *My Life Today*, 349.

- b. On what hope must we never give up? **Titus 2:11-13; Hebrews 10:35-37.**
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**Thursday**

**5 EVERLASTING LIFE**

- a. What is the greatest of all the promises given through the everlasting covenant? **Galatians 3:29; 1 John 5:11; Revelation 21:3, 4.**
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**Note:** “Be patient, Christian soldier. Yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come. The night of weary waiting, and watching, and mourning is nearly over. The reward will soon be given; the eternal day will dawn. There is no time to sleep now—no time to indulge in useless regrets. He who ventures to slumber now will miss precious opportunities of doing good. ... Every soul saved will be an additional star in the crown of Jesus, our adorable Redeemer.” *Christian Service*, 275.

**Friday**

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1 How can we have confidence in God’s Word?
- 2 How can we have the same covenant relationship with God that Abraham had?
- 3 Explain how we can have confidence in Christ’s everlasting priesthood.
- 4 What is the blessed hope of Abraham’s children?
- 5 Why is eternal life with God the Christian’s blessed hope?

**Note:** “The day is coming when the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. The nations of the saved will know no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving—the robe of Christ’s righteousness.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 506.

May 13 – 19

# Everlasting Grace

## Key Text

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

**Study Help:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 363–373; *Faith and Works*, 15–28.

## Introduction

“Grace means favor to one who is undeserving, to one who is lost. The fact that we are sinners, instead of shutting us away from the mercy and love of God, makes the exercise of His love to us a positive necessity in order that we may be saved.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 347.

## Sunday

### 1 THE NEW COVENANT OF PROMISE

a. In what way did God make the new covenant with Abraham—and what did God later do to confirm this covenant and why? Galatians 3:14–18; Hebrews 6:13–18.

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b. What had Abraham done of himself to deserve these covenant blessings—and what does that teach us about God’s attitude toward sinners? Genesis 12:1–3; 1 Corinthians 1:26–31; Romans 3:10–12.

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**Note:** “Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. ...

“It is His [God’s] glory to pardon the chief of sinners.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 161.

“The more unworthy the receiver, the more glorious the mercy of God.” *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, January 28, 1893.

## Monday

### 2 THE OLD COVENANT OF WORKS

a. Why did God make another covenant through Moses 430 years later—and why can’t it disannul the new covenant of promise? Deuteronomy 4:12, 13; Exodus 19:5–7; Galatians 3:17; 1 Peter 1:18–20.

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**Note:** “In their bondage the people [of Israel] had to a great extent lost the knowledge of God and of the principles of the Abrahamic covenant. ... God sought to reveal to them His power and His mercy, that they might be led to love and trust Him ... that they might realize their utter helplessness, their need of divine aid; and then He wrought deliverance for them. ...

“Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God’s law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 371.

“The ‘old’ covenant—was formed between God and Israel at Sinai, and was then ratified by the blood of a sacrifice. The Abrahamic covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ, and it is called the ‘second,’ or ‘new,’ covenant, because the blood by which it was sealed was shed after the blood of the first covenant.” *Ibid.*, 371, 372.

b. How did the people react to God’s requirement under the old covenant? Exodus 19:8. How might we fall into the same danger?

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**Note:** “The people did not realize the sinfulness of their own hearts, and that without Christ it was impossible for them to keep God’s law.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 371.

“Those who feel no need of the blood of Christ, who feel that without divine grace they can by their own works secure the approval of God, are making the same mistake as did

Cain. If they do not accept the cleansing blood, they are under condemnation.” Ibid., 73.

“Self-righteousness is the danger of this age; it separates the soul from Christ. Those who trust to their own righteousness cannot understand how salvation comes through Christ. They call sin righteousness and righteousness sin. They have no appreciation of the evil of transgression, no understanding of the terror of the law; for they do not respect God’s moral standard.” *Faith and Works*, 96.

**Tuesday**

**3 FROM OLD TO NEW**

- a. What was the moral law’s purpose in the old covenant and what purpose does it still serve today? Romans 7:7, 9–13, 20; 3:19–20.

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**Note:** “The law was given to convict them [men] of sin, and reveal their need of a Saviour.” *The Desire of Ages*, 308.

- b. In the new covenant, how does God change our attitude towards His law and what transformation will be seen in our life? Hebrews 8:10; Psalm 40:8; Ezekiel 36:26, 27; Colossians 3:9, 10.

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**Note:** “The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth ‘the fruits of the Spirit.’ Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 372.

“The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls.” *The Desire of Ages*, 407.

- c. How does the new covenant experience perfectly fulfill the spirit and intent of the law—and what was said of Abraham in this regard? Matthew 5:20–22, 27, 28, 31–48; Romans 13:8–10; Genesis 26:5.

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**Note:** “Obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, ‘I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them’ (Hebrews 10:16). And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life?” *Steps to Christ*, 60.

**Wednesday**

**4 BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH**

- a. What free gift did God bestow on Abraham because he chose to believe? Romans 4:22; Galatians 3:6.

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**Note:** “The thought that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God, is a precious thought. The enemy of God and man is not willing that this truth should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully, his power will be broken.” *Gospel Workers*, 161.

“The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God’s forgiving grace.” *The Faith I Live By*, 107.

- b. What did Abraham do to be declared righteous—and how alone are believers in like manner saved? Romans 4:1–5; Ephesians 2:8, 9.

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**Note:** “Our acceptance with God is sure only through His beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of His sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God’s free gift to the believer, given to him for Christ’s sake alone.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1122.

- c. Even though faith itself is a gift (see Romans 12:3, *last part*), what are we to do with it? John 3:16; Luke 7:1–9; Romans 10:17.

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**Note:** “Faith that enables us to receive God’s gifts is itself a gift, of which some measure is imparted to every human being. It grows as exercised in appropriating the word of God. In order to strengthen faith, we must often bring it in contact with the word.” *Education*, 253, 254.

“Men and women will not be saved unless they themselves exercise faith, and build on the true foundation, unless they allow God to re-create them by His Holy Spirit.” *The Signs of the Times*, February 14, 1900.

**Thursday**

**5 UNMERITED FAVOR**

- a. What unmerited favor, promised under the new covenant, has God shown in order to save humankind? Genesis 12:3; 1 John 4:14; Ephesians 2:4–8; Romans 5:15–18.

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**Note:** “Although by our disobedience we have merited God’s displeasure and condemnation, He has not forsaken us.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 10.

“Those who enter heaven will not scale its walls by their own righteousness, nor will its gates be opened to them for costly offerings of gold or silver, but they will gain an entrance to the many mansions of the Father’s house through the merits of the cross of Christ.” *Ibid.*, 179.

- b. How does a sinner access such a free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ? John 1:12; Romans 5:17; Hebrews 11:8.

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**Note:** “All who believe that Christ is the atoning sacrifice may come and receive pardon for their sins; for through the merit of Christ, communication has been opened between God and man. God can accept me as His child, and I can claim Him and rejoice in Him as my loving Father. We must center our hopes of heaven upon Christ alone, because He is our substitute and surety.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 363.

- c. What two things did God destroy by his marvellous grace? Romans 8:2; 1 John 3:5, 8; 2 Timothy 1:10.

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**Friday**

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1 Explain the word “promise” in light of God’s inability to lie.
- 2 Why was the old covenant given—and why was it devoid of faith?
- 3 How does God write His law of love within our hearts and minds?
- 4 Why can’t we claim credit for our good works in salvation?
- 5 Why will we never be able to boast of our faith?

May 20 – 26

# A Faith That Works

## Key Text

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar” (James 2:21)?

**Study Help:** *Faith and Works*, 47–54, 111–116.

## Introduction

“There are many who fail to understand the relation of faith and works. They say, ‘Only believe in Christ, and you are safe. You have nothing to do with keeping the law.’ But genuine faith will be manifest in obedience.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 153, 154.

## Sunday

### 1 A WORKING FAITH

- a. How do we know Abraham believed in God’s word? Genesis 22:1–5; James 2:21–24.

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**Note:** “Abraham believed God. How do we know that he believed? His works testified to the character of his faith, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.” *Reflecting Christ*, 79.

- b. What is the relationship between faith and works? James 2:17, 18; Matthew 7:16–20. What kind of fruit does a Christian bear?

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**Note:** “Good works can never purchase salvation, but they are an evidence of the faith that acts by love and purifies the soul.” *The Desire of Ages*, 314.

“Just as a good tree will bear good fruit, so will the tree that is actually planted in the Lord’s garden produce good fruit unto eternal life. Besetting sins are overcome; evil thoughts are not allowed in the mind; evil habits are purged from the

soul temple. ... An entire transformation has taken place.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1080.

## Monday

### 2 GOD’S WORKS

- a. How did Abraham show his faith in God? As he acted out his faith, what did Abraham reveal about his faith? James 2:22; Genesis 22:12.

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**Note:** “Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith buds and blossoms and bears a harvest of precious fruit. Where faith is, good works appear.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 398.

- b. Where do good works come from? Compare Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:12 with Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:13, 14.

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**Note:** “Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ. It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 397.

“If we are faithful in doing our part, in co-operating with Him, God will work through us the good pleasure of His will. But God cannot work through us if we make no effort. If we gain eternal life, we must work, and work earnestly. ... We must follow the example Christ has left us, submitting to Him in everything. Our will must be in harmony with His will.” *The Review and Herald*, June 11, 1901.

- c. Before the Christian can bring forth the good works of God, what must first take place? Ephesians 2:1-5; Galatians 2:20; Jeremiah 29:13.

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**Note:** “The only way we can secure the help of God is to put ourselves wholly in His hands, and trust Him to work for us. As we lay hold of Him by faith, He does the work. The believer can only trust. As God works, we can work, trusting in Him and doing His will.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1080.

Tuesday

3 A DEAD BELIEF

- a. What is the difference between a living faith and a dead belief? James 2:19, 20; Mark 7:6, 7.

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**Note:** “True faith, which relies wholly upon Christ, will be manifested by obedience to all the requirements of God. ... In all ages there have been those who claimed a right to the favor of God even while they were disregarding some of His commands. But the Scriptures declare that by works is ‘faith made perfect’; and that, without the works of obedience, faith ‘is dead’ (James 2:22, 17).” *The Faith I Live By*, 91.

“Many are content with lip service, and but few have a sincere, earnest, affectionate longing after God.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 534.

- b. Can someone with a dead belief produce good works? Matthew 23:27, 28; 7:21-23.

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**Note:** “The good man, from the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things. Why? Because Christ is an abiding presence in the soul. The sanctifying truth is a treasure-house

of wisdom to all who practice the truth. As a living spring it is springing up unto everlasting life. The one who has not Christ abiding in his heart will indulge in cheap talk, exaggerated statements, that make mischief. The tongue that utters perverse things, common things, slang phrases, that tongue needs to be treated with the hot coals of juniper.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 577.

“No man can have the spirit and the mind of Christ without being rendered better by it in all the relations and duties of life. Murmuring, complaining, and fretful passion are not the fruit of good principles.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 347.

- c. What will always be missing in the works of a dead believer? 1 John 4:20, 21; John 8:37-41.

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**Note:** “Obedience to the word produces fruit of the required quality—‘unfeigned love of the brethren’ (1 Peter 1:22). This love is heaven-born and leads to high motives and unselfish actions.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 520.

Wednesday

4 THE ROOT OR THE FRUIT?

- a. What happens when good works of obedience become the root of the Christian experience instead of the fruit of it? Matthew 23:5.

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**Note:** “The Pharisees sought distinction by their scrupulous ceremonialism and the ostentation of their worship and their charities. They proved their zeal for religion by making it the theme of discussion. Disputes between opposing sects were loud and long, and it was not unusual to hear on the streets the voice of angry controversy from learned doctors of the law. “In marked contrast to all this was the life of Jesus. In that life no noisy disputation, no ostentatious worship, no act to gain applause, was ever witnessed. Christ was hid in God, and God was revealed in the character of His Son.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 32.

b. What should always be at the root of the Christian's experience? Galatians 6:14.

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**Note:** "The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. ... Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. ... All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God. ...

"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." "Ellen G. White Comments," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1132, 1133.

c. How will the true Christian regard his or her own works in light of Christ's works? Philippians 3:4-9; Isaiah 6:5.

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**Note:** "The more they [God's followers] see of the character of Christ the more humble they become, and the lower their estimate of themselves. ... Self is lost sight of in their consciousness of their own unworthiness and of God's wonderful glory." *That I May Know Him*, 122.

**Thursday**

**5 FRUITFUL CHRISTIANS**

a. Why does God want to fill the Christian's life with good works borne from a changed heart? Matthew 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:9.

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**Note:** "It is His [God's] plan that all who are partakers of the great salvation shall be missionaries for Him. The piety of the Christian constitutes the standard by which worldlings judge the gospel. Trials patiently borne, blessings gratefully received, meekness, kindness, mercy, and love, habitually exhibited, are the lights that shine forth in the character before the world, revealing the contrast with the darkness that comes of the selfishness of the natural heart." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 134.

"When the grace of Christ is expressed in the words and works of the believers, light will shine forth to those who are in darkness; for while the lips are speaking to the praise of God, the hand will be stretched out in beneficence for the help of the perishing." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 276.

b. Throughout history, what knowledge does Christ always have regarding His church? Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15. Why is Jesus so interested in the works of His followers? James 2:21, 22, 24; Revelation 22:12.

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**Note:** "The eyes of the world are upon us, and we are observed by many of whom we have no knowledge. There are those who know something of the doctrines we claim to believe, and they are noting the effect of our faith upon our characters." *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 386.

"The world today is in crying need of a revelation of Christ Jesus in the person of His saints." *In Heavenly Places*, 313.

**Friday**

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- 1 Why does true faith always work?
- 2 How can we ensure that our works are always from God?
- 3 Why can an unconverted heart never produce unselfish love?
- 4 Explain the difference between the root and the fruit of our experience.
- 5 What is God and the world waiting to see in the Christian church?

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By Lynette Golia

**A**mong Americans, the sweet taste and juiciness of pineapples has made them the most popular tropical fruit next to bananas.

Pineapple was derived from piña, a name supplied by the Spanish, who thought the fruit resembled a pinecone. It probably originated in South America and from there it was transplanted to the Caribbean islands where it was discovered by Columbus in 1493. By 1600, early Europeans had carried the pineapple as far as China and the Philippines, and in the eighteenth century it was introduced

other nutrients, including thiamine, a B vitamin involved in energy production, folate, vitamin B6, magnesium, and manganese, important for antioxidant defense. Pineapple is also high in soluble fiber.

Like melons, pineapples have no built-in reserves of starch that convert to sugar—the starch is stored in the stem of the plant rather than in the fruit itself. Just before the fruit ripens completely, the starch con-

verts to sugar and enters the fruit. Once the fruit has been harvested, it won't get any sweeter, so most growers ripen pineapples on the plant to a point where they are almost fully ripe, with a high sugar content

and plenty of juice, then quickly ship to market. The sweet and tangy flavor make fresh pineapple a delicious dessert choice. Peel, quarter, and stick on a toothpick or skewer with pitted cherries, strawberry and banana slices, grapes. Combine in a salad with bananas, oranges, mangoes, papayas, kiwi, and strawberries. Use the juice to sweeten vegetables, particularly winter squashes or sweet potatoes. Enjoy in smoothies or ice creams. If fresh pineapple is not as sweet as hoped, salvage it by cutting it into thick slices and broil until hot.

When serving pineapple on its own, add mint, cardamom, fresh or ground ginger and a splash of fresh squeezed orange juice.

In European countries the pineapple was considered a rare and coveted treat. As it was an honor to be served pineapple, the fruit eventually became a universal symbol of hospitality. **LM**



## Pineapple

into the Hawaiian Islands, eventually becoming their principal fruit crop.

A pineapple is not one fruit but 100–200 fruitlets fused together around a central core. It can take nearly three years for a single pineapple to reach maturity. It is the only edible fruit of its kind, the Bromeliads.

Pineapple has been used for centuries for a variety of ailments. Modern research indicates that bromelain, an enzyme found in both the stem and fruit, aids in digestion and may have serious anti-inflammatory effects, reducing the symptoms of arthritis. In addition, pineapple contains substantial amounts of vitamin C. One cup of fresh pineapple chunks provides 25 mg, 40% of the daily adult requirement. It also offers useful amounts of

### Recipe

#### Pineapple Coconut Sorbet

*2 cups frozen pineapple chunks*

*1 Tbsp. maple syrup or raw honey*

*1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, or to taste*

*¼ cup coconut milk or cream, chilled*

*1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice, or to taste*

Add all ingredients to a blender and blend until smooth or chunky. Serve immediately in a bowl, or spoon on whole grain waffles or cooked cereal. Serve as soft or place in the freezer to harden.

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