

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

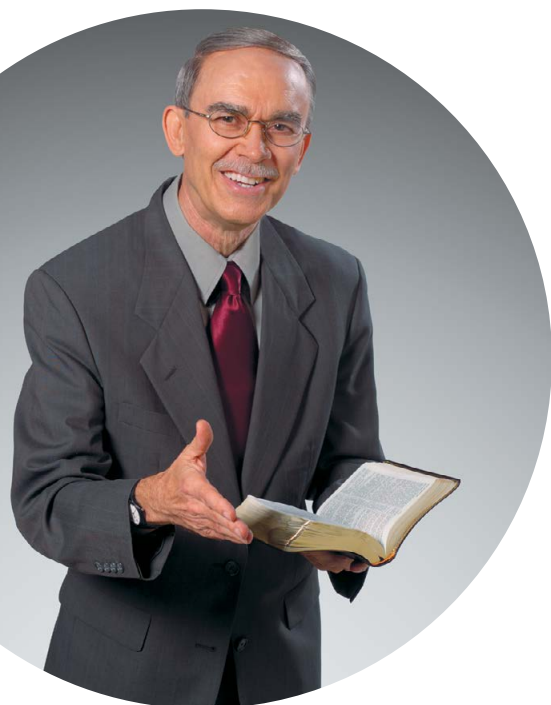
*God created man for
happiness, so it is natural
to want it.*

p. 2

*Antidote for
Death*

p. 7

give
thanks



From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

The Atonement

On the cross of Calvary Jesus paid the price for the sins of the whole world. However, He told the angels four thousand years before this, right after Adam and Eve sinned, that “few would receive Him as the Son of God.” *Early Writings*, 150. By His death on the cross, Christ began the work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete. The cross was the means of atonement for the human race and by His death on the cross, the conditions of atonement were fulfilled. Christ had won the kingdom, wresting it from Satan becoming heir of all things.

Today Jesus is making an atonement for us before the Father. A review of the earthly sanctuary service in the book of Leviticus reveals that the atonement has at least three phases:

- an atoning sacrifice (Leviticus 17:11)
- the priest must make atonement with this blood (Leviticus 4:18–20)
- the sinner must be cleansed (Leviticus 16:30)

This is stated in beautiful simple language by the apostle John: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Those who neglect this work of confession will eventually be “cut off” (see Leviticus 23:29, 30) when probation is over and the plan of salvation is complete.

“We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary should be our constant study.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 520.

It was to this silent, unnoticed close of human probation that Jesus looked forward to when He said, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from’” (Luke 13:24, 25). **LM**

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LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

Staff

Editor: John J. Grosboll
Managing Editor: Sandra Mulchin
Graphic Design: Martin Bernar
Contributing Editors: Judy Hallingstad, Lynette Golia

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Publisher

Steps to Life, Inc.
P. O. Box 782828
Wichita, KS 67278

facebook

Ph: 316-788-5559
historic@stepstolife.org
www.stepstolife.org

YouTube

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 (2 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. This magazine is designed to help believers 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.

In this Issue



2

Created for Happiness

Man was created for happiness but many have not yet found it looking in all the wrong places.

By John J. Grosboll



7

Antidote for Death

The life of Christ that gives life to the world is in His word. It cast out demons, stilled the sea, raised the dead.

By Brenda Douay



12

Who's in Charge?

A subject of conversation that often leads to a dispute but the Bible gives a clear answer.

By John Pearson



14

Thankful

God has every circumstance covered with a promise of hope.

By E. J. Waggoner

More in this Issue

16 Bible Puzzle

Moses and Pharaoh

18 Story Time

Captain John Smith

20 Pen of Inspiration

Restored Access to the Tree of Life

21 Keys to the Storehouse

Undimmed Flame

23 13th Sabbath Offering

Churches in Latin America

24 From the Mission Fields

Autumn Festival Witnessing Opportunities

26 Nature

The Mockingbird

27 Question & Answer

How Did Nero Die?

28 Health Nugget

The Pathway of Smell

30 Life Sketches

The Unknown God

33 Bible Study Guide

Behold, I Come Quickly

49 Recipe

Brussels Sprouts



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Created for Happiness

By John J. Grosboll

“Even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [a land that sins against God by persistent unfaithfulness], as I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.’”

Ezekiel 14:20

There is coming a time when no human being will be able to save you.

Children look to their parents for security, for deliverance from trouble, for help, for salvation, and that is not wrong.

In fact, Ellen White says that parents stand in the place of God to their young children (see *The Adventist Home*, 293).

But there is coming a time when your parents are not going to be able to help you, and it could be sooner than you realize.

Have you ever been in a situation where you wish more than anything else that you could just die? The Bible records a number of such instances. Numbers 11 describes how anxious Moses was being burdened by the complaints of the Israelites over the manna that God had supplied for them. He told God, "If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now" (verse 15, *first part*). Moses would rather die than face the situation with the people.

After the miraculous display on Mount Carmel and exhausted from his flight from Jezebel, Elijah also found himself in a situation where he no longer wanted to live. However, probably the most outstanding character of the Bible who felt this way was Job. The situation he found himself in was not just for an hour or a day, but for many days. It says in Job 3:20–22:

"Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, who long for death, but it does not come, and search for it more than hidden treasures; who rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?"

Zephaniah 2:1, 2, literal translation, says, "Gather yourselves together, yes, gather together, O undesirable nation, before the decree is issued, or the day passes like chaff, before the LORD's fierce anger comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you!"

One of the main ways that young people are being lost today is because of their desire for happiness which, in itself, is not wrong. The

framers of the Declara-

tion of Independence believed that every human being had inalienable rights. They had a right to life, they had a right to liberty, and they had a right to the pursuit of happiness.

The pursuit of happiness is not wrong, but unfortunately what most people think will make them happy doesn't work.

God created man for happiness so it is natural to want that. Those who will have eternal life will never again experience unhappiness. They will have happiness that will continue to increase for eternity.

Ellen White wrote, "He [God] desired that the earth should be filled with joy and peace. He created man for happiness, and He longs to fill human hearts with the peace of heaven. He desires that the families below shall be a symbol of the great family above." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 290.

God not only wants you to be happy as an individual, but He wants you to have a happy family. It seems as if happy families today are in the minority. The majority of people fill their lives with those things that

cannot satisfy. Let's look at just a few quick examples.

Do you know anybody who thinks that if they had a lot more money they would be happy? The Bible has a lot to say about this. The wise man says in Ecclesiastes 5:10: "He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver." Silver and gold have been used since ancient times for money. The one who loves money will never be satisfied because he thinks that he never has enough.

While pastoring in North Dakota, one of my church members shared the story about one of the local farmers there who owned many sections of land along the Red River and was one of the biggest farmers in that area. In winter, while things were quiet, farmers maintained their equipment, and this farmer had a building as big as a warehouse where his equipment was maintained and repaired and readied for the next growing season.

The farmer was one of the most successful and richest farmers in that entire region. However, one Sunday morning he did not come home for breakfast. A search began and in a very remote place on his farm, he was found. He had taken a pistol, put it to his head and pulled the trigger. He may have had wealth but he was devoid of happiness. He had found out that no amount of money could buy him happiness.

Yet somehow the masses of people continue to strive to find happiness with the pleasures of this life: television, movies, video games, concerts. The devil has something prepared for all tastes. The problem with all of those activities is that while they are fun, that fun is only temporary. Once finished, we immediately begin looking for the next source of fun.

The Bible tells us that Moses chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25, KJV).

The second chapter of Joel describes a time that the young people need to

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Children look to their parents for security, for deliverance from trouble, for help, for salvation.

become alarmed and a warning needs to go out to them. Joel 2:16 says, “Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and nursing babes; let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, and the bride from her dressing room.”

A time is coming when sin is going to be destroyed and all who are attached to those sins will also suffer with them. The devil deceives both the old and the young into believing that if you become a Christian and forsake these worldly pleasures, then you will not experience any happiness. The temptation to believe his lie is so powerful because for some the only pleasures they know are sinful pleasures. From their point of view, if those sinful but pleasurable things are taken away, there is nothing left that is enjoyable. That is a lie, of course.

There is one standard to enter heaven, not one for adults and another for young people. All who are engaging in sinful pleasures must be willing to leave them aside and substitute them with something wholesome.

Consider some of the following things that I have found to give me great pleasure that do not involve sin:

Gardening – Gardening is a lot of fun and I am often astonished when I meet young people who are 30 years old and have never grown a garden. They may live in an apartment but it is still possible to grow some things in a small way.

The book *The Apartment Farmer* describes a person who lived in New York City on the 30th floor in a high-rise building. He had

no yard but wanted to be a gardener. There was a small patio allowing him to grow a small variety of crops in containers: corn, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, and about every garden vegetable. If it is possible to grow a garden on the 30th floor of a high-rise building in New York City, you can do it just about anywhere.

When I was 9 years old, my mother gave me a 20 square foot patch in the garden to care for. She was a nurse working at the local hospital and also had a garden much bigger than mine. In my garden I planted several rows of green beans. The planting, watering, and weeding them was easy, but harvesting was not so easy. Those beans produced more beans than I’d ever seen in my life. After I picked them my mother would help me by taking them in apple boxes to the hospital to sell. At that time I was playing trumpet in the Yakima Junior Academy Band with a borrowed instrument. I really wanted a trumpet of my own but my parents couldn’t afford to buy one for me.

My mother had been the superintendent of nurses at the hospital so knew everyone in the hospital. One day while selling my beans she talked to a nurse who had found out that I wanted a trumpet and was willing to trade a really old cornet that still worked for a box of beans. How happy I was to be able to purchase my own cornet with the fruit of my own labor.

Gardening is God ordained and a righteous pleasure. Adam and Eve enjoyed their work in the Garden of Eden. It is something that the saved will do in heaven again.

Scripture songs – There are some people who get immense pleasure from music. Scripture songs are a way to enjoy and to learn the promises of God in His word. There is nothing evil or harmful about Scripture songs.

Hiking in nature – Though under the curse of sin, this world still has much beauty. When I was a boy, we always lived around mountains. As a young man I would hike into the Rocky Mountains. For the last 45 years, my wife and I have lived in the



*Baking
is fun!*

plains and I've learned to hike in the plains. There is so much to see when you take the time to get outside, and there are also great health benefits.

Games – All children should be taught to play wholesome games, not games that are sinful. How do you tell the difference between a game that is wholesome and a game that is not?

Wholesome games imitate life skills or adult work. Children learn by imitating. My 2-year old grandson as he pushes toy trucks and cars around starts making the noise, imitating the engine sounds which is something he has taught himself by playing. He also likes to try on my shoes, which are so big for him that as he starts to walk he steps right out of them.

War games are never constructive for children. There was one war in heaven that will never happen again. Those preparing for heaven have no need to learn about war.



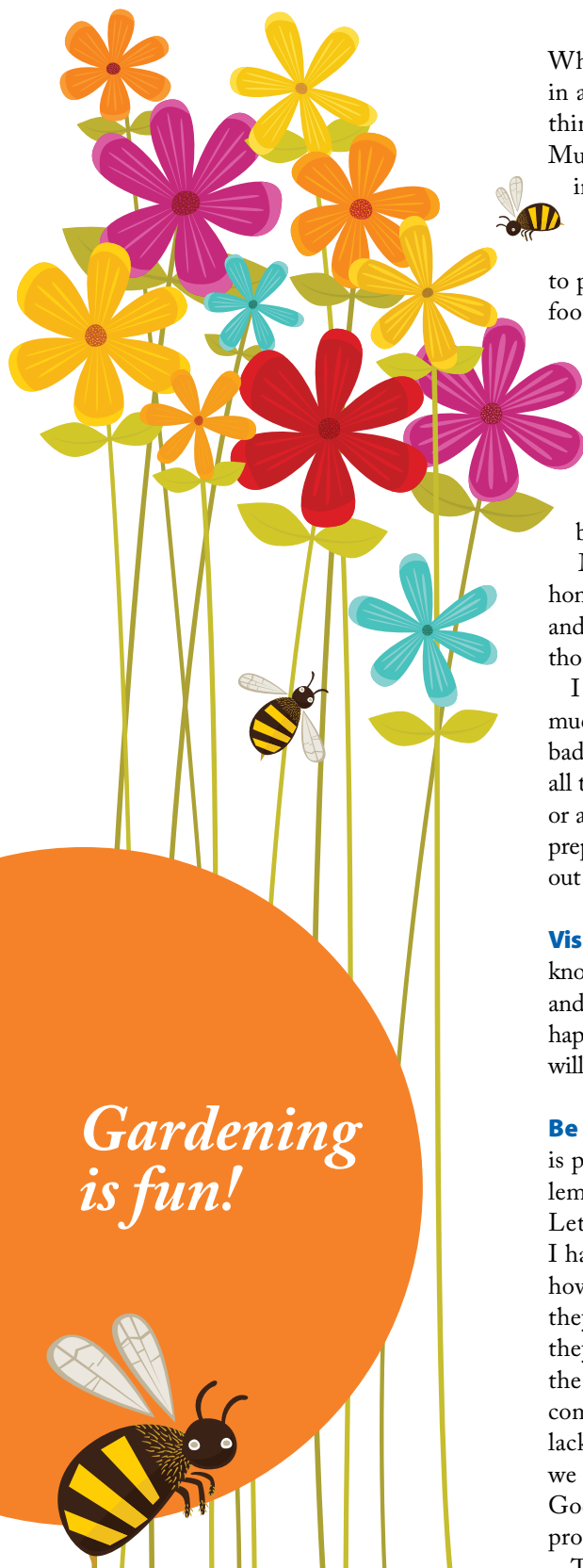
Telecommunications – We live in a telecommunications age and are exposed to television, video, and internet, and all these different kinds of things. I believe that children should have moving pictures to watch as long as they are of a positive informative nature like a documentary on nature, science or history. Any of those categories are educational, interesting and pleasurable.

Music – It is wholesome to learn to play an instrument. Once when I was a little over 20 years of age, I was sick and almost died. While recuperating, there were several weeks when I couldn't work. I needed something to do to fill my time. My father had an organ that I never before had opportunity to play. I could play piano a little so fiddled with the organ until I learned how to play it. The challenge gave me a lot of fun. For some people, learning to play a musical instrument can give a lot of pleasure.

Manufacture a garment

– God gave people the ability to be creative. After God had finished creating each day, He looked at what He had made and said that it was very good! So it can be for those who learn to create a garment. Years ago, mothers passed on to their children the art of sewing garments or at least how to sew on a button or mend a tear in a garment, but today, in first world countries, that art is seldom taught. We live in a throw-away society where there is much waste. Learning how to produce something gives great pleasure.

Cooking and baking – The dinner table was a time where the family was all together to share a home cooked meal and share the events of the day with each other. Life has become so hectic with everyone on a different schedule that many pick and run without sitting down to eat. With much dining out and takeaway food, there are many who have lost the art of simple food preparation and baking. Ellen



White wrote, "There is more religion in a good loaf of bread than many think." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 316. Much pleasure can be found in kneading a lump of dough and forming it into loaves for the family to enjoy or give to a neighbor. It takes skill to prepare a variety of wholesome foods, sweet breads, pies or cakes.

I decided when I was very young that cooking was a pleasurable activity; so I started learning to do it. In fact, when I was in college and lived at home, I worked to earn part of my college education by cooking and I enjoyed it.

My father once managed a nursing home that had over a hundred patients and I cooked two meals a day for all those patients. Cooking is fun.

I meet men who can't do anything much more than boil water. That's too bad. If their wives are gone from home, all they have to eat is milk and cereal, or a piece of bread. By not being able to prepare healthy, delicious food they miss out on a lot of pleasure.

Visit the elderly – Young people should know how to visit the elderly, the sick, and the shut-ins. By reaching out to add happiness to the life of someone else you will end up being happy yourself.

Be a practical problem-solver – It is pleasurable to be able to solve problems. Some people never learned that. Let me give you just a few examples. I have met people who do not know how to change a flat tire and when they find themselves in that situation, they have to stand beside the side of the road and wait for somebody to come and help them out. That person lacks self-sufficiency. The more skills we have, the more useful we can be in God's service. Knowing how to solve problems brings great pleasure.

These are just a few ideas concerning exchanging sinful pleasures for other

things that can give more joy and be a benefit to both self and others. When Jesus gave talents He expected that they be increased and not just lie idle. This takes time of which we are all given 24 hours each day. It would be beneficial for all to consider just how we spend our waking hours and whether there are many wasted hours spent on useless sinful pleasures that could be exchanged for righteous pleasure.

The Lord is speaking: "There is no love greater than Mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness will be found in loving Me." *The Desire of Ages*, 57.

Dear young friends, Do not be deceived into thinking that if I could just get, then I could have and that would make me happy. Be assured, as soon as you have what you desire, it will not be enough and you will certainly want something else. There have been many movie stars and successful men and women who have had all that this world could offer and then found that their life is hollow. They reach the same conclusion as the wealthy farmer, that life is not worth living.

If you have not yet discovered the happiness that is to be found in loving the Lord, you do not know what real happiness is. All the things that you think will make you happy will not give you perfect happiness unless you have this. If you do not know the Lord, if you do not love Him, you will never, ever be perfectly happy. Jesus promises "you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29).

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

Pastor John J. Grosboll is Director of *Steps to Life* and pastors the *Prairie Meadows Church* in Wichita, Kansas. He may be contacted by email at: historic@stepstolife.org, or by telephone at: 316-788-5559.



Antidote for Death

By Brenda Douay

“And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”

Deuteronomy 8:3

“But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Matthew 4:4

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

John 6:63, last part

This is a subject that is very dear to my soul, a subject that leaves me in awe and wonder, that gives joy and life, that vitalizes, that heals, that rejuvenates and enlivens. Although these blessings are for all, there are conditions. This subject is quite simply the word of God. This study is about the reality of what His word is and does for the human soul.

However, in order to understand the topic in its depth, its beauty, its power, and its importance, we must begin with a little background.

“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:13–15).

Ezekiel 18:4 and 20 says, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” “Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel” (Ezekiel 33:11)?

Ellen White wrote, “In order to determine how important are the interests involved in the conversion of the soul from error to truth, we must appreciate the value of immortality; we must realize how terrible are the pains of the second death.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 620.

The agonies of the second death are most clearly revealed in the sufferings of Christ as He bore the penalty in behalf of fallen man for the transgression of God’s law.

“The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and of the retribution which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).” *Bible Training School*, September 1, 1915.

“The sword of justice was unsheathed, and the wrath of God against iniquity rested upon man’s substitute, Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father.

“In the garden of Gethsemane Christ suffered in man’s stead, and the human

nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin, until from His pale and quivering lips was forced the agonizing cry, ‘O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me:’ but if there be no other way by which the salvation of man may be accomplished, then ‘not as I will, but as Thou wilt’ (Matthew 26:39). Human nature would then and there have died under the horror of the sense of sin, had not an angel from heaven strengthened Him to bear the agony. ... Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God’s law.

“It is a fearful thing for the unrepenting sinner to fall into the hands of the living God. This is proved by the history of the destruction of the old world by a flood, and by the record of the fire which fell from heaven and destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom. But never was this proved to so great an extent as in the agony of Christ, the Son of the infinite God, when He bore the wrath of God for a sinful world. It was in consequence of sin, the transgression of God’s law, that the garden of Gethsemane has become pre-eminently the place of suffering to a sinful world.

“No sorrow, no agony, can measure with that which was endured by the Son of God. Man has not been made a sin-bearer, and he will never know the horror of the curse of sin which the Saviour bore. No sorrow can bear any comparison with the sorrow of Him upon whom the wrath of God fell with overwhelming force. Human nature can endure but a limited amount of test and trial. The finite can only endure the finite measure, and human nature succumbs; but the nature of Christ had a greater capacity for suffering; for the human existed in the Divine nature, and created a capacity for suffering to endure that which resulted from the sins of a lost world. The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and of the retribution which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ to the repenting, believing sinner.” *Ibid*.

“

This second death is the destiny for every soul – without Christ.

“The suffering Son of God leaves His disciples, for the power of darkness rushes upon Him with an irresistible force which bows Him to the earth. ... His soul was pressed with such agony as no human being could endure and live. The sins of the world were upon Him. He felt that He was separated from His Father’s love; for upon Him rested the curse because of sin. Christ knew that it would be difficult for man to feel the grievousness of sin, and that close contact and familiarity with sin would so blunt his moral sensibility, that sin would not appear so dangerous to him, and so exceedingly offensive in the sight of God. He knew that but few would take pleasure in righteousness, and accept of that salvation which, at infinite cost, He made it possible for them to obtain. While this load of sin was upon Christ, unrealized, and unrepented of by man, doubts rent His soul in regard to His oneness with His Father. ...

“Human minds cannot conceive of the insupportable anguish which tortured the soul of our Redeemer. ...

“The sufferings of martyrs can bear no comparison with the sufferings of Christ. The divine presence was with them, in their physical sufferings. There was the hiding of the Father’s face from His dear Son. ... It was anguish of soul beyond the endurance of finite nature. It was woe condensed that brought from the trembling lips of the noble sufferer these words: ‘Now is My soul troubled’ (John 12:27). ‘O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt’ (Matthew 26:39).” *The Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1879.

This is a description of the pains of the second death, separation, eternal separation, from the Life-giver, the One alone in whom rests the joy, the happiness, the peace, the divine contentment of the soul of man. This second death is the destiny for every soul – without Christ. We must realize this before we can understand the gift of God’s



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word of God.*

word, the antidote for this agonizing, soul-wrenching, second death. I pray God make these words full of vitality and reality to each one.

We are told: “The life of Christ that gives life to the world is in His word. It was by His word that Jesus healed disease and cast out demons; by His word He stilled the sea, and raised the dead; and the people bore witness that His word was with power. He spoke the word of God, as He had spoken through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ, and the Saviour desired to fix the faith of His followers on the word. When His visible presence should be withdrawn, the word must be their source of power. Like their Master, they were to live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God’ (Matthew 4:4).

“As our physical life is sustained by food, so our spiritual life is sustained by the word of God. And every soul is to

receive life from God’s word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so we must receive the Word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another’s mind. We should carefully study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His word. We should take one verse, and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which God has put in that verse for us. We should dwell upon the thought until it becomes our own, and we know ‘what saith the Lord.’” *The Desire of Ages*, 390.

Steps to Christ, 90, adds a little to this thought. “One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind *and* its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained.” [Emphasis added.]

“The Lord has often made manifest [clear] in His providence [foresight] that

nothing less than revealed truth, the word of God, can reclaim man from sin or keep him from transgression. That Word, which reveals the guilt of sin, has a power upon the human heart to make man right and keep him so. The Lord has said that His word is to be studied and obeyed; it is to be brought into the practical life; that Word is as inflexible as the character of God—the same yesterday, today, and forever.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, 118, 119.

“The Bible contains all the principles that men need to understand in order to be fitted either for this life or for the life to come. And these principles may be understood by all. No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought. But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader.

Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort.

The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, ‘here a little, and there a little’ (Isaiah 28:10).” *Education*, 123.

Here inspiration takes a few paragraphs and compares and contrasts the teaching of the Bible with any and all other writings.

Also delineated in these paragraphs are the benefits gained from a study of the Bible from a merely *temporal* (that is, earth-bound) point of view. Then Inspiration continues by speaking of the Bible and its blessings from a spiritual perspective, that is, including the reckoning of eternity.

“And even greater is the power of the Bible in the development of the spiritual nature.

Man, created for fellowship with God, can only in such fellowship find his real life and development. Created to find in God his highest joy, he can find in nothing else that which can quiet the cravings of the heart, can satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. He who with sincere and teachable spirit studies God’s word, seeking to comprehend its truths, will be brought in touch with its Author; and, except by his own choice, there is no limit to the possibilities of his development.

“In its wide range of style and subjects the Bible has something to interest every mind and appeal to every heart. In its pages are found history the most ancient; biography the truest to life; principles of government for the control of the state, for the regulation of the household—principles that human wisdom has never equaled. It contains philosophy the most profound, poetry the sweetest and the most sublime, the most impassioned and the most pathetic. Immeasurably superior in value to the productions of any human author are the Bible writings, even when thus considered; but of infinitely wider scope, of infinitely greater value, are they when viewed in their relation to the grand central thought. Viewed in the light of this thought, every topic has a new significance. In the most simply stated truths are involved principles that are as high as heaven and that compass eternity.” *Ibid.*, 124, 125.

Oh, friends, what is the “grand central thought” of the Bible? The answer to this question is given in the very next paragraph of this passage.

“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. [That is, rescuing man from the terrifying, agonizing second death, alone, with no God, to the bliss of eternal life with the Life-giver!] From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, ‘They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads’ (Revelation 22:4), the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,—man’s uplifting,—the power

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of God, ‘which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Corinthians 15:57).

“He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has the key that will unlock to him the whole treasure house of God’s word.” Ibid., 125, 126.

As thrilling as these words of life are, we must go beyond the beautiful emotion that they inspire. If we are satisfied merely with these good feelings, these wonderful emotions elicited by the reading of God’s words, they will be to us as though we had not read them. It is not merely the study of these precious words that will give the boon of eternal life. There is more. Hear the words of our God. “The love of truth and righteousness must reign in the soul, [then the result is given], and a character will appear which heaven can approve.” *Lift Him Up*, 336.

“The thoughts must be upon heavenly things if you desire the Holy Spirit of God to impress truth upon the mind and soften and subdue the heart, inspiring ardent love of truth, of justice, of mercy, and of purity. The Spirit will bring to your remembrance the most precious jewels of thought. The whole

heart will be warm with the contemplation of Jesus and His love, His teachings will be cherished, and you will love to speak to others the comforting things that have been opened to you by the Spirit of God. This is the privilege of every son and daughter of God. Oh, if those who believe the truth would love and fear the Lord always, if they would abide in Christ, they would treasure up the most precious experience; they would have moral and intellectual power; the grace of God would be in them ‘like a well of water springing up into everlasting life’ (John 4:14), and would flow forth from them as streams of living water. When persecution comes, the influence of such souls will be manifest; they will delight to magnify the truth.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, 345.

Think of those truths with which we began our study, the seriousness of sin and the agonies of its consequences. And then consider the fact that Jesus, the divine Son of God, willingly, eagerly came to this earth to endure those agonies of the second death to shield and protect us from having to experience them ourselves!

Only as we truly comprehend the magnitude of the consequences of

sin can we rightly appreciate and love the word of God “which gives life to the world,” not just temporal life, but life eternal, perfect, pure, holy, happy, without the mar, the blight of sin. Oh, friends, if God’s word is not the love of your life, plead on your knees for heavenly wisdom and enlightenment, a change of heart. Plead to the Lord to put in your heart divine love for His word, for the principles of His Kingdom. Then act on that prayer. When other things allure and tempt, steadfastly refuse. Act as though God’s word is the most important thing in your life and the Lord will do the rest.

Friends, cherish, study, read, memorize these precious words as if your life, your eternal life, depends upon it—because it does. The life of Christ which gives life to the world, is in His word – God’s word – the “antidote for death.” Will it be yours? **TM**

Brenda Douay is a staff member at *Steps to Life*. She is director of *The Training Program for Ministers and Church Leaders*, a correspondence course that prepares individuals to serve as pastors or Bible workers. She may be contacted by email at: brendadouay@stepstolife.org.



Who's in Charge?

By John R. Pearson

Though it often leads to a dispute when made the subject of conversation, the Bible is very clear about who is in charge of this world.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus refers to Satan three times as “the ruler of this world.” (See John 12:31, 14:30, and 16:11.)

John also made it clear in his first epistle when he wrote, “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one” (1 John 5:19).

Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthians, also acknowledged the power of the enemy in this world: “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4).

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul used a different term, referring to Satan as “the prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2).

Later in that same letter, Paul expresses even more clearly the scope of Satan’s power and of the fallen angels who are in allegiance with him: “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).

Lest there be any doubt as to who the above texts refer to, the Revelator makes it clear in Revelation 12:9: “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

How did it come to be that Satan acquired the power to deceive the whole world and claim it as his dominion?

“Satan was determined to succeed in his temptation of the sinless Adam and Eve. And he could reach even this holy pair more successfully through the medium of appetite than in any other way. The fruit of the forbidden tree seemed pleasant to the eye and desirable to the taste. They ate and fell. They transgressed God’s just command and became sinners. Satan’s triumph was complete. He then had the vantage ground over the race. He flattered himself that, through his subtlety, he had thwarted the purpose of God in the creation of man.

“Satan made his exulting boasts to Christ and to loyal angels that he had succeeded in gaining a portion of the angels in heaven to unite with him in his daring rebellion; and now that he had succeeded in overcoming Adam and Eve, he claimed that their Eden home was his. He proudly boasted that the world which God had made was his dominion; that having conquered Adam, the monarch of the world, he had gained the race as his subjects, and should now possess Eden, making that his headquarters, and would there establish his

throne and be monarch of the world.” *Confrontation*, 15, 16.

“Mighty issues for the world were at stake in the conflict between the Prince of light and the leader of the kingdom of darkness. After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. He declared that men had chosen him as their sovereign. Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world.” *The Desire of Ages*, 114, 115.

“When Satan was thrust out of heaven, he determined to make the earth his kingdom. When he tempted and overcame Adam and Eve, he thought that he had gained possession of this world; ‘because,’ said he, ‘they have chosen me as their ruler.’ He claimed that it was impossible that forgiveness should be granted to the sinner, and therefore the fallen race were his rightful subjects, and the world was his.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 69.

Although our first parents did indeed succumb to Satan’s specious argument that “You will not surely die” (Genesis 3:4), God, in His incredible mercy and love for the pinnacle of His creation, provided a remedy for the repentant. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

This fact should not be taken to mean that all will be saved. Many places in the Bible make it clear that all individuals

have a role to play in their personal salvation. Ezekiel speaks directly against the assertion “once saved—always saved” in Ezekiel 18:24, when he wrote, “But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live?

All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.”

The Revelator also made clear the importance of overcoming “the accuser of the brethren” in his efforts to ruin the souls of all mankind when he wrote, “Then I

heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death’ ” (Revelation 12:10, 11).

So, the answer to the question “Who’s in charge” depends on you. Are you claiming the promises in God’s word and complying with the conditions on which those promises are based? Or are you loving your life to the death?

All Bible quotes NKJV unless otherwise noted. **LM**

John R. Pearson is the office manager and a board member of Steps to Life. He may be contacted by email at: johnpearson@stepstolife.org.

“
*The fruit of the forbidden
tree seemed pleasant to the eye
and desirable to the taste.*”





By E. J. Waggoner

“

He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Romans 8:32

In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

It is an unqualified command, and it is a command just as surely as are the words, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8).

“It is a very difficult commandment to obey,” do you say? No: “His commandments are not grievous.”

It is impossible, however, to obey any commandment of God, when it is regarded from the human side, merely as a commandment; we must know it as a promise, and then it becomes a delight.

Obedience to the commandment, “In everything give thanks,” not only brings, but is the highest happiness that human hearts can know.

What have we to be thankful for?—Everything. Listen: “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for

us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things” (Romans 8:32)? Now the very thought of God’s free gift must awaken love, “and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Romans 8:28). Since God cannot but give us all things in Christ, and in Him all things are for our good, how can we be otherwise than thankful in everything?

“How can I be thankful when I know that I am a sinner, and that I am lost?” Easily enough, when you know that “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). If you feel lost, that should remind you that the Lord Jesus Christ is good at finding.

“Ah, but you don’t know how great a sinner I am; you would feel depressed if you felt yourself to be the greatest sinner in the world.”

Not by any means; so much the more for joy. “Faithful is the saying, of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief; howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all longsuffering”

(1 Timothy 1:15, 16, R.V.). “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Romans 5:20). The greater the sin, the greater the saving grace bestowed. Then thank God.

“But I have so many temptations; how can I give thanks in the midst of them?”

“My brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:2–4). How can one help being thankful for that which makes him perfect, and brings him everything good?

“Oh, but I have more trials and trouble than anybody else in the world.”

Good! then you have more to be thankful for than anybody else in the world; for have you never read: “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ” (2 Corinthians 1:3–5). The greater the trial, the greater the comfort.

“I am so very poor and needy, I lack everything; how can I give thanks?” Your great need should simply remind you of the promise, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory” (Philippians 4:19). The more needy you are, the more you get. “I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me” (Psalm 40:17). “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him” (James 2:5)? Your poverty is your wealth.

“But I am so vacillating, so easily swayed; the slightest breath moves me, and I cannot stand.”

Then thank God doubly for that, “because greater is He that is in you, than



he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4); and if you are so easily swayed by the Holy Spirit. Only let the breath of Christ blow upon you, and it will always carry you in the right direction with the force of “a rushing mighty wind” (Acts 2:2).

The fact is, Christ has so completely identified Himself with humanity, that there is not any circumstance in life, no condition of the soul or body, no need or frailty, that does not in itself suggest the fullness of God in Him. Whatever poverty or temptation or suffering we have, whether as the direct result of our own folly, or from causes of which we are not personally responsible, we may know that they are the sufferings of Christ, and find the joy of deliverance in the knowledge. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16, *last part*). It seems to a great many that these words drive off the thought of effectual prayer further than ever, for they would not presume to say that they were righteous. But how does anyone become righteous? “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us”

(Titus 3:5). “Being justified freely by His grace,” we obtain righteousness, “even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Romans 3:22).

Therefore the man who is righteous becomes so by believing the glad tidings which God declares to all, “concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” He has learned how to take what God gives, and having learned how to take the greatest gift of all, he knows how simple a matter it is to receive all things else.

For to the man who receives Jesus Christ, everything else is given. It can not be otherwise. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things” (Romans 8:32)? And Jesus, speaking of food and drink and clothing, says, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

God does not force allegiance. He waits for it. The crown of our own individual love and loyalty must be offered by our own hands.

The Present Truth (UK) 80. February 2, 1899. **LM**

Moses and Pharaoh

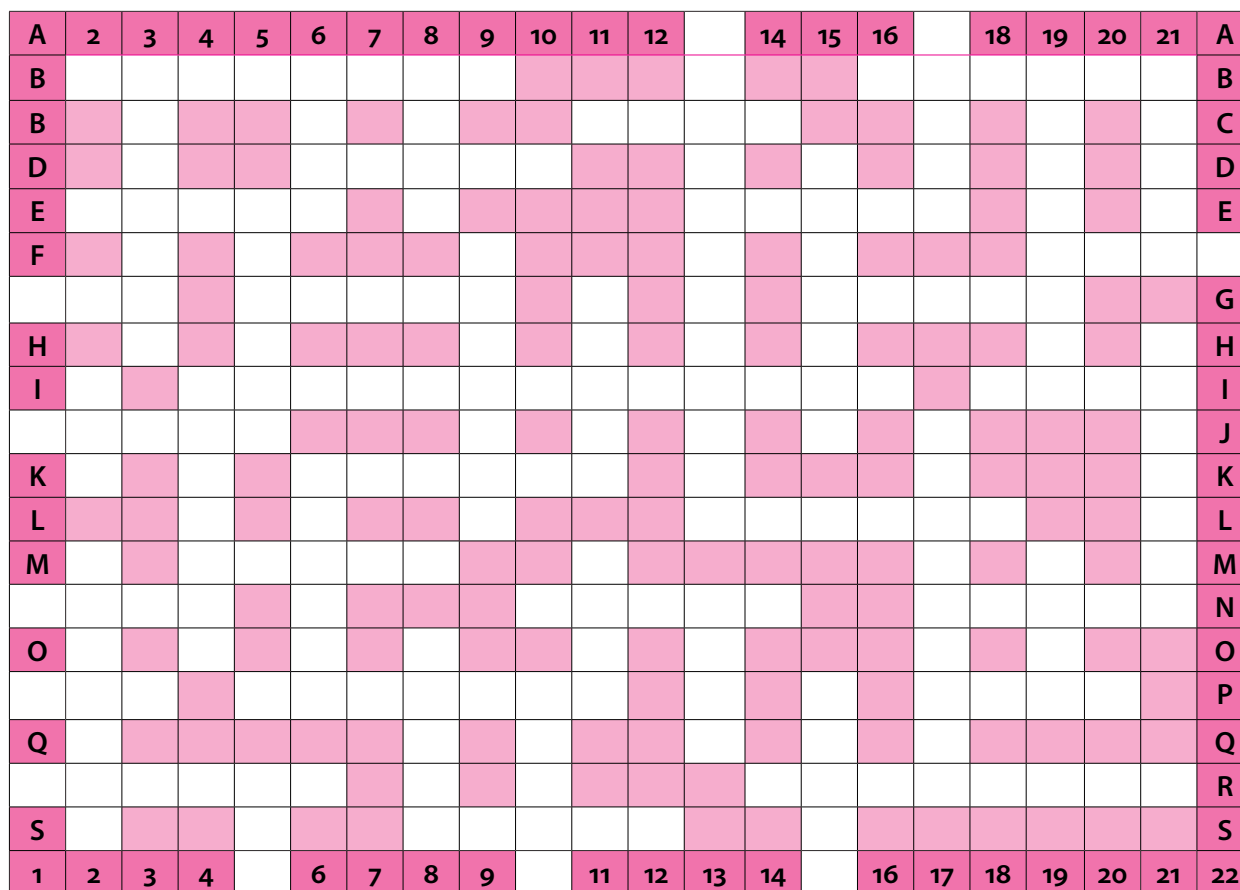
Clues – Exodus 5-11 KJV

Across:

B2	Beginning with the 4 th plague God put this between His people and the Egyptians	8:23
B16	Under the 10 th plague even the firstborn of these died	11:5
C11	Moses told Pharaoh not a single one of these would be left behind	10:26
D6	The 8 th plague did not leave anything _____ in all of Egypt	10:15
E2	The 7 th plague left two crops that were not yet _____	9:32
E13	The 1 st plague affected even water in containers of wood and _____	7:19
F19	God sent plagues on Pharaoh so he'd learn there was _____ like Him	9:14
G1	God ultimately drove all locusts into this	10:19
G5	The locusts were to _____ the face of the earth	10:5
G15	In the 1 st plague the people could not do this to water	7:21
I4	God continually requested this of Pharaoh (four words)	5:1
I18	Pharaoh to Moses: you just want the people to _____ from burdens	5:5
J1	In the 1 st plague all water in Egypt became this	7:20
K6	In the 5 th plague these animals were affected	9:3
L13	Moses originally asked Pharaoh to let the people go here	5:3
M4	Pharaoh's servants told him Moses was this to them	10:7
N1	Aaron's rod caused this to become lice for the 3 rd plague	8:17
N10	While Egypt was dark the Israelites had this	10:23
N17	The 9 th plague lasted this many days	10:22
P1	God predicted all Egypt would do this at the 10 th plague	11:6
P5	God told Moses that this was a new name for Himself	6:3
P17	Pharaoh thought he was too mighty to do this to God	5:2
R1	His magicians admitted to Pharaoh the _____ of God caused the 3 rd plague	8:19
R14	The time at which the 10 th plague hit Egypt	11:4
S8	God did this to the patriarchs of the Israelites	6:8

Down:

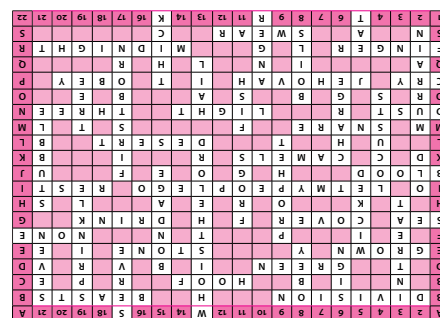
A13	Pharaoh's answer to Moses' first request from God (four words)	5:2
A17	God's message to Pharaoh: let My people _____ Me	9:13
B3	After the 3 rd plague Pharaoh asked Moses to _____ God for him	8:28, 29
B6	The 4 th plague affecting only the Egyptians was this	8:23
B19	6 th plague--God to Moses and Aaron: _____ furnace ashes toward heaven	9:8
B21	The 1 st plague lasted this many days	7:25
D15	God promised to rid His people out of Egyptian _____	6:6
E5	After the 6 th plague Pharaoh admitted all Egyptians were this	9:27
F9	God told Moses that Aaron would be his _____	7:1
G11	For the 2 nd plague these infested all Egypt	8:3-6
H21	The Hebrew slaves were forced to use _____ instead of straw for bricks	5:12
I2	Moses to Pharaoh: our young and _____ will go with us	10:9
I4	Pharaoh's stubborn refusal brought these to infest his kingdom - 8 th plague	10:14
J17	For Pharaoh's 10 th and final "lesson" all these were to die	11:1, 5
K6	God gave this to Moses and Aaron for His people and Pharaoh	6:13
M2	The 5 th plague was a very grievous _____ on all Egyptian livestock	9:3
M11	When all these died in the 1 st plague the river stank	7:21



- M19 The 7th plague broke every one of these
 N13 For the 7th plague this came with thunder and fire (lightning)
 O8 For the 6th plague these were upon all the Egyptians
 P10 After introducing the 10th plague Moses left Pharaoh in _____
 P15 The 9th plague was this kind of darkness
 R5 The locusts were to _____ whatever remained from the 7th plague

- 9:25
 9:23, 24
 9:11
 11:8
 10:22
 10:5

Answer Key:



Correction in 2018 September *Landmarks*, article **The Family of God**, which starts on page 2

Page 3 middle column reads: "Once man was cast out of the Garden of Eden, away from the protection of the evil one we found out what it is really like when you do not obey God and do His will."

Should read: "Once man was cast out of the Garden of Eden, **without** protection **against** the evil one, we found out what it is really like when you do not obey God and do His will."



Captain John Smith

Among the first people who came from England to live in the New World was a man named Captain John Smith. He and his people called the village which they built Jamestown, in honor of King James of England. This was in Virginia, in the year 1607. There were about one hundred men in the village. They had no families, or, if they had, they left them in England. Most of the men had come to find gold and get rich, and then return to England. Some wanted to see this wonderful new world that everywhere in Europe people were talking about.

About half of the men in this company were so-called “gentlemen.” They were not used to hard work. They did not want to chop wood. They did not know how to cultivate the soil. There were some who could refine gold, and these might have been quite useful if there had been any gold to refine. There was even one man who could make perfume. But these gold seekers did not care for perfume. Fortunately, there were among them a few carpenters, a blacksmith, a mason, a barber, and a tailor.

The first summer in Jamestown was a hard one. Some of the people lived in tents. Some dug caves in the hillside to live in. A few built log cabins. The food they had brought with them from England was soon gone, and the corn they had planted was not ready to be gathered. The men did not know how to take care of themselves, and many of them became sick. By September, half their number had died.

Captain John Smith was then made president of the colony. And he saved it from destruction. How did he do it? He set every man to work. He said, “Those who will not work, shall not eat.” He trained the tender “gentlemen” till they learned how to swing the ax in the forest. He taught them that the surest way to make a fortune is by hard, honest labor. He showed them how to build comfortable log huts for the winter. He made friends among the Indians, and from them he bought corn and other food.

A tribe of Indians, called the Powhatans, were the nearest neighbors of the white men. Usually they were friendly, but not always. Once during the winter, when Captain Smith was among them, they caught him and prepared to kill him. They were going to tie him to a tree to be burned.

All at once, he thought of a little compass that he had in his pocket. He pulled it out, and began to explain it to the Indians. He showed them the trembling needle. He told them it kept him



Jamestown Fort, Virginia, USA

from being lost in the woods. He said it always told him just which way to go to find Jamestown. They wondered how that could be.

Then he told them about the shape of the earth. He talked to them about the motions of the moon and the stars. He explained how the sun and the moon and the stars chase one another. They were so interested and delighted that they forgot to kill him.

At last he promised to give his gun to the one who would take a piece of paper to his people in Jamestown. On this piece of paper they saw him make a few marks, but they did not know what these marks meant. When the Indians who carried the paper to Jamestown found that it told his friends of his misfortune, they were astonished. They could not understand how the white man could make the paper talk. They thought he must be some kind of god, and they did not dare to kill him.

Then Captain Smith gave them some seeds. These they afterwards planted, expecting to reap a harvest for their next year. After that the Indians let the white

man go free, and he returned to Jamestown in safety.

A few years later, Captain Smith was so badly burned by an explosion that he had to go to England, where he could have a doctor's care. Here he stayed during the rest of his life. Captain John Smith will always be remembered as the man who saved from starvation and death the first English settlement in America.

True Education Reader, Fourth Grade, Pacific Press Publishing Association, © 1931, 52–55.

Six years after John Smith's exploration, the Pilgrims set out for the New World after fleeing persecution for their religious beliefs from the Church of England. They set sail on a long and dangerous voyage across the Atlantic in the leaky, top-heavy Mayflower. Landing at Plymouth, Massachusetts, the Pilgrims befriended the Indians and endured many hardships. After a successful harvest in the New World, they celebrated their first Thanksgiving feast with their Native American friends in the autumn of 1621. **LM**



Restored Access to the Tree of Life



Dear young friends, You live in a dark and wicked world, subject to sickness, pain and death. You may see many things that look beautiful; but how soon they fade away. You may have a dear friend that you love; but soon that one may be torn from you by sickness and death, and you will then feel lonesome.

You should have something substantial to fix your minds and affections upon, that can give real satisfaction and joy, and cheer your spirits in this dark world, and cause your sorrows to bring joy in the end.

There is a blight upon everything. The earth feels the curse that God pronounced upon it, because of the disobedience of our first parents. They broke the command of God in eating of the forbidden tree, after He had given them the privilege of eating of all the other trees in the garden. They listened to the tempter, ate of the forbidden tree, and were expelled from the beautiful garden of Eden.

The earth that was then so beautiful, was cursed, and the flaming sword was placed around the tree of life to guard it, lest man, in his sin, should approach that

tree, and eat of its immortal fruit, and by so doing, live in sin forever.

The tree of life was designed to perpetuate immortality. Adam and Eve could eat of that tree, and enjoy its rich immortal fruit, until they transgressed the command of God. Death was then pronounced upon them, and all that should ever live upon the earth. There was no way of escape for us; no provision that we might again have access to the tree of life, if we would repent. Whatever evils might befall us, there was then no other way than to bear them without hope of having right to the tree of life, to eat of its leaves and fruit, and be healed. We must ever suffer and groan beneath the curse.

But the Son of God, who was with the Father before the world was, took pity upon us in our lost condition, and offered to step in between us and the wrath of an offended God. Said Jesus, I will give My life for them. I will take the burden of the sins of the world upon me, and will make a way possible for these transgressors to find pardon, and enjoy Thy favor again, that they may repent and keep Thy commandments, and again have access to the tree of life. God

consented to give His only Son to die for lost man (John 3:16).

The lovely Jesus laid aside His glory, and came into this dark world, and took upon Himself our nature, to be wounded for our transgression, to be bruised for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5). O, what love for us.— He led a self-denying life, and had not where to lay His head (Matthew 8:20). He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, was despised and rejected, and finally was crucified for us (Isaiah 53:3).

But you must not think that you have nothing to do, because Christ died for you. You must repent of all your sins, and give your hearts to God, and then believe that the blood of Christ will cleanse you from all sin. Then, if you keep all the commandments of God, the Sabbath with the rest, you may through the merits of Christ, be brought back to the tree of life. This will be when Jesus comes to raise the righteous dead, and change the living saints. Then you will have right to the tree of life (Revelation 22:14), and eat of the leaves, and immortal fruit of the tree of life and live for ever in perfect happiness.

The Youth's Instructor, August 1852. **LM**

Undimmed Flame

An undimmed flame is not dull, faint, gloomy or blurred; it is bright! “Their light burned with undimmed flame through the night of watching. It helped to swell the illumination for the bridegroom’s honor. Shining out in the darkness, it helped to illuminate the way to the home of the bridegroom, to the marriage feast.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 414.

We are in that night of watching! What is that light burning with *undimmed flame*? What is that light that is shining on the path of many people, directing their eyes heavenward? It is God’s character shining forth through us! This is that “undimmed flame ... shining out in the darkness.” This is God’s character, His thoughts and feelings, shining through us. We are told that the “thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 310. This is that undimmed flame!

“So the followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit,

- God’s word is a light
- as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 414.

As God’s word becomes a transforming power in our lives, it becomes that light shining forth into the darkness! “By implanting in their hearts the

principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God.

- The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers.
- Thus they are to glorify God,
- to lighten the path to the Bridegroom’s home,
- to the city of God,
- to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Ibid.

Is your light burning with undimmed flame, lighting the path to the city of God? Has the light of God’s word become a transforming power in your life? Remember: “Through the Holy Spirit, God’s word is a light *as it* becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver.” Ibid. [Emphasis supplied.] Are you transformed?

The foolish virgins had light from God’s word, but had not the transforming power in their life. “We cannot keep Christ apart from our lives here, and yet be fitted for His companionship in heaven.” Ibid. Do you belong to Christ or the world? Do you shine or are you beclouded?

To His people God says, “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee” (Isaiah 60:1, 2). **LM**



Father: Let the Holy Spirit transform my life that I may shine forth. May the Holy Spirit, through Your Word, develop in me Your attributes. I do not want to end up a foolish virgin. Let the light of Thy character shine through me. Amen.

"The September *LandMarks* is beautiful in appearance & well done with a lot of helpful articles tastefully done with artwork."

—DM, Maine

"Really enjoy *LandMarks*. Great to read and study."

—DO, North Dakota

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—PH, Ohio

"The DVDs are my church and *LandMarks* is my Sabbath school and daily devotions. They're great!"

—MP, Indiana

November Sermon of the Month

The Occult Explosion

By Marshall Grosboll

For many years television has softened people toward the occult and now many are attracted to the supernatural.

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

November 2018

Dear Friend,

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven He commissioned His disciples to take the gospel to all the world:

"And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.' Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven'" (Acts 1:7-11). If we accept and do our part to fulfill this commission, then to us are given some of the most wonderful promises in inspired writings.

"Jesus read the future of His disciples. He saw one brought to the scaffold, one to the cross, one to exile among the lonely rocks of the sea, others to persecution and death. He encouraged them with the promise that in every trial He would be with them. That promise has lost none of its force. The Lord knows all about His faithful servants who for His sake are lying in prison or who are banished to lonely islands. He comforts them with His own presence. When for the truth's sake the believer stands at the bar of unrighteous tribunals, Christ stands by his side. All the reproaches that fall upon him, fall upon Christ. Christ is condemned over again in the person of His disciple. When one is incarcerated in prison walls, Christ ravishes the heart with His love. When one suffers death for His sake, Christ says, 'I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore ... and have the keys of hell and of death' (Revelation 1:18). The life that is sacrificed for Me is preserved unto eternal glory." *The Desire of Ages*, 669.

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath *Offering*

Churches in Latin America

By Pastor Domingo Nunez



Colombia

Coastal area of Santa Marta and the mountains of Guachaca. The group of worshipers in the coastal area are mostly low income farm workers. Financially, the resources of these people are very limited. The nearest places of worship are from 100–150 km (60–100 miles) away, making it difficult for them to gather together with fellow saints. The group of 60 in Guachaca are praying that they are successful in their witnessing and will soon be able to bring their neighbors to their own church.



Bolivia

Santa Cruz. For some time now the church here has been working hard to evangelize the people within the surrounding region. Most of the citizens are Catholic, Pentecostal, or evangelical. After several prophecy seminars in the area some families have come out of their previous churches and joined the Adventists. There is now a group of 55 people who would like to have their own church in which to worship. Their prayer is to receive funds to build a church so that as they teach new converts the Seventh-day Adventist message and membership increases they will have a place to worship.



Peru

The church in Cañete. Cañete is located about 160 kilometers from Lima, Peru. This group of 44 people is the result of evangelistic meetings that took place there 18 months ago. Forty people came out of the Catholic Church to become Seventh-day Adventists. Most of the people in this area are fishermen or carpenters of very low income. They need support and prayers to build a church to worship locally in Cañete. Presently, the nearest church for them to worship as Free Seventh-day Adventists is about 95 km (59 miles) away.



Autumn FESTIVAL *Witnessing Opportunities*

By John R. Pearson

As summer begins to fade and hints of fall begin to appear, the thoughts of many turn to harvest time—a time when many state and local fairs are scheduled to highlight the bounties that the earth has brought forth in the concluding growing season.

Kansas is no different. The Kansas State Fair begins the Friday after Labor Day and runs for ten days, providing an opportunity for fair-goers to see the bounty that God has provided in the fruits of the earth and from the talents of the works of the hands.

This year marked the 23rd year that Steps to Life has staffed a booth at the Kansas State Fair. It is an opportunity to share the truth not only with fellow Kansans, but with people from all over the United States and even visitors from other countries.





1. The work begins
2. Making progress
3. Done

Fall festivals occur on a local level as well. This year, the ministry will establish a presence in at least four local festivals in addition to the state fair, shedding the light of the gospel throughout southcentral Kansas.

A great deal of effort, both physical and spiritual, goes into preparation for these events, as we want to be faithful representatives of Jesus as we encounter souls for whom He died.

To quote from Pastor John's last letter to our supporters: "There are many fairs and large public gatherings for various entertainments where we can have booths and give out literature. These opportunities exist all over the United States. Even small churches can be involved in this way in reaching people from all parts of the world. Visitors from around the world come to these events. If your church is too small to finance a booth at a large state fair, there is almost certainly a small fair in some city or county near you where your church could be represented."

Inspiration also addresses these opportunities:

"We should improve every such opportunity as that presented by the St. Louis Fair. At all such gatherings there

should be present men whom God can use. Leaflets containing the light of present truth should be scattered among the people like the leaves of autumn. To many who attend these gatherings these leaflets would be as the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations." *Evangelism*, 36.

It is possible to divide those who pass our booth into three categories:

- Those who pass by and avoid even making eye-contact as they pass
- Those who smile and perhaps give a cursory look at the information in the booth
- Those who are willing to engage in conversation

This last group can be subdivided even further into four groups:

- Those who are simply friendly and engaging, regardless of the subject matter, but are not necessarily seeking the truth
- Those professed Christians who have "been saved" and "need" no further enlightenment
- Those who, once they discern that we are Seventh-day Adventists, want to

argue, even sometimes forcibly, the erroneous doctrine that the law was nailed to the cross, fulfilled by Jesus, done away with, or some other wind of false doctrine

- Those who are earnestly open-hearted and who are seeking to know and do the will of God

You can probably surmise that this latter group is by far the smallest. Nevertheless, our instruction is to cast the seed and leave it to the Holy Spirit to provide the increase.

We make of you now a two-fold request:

1. Pray for the success of these kinds of outreach efforts—not only ours, but those throughout the world where faithful saints are attempting to spread the gospel message.
2. Pray about how you and/or your church can engage in similar activities.

Christ cannot and will not return until the three angels' messages have gone to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Are you doing your part to hasten the completion of that responsibility? [LM](#)



The Mockingbird

"This bird's famous song, with its varied repetitions and artful imitations, is heard all day during nesting season (and often all night as well). Very common in towns and cities, especially in southern areas, the Mockingbird often seeks insects on open lawns. When running in the open it may stop every few feet and partly spread its wings, flashing the white wing patches. Mockingbirds are bold in defense of their nests, attacking cats and even humans that venture too close." <https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/northern-mockingbird>

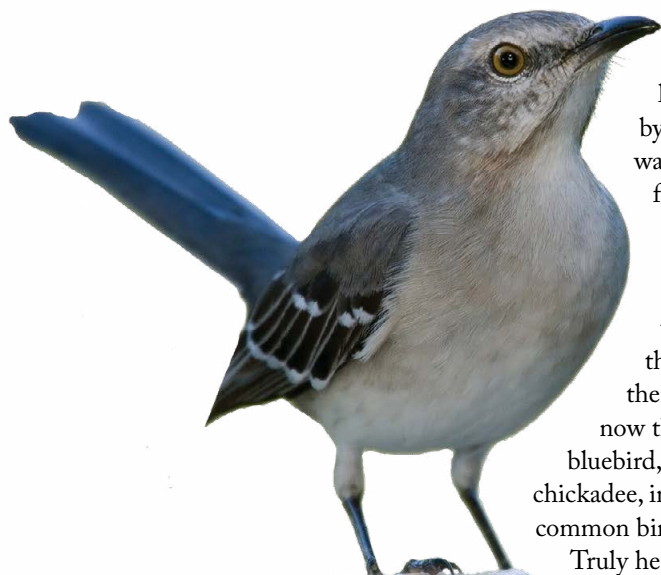
"While I am writing, I hear a mocking-bird warbling his morning song. He has selected a tree near where I am sitting, on the bank of a beautiful stream, whose running waters are murmuring over rocks and pebbles, while extending from its banks are green meadows, presenting beautiful scenery.

"I am pleasantly entertained by this morning warbler. He sings for a moment the robin's song, then, without stopping, changes his voice to that of the meadow lark, then the blackbird, now the quail, swallow, bluebird, whippoorwill, chickadee, in fact, nearly all common birds that he hears. Truly he is rightly named the mocking-bird.

"He mocks other birds so correctly that were it not that I could see him, I should conclude there was a group of birds together, each commencing his song when the other had closed.

"The mocking-bird is not handsome. He is small and slender, his color is dull brown, and were it not for his pretty singing, but little notice would be taken of him.

"God has made many different kinds of birds, and has given to each a peculiar song, but to this kind, he has either given no song at all, or has bestowed upon him the gift of imitating the songs of all other birds. Be this as it may, we find him a very interesting creature; and I could not but think how many lessons could be learned from him. First, of the kindness of our dear Heavenly Father in giving us pleasure in so many ways; for we are taught in the holy Bible that all the blessings this world affords were created for the comfort and enjoyment of man—animals to help him, birds with their beautiful songs to cheer his heart, and impart to him a lesson by their songs of praise to God, that he should also praise and worship his Maker for his goodness. Yet for all this and numerous other benefits, we have only given in exchange sin and wickedness; for God withholds not His goodness from us. Though we may have but few or no good graces of our own, may we not learn to imitate those of others, and finally as other birds are not ashamed of the humble mocking-bird singing their pretty songs, because so correctly imitated, may we not follow in the plain footsteps of our dear Saviour so nearly that He may never be ashamed of us. Let us all try to be pure and holy, that we may be saved at last." *The Youth's Instructor*, May 15, 1871. **LM**



Q:

How did Nero die?

A:

The apostle Paul was tried before Nero, emperor of Rome.

“For a moment, heaven was opened to the guilty and hardened Nero, and its peace and purity seemed desirable. That moment the invitation of mercy was extended even to him. But only for a moment was the thought of pardon welcomed. Then the command was issued that Paul be taken back to his dungeon; and as the door closed upon the messenger of God, the door of repentance closed forever against the emperor of Rome. No ray of light from heaven was ever again to penetrate the darkness that enveloped him. Soon he was to suffer the retributive judgments of God.

“Not long after this, Nero sailed on his infamous expedition to Greece, where he disgraced himself and his kingdom by contemptible and debasing frivolity. Returning to Rome with great pomp, he surrounded himself with his courtiers and engaged in scenes of revolting debauchery. In the midst of this revelry a voice of tumult in the streets was heard. A messenger dispatched to learn the cause, returned with the appalling news that Galba, at the head of an army, was marching rapidly upon Rome, that insurrection had already broken out in the city, and that the streets were filled with an enraged

mob, which, threatening death to the emperor and all his supporters, was rapidly approaching the palace.

“In this time of peril, Nero had not, like the faithful Paul, a powerful and compassionate God on whom to rely. Fearful of the suffering and possible torture he might be compelled to endure at the hands of the mob, the wretched tyrant thought to end his life by his own hand, but at the critical moment his courage failed. Completely unmanned, he fled ignominiously from the city and sought shelter at a countryseat a few miles distant, but to no avail. His hiding place was soon discovered, and as the pursuing horsemen drew near, he summoned a slave to his aid and inflicted on himself a mortal wound. Thus perished the tyrant Nero, at the early age of thirty-two.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 496, 497. **LM**





The Pathway to Smell

Do you appreciate your little nose?

“The nose is the smelling room of the body. It is more than a room—it is in reality a wonderful little house. It is three stories high and is made up of many curious rooms and winding stairs. Two doors, the nostrils, admit the air laden with odors to the waiting room or vestibule. Most of the air passes back through the hall on the first floor, some of it goes up stairs to the second floor and visits the various chambers, but the odors one and all make haste to reach the rooms on the third floor. In the walls of these upper rooms are thousands of delicate hair-like projections ready to be touched.

“These projections are like electric buttons in a house or a hotel. ... The very gentlest touch of an odor on one of these hairs or “smell bodies” in the smell chamber of the nose, rings a bell in your office in the brain and tells you that a rose is waiting to be enjoyed or that you are in disagreeable or dangerous air ... these little smell bodies, which are called olfactory cells, send different messages to the brain for different odors. ...

“Every fragrant odor is healthful or full of health. It makes us breathe more deeply and thus brings more life into the blood, more vigor to the brain.

“Bad odors have just the opposite effect. They warn us of danger in the air and keep us from breathing gases and fumes that would poison us. How often in passing a factory or some other place where there is a bad smell you hold your nose shut to keep out the odor. At the same time you are keeping out bad air.

“You cannot smell any one odor very long at a time. If you do not heed the warning of a bad smell soon the warning will no longer be given. If you bury your nose in a fragrant bouquet or hold it close to the top of a bottle of perfume almost at once you cease to smell anything at all. If you keep smelling and smelling of some sweet flower your very eagerness destroys your pleasure. The odor cannot be constantly smelled. In three minutes or in a shorter time it will be gone. This is because the power of the smell cells is limited. You have been trying to make them work too hard. They are so built that they cannot overdo. If you wait a few moments and let them rest they will go to work again and you can again smell the flower, the perfume, the gas.

“In this the smell cells are like the taste buds. After one has been eating for half an hour the food does not taste as it did at first. The taste buds as well as the smell cells become tired and need a rest. The first mouthful has the keenest taste. The first whiff of an odor has the keenest smell.

“Just as the taste buds in the mouth stand, like sentinels, at the beginning of the food passage to see that nothing dangerous enters, so the smell cells stand, like sentinels, at the beginning of the breathing passage, guarding all the air we breathe.

“The air often carries other enemies besides bad odors. Just inside the doors of the nose, in the nostrils, are several little stiff hairs, that are placed there to keep out these enemies. They keep out flies and other insects as well as the dust. If dust or dirt or insect passes these guards it is caught by the moist walls of the nose.

“In many places, especially in some large cities the air is so full of dust that it forces its way past these sentinels through the nose into the throat and lungs where it often causes disease.

“If the air is very cold or very hot the front doors of the nose are partly closed by certain little muscles whose duty it is to keep watch and not let in any more cold air or hot air than it is safe to breathe. When these little muscles are holding the door shut it makes our noses look thin and 'pinched.' Notice this on a cold frosty morning. It is not Jack Frost that is pinching your nose but the little muscles in the tip of your nose that are shutting the doors to keep out Jack Frost. ...

“Smell and Taste are good friends and work together. One helps the other. But smell helps taste more than taste helps smell.

“Sometimes you get up in the morning to find that you have a cold in the head. You try to breathe through your nose but cannot. You cannot smell. You sit down to breakfast but you cannot eat. The food does not taste good. You push back your plate and give up trying to eat. This is just what smell and taste were working for. Your cold will disappear sooner if you do not eat much, so they make eating uncomfortable and disagreeable. Every part of the body is all the time helping every other part to keep the living temple growing healthy and strong and beautiful.” Excerpts from *The Story of a Living Temple*, Frederick M. Rossiter, published by Forgotten Books 2012—originally published in 1902, 43–49.

Praise the Lord for the gift of a nose! LM



Every fragrant odor is healthful. It makes us breathe more deeply and thus brings more life into the blood, more vigor to the brain.

The Unknown God

By John J. Grosboll

Some people believe that everything has its origin in blind chance. Others believe that there exists an over-ruling providence, a living center of all government. Why it is that many intelligent people believe unproven theories?

While preaching the gospel on his missionary journey from Thessalonica to Berea, Paul found that the people in Berea were Bible students. He said, "These [people] were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). When people honestly desire to know what is right, they will check what they have been taught by the Scriptures and it will produce a result similar to that found in Berea. However, too many people today are just the opposite of the Bereans. They may not be able to controvert the doctrine that has been presented to them from the Bible, yet manifest the utmost reluctance to even investigate the evidence that has been presented in its favor.

Often the assumption is that even if it is the truth, it is really a matter of little consequence whether it is accepted as such, believing that if the faith and customs that they have was good enough for their fathers to follow, it is good enough for them. So why change? But the Lord has sent out His ambassadors with a message to the world, and will hold the people responsible

for the manner in which they treat the words of His servants. God will judge us according to the light that we have had the opportunity to receive. It is our duty to investigate, like the Bereans, to see whether it is true or not.

Jesus said, "That servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:47, 48).

So much has been committed to the people of our generation. The Bible is more accessible to people in first world countries than it has ever been before. Are you taking advantage of this opportunity? The prophet Hosea delivers a strong warning: "My people [the Lord's people] ... are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children" (Hosea 4:6).

If people today were like the Bereans and checked the Bible to find out the truth, there would be thousands of people loyal to God's government and His law, where now there is only one. Many who profess to love God have no desire to change from error to truth and they cling to the pleasing fables that the Bible predicted would abound in the last days.

Error blinds the mind and leads from God, but the truth is light to the mind and life to the soul. Error cannot sanctify.

Paul left Berea to escape from the Jews and went to Athens, a city that was the metropolis of heathen religions and philosophy. There he spent a period of time alone. This city was completely different from Lystra where Paul had been stoned. Lystra was home to an ignorant, credulous populace, but in Athens, there were people who were famous for their intelligence and education. The city was adorned by the many statues of their gods and deified heroes from their history. There were poetry, paintings, architecture, and images all over town that represented the glory and popular worship of heathen deities.

The Bible says in Acts 17:16, 17, "Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there."

A tremendous amount of money and wealth had been expended in producing all of the sculptures, shrines, and the vast gallery of art. The average person's senses are taken in with pleasure at seeing such a spectacle of wealth—the beauty, the grandeur, and such beautiful displays of human workmanship. But when the apostle Paul looked on this city full of idols, he was

stirred with jealousy for God, whom he saw dishonored on every side.

The second commandment, Exodus 20:4–6, which is also the second longest commandment of the ten, strictly prohibits any kind of idolatry. God hates idolatry. In Revelation, the Lord pronounces that there are going to be certain people who will not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven but will be left on the outside. It says, “Outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie” (Revelation 22:15).

In Athens, the people were intellectually great, but they were given over to idolatry. Paul perceived that this human art deified vice and made falsehood attractive and understood that the joy and splendor of these riches would never give eternal life. To him, all earthly pomp and glory was valueless if you failed to receive eternal life. Jesus said, “What will it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul” (Mark 8:36, literal translation)? Looking at the magnificence of the city and costly displays, Paul saw the seductive influence over the minds of those who were lovers of art and science. Paul had a job to do; he understood that he had been given a life mission just as Christ has given a commission to all of His followers (see Matthew 28:19, 20). That mission is to bear the tidings of salvation to people who had no intelligent understanding of God and His plans.

Paul was not in Athens to gratify a desire to see new things or have new experiences. He was there on a mission from God, and was grieved as he saw idolatry abound everywhere and sought to reason with the people. Paul realized that the religion of Athens, of which they made great boast, was of no value, because it was destitute of the knowledge of the true God. Like much of the religions of today, their religion consisted of art worship, beautiful music, a round of dissipating amusement and festivities, and religious rituals, but lacked

the virtue of true goodness. Genuine religion of the heart and mind results in victory over the sinful nature, victory over sinful habits. (See Romans 6 and 8, John 8; 1 John 3.)

If your religion is merely intellectual and wanting in the realization of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in your life, it will not be able to raise you above the sinful desires of the sinful nature so that you can enjoy victory over sin and live in harmony with the law of God. Paul preached in Athens about the resurrection from the dead. With all their philosophy, they did not have any system of religion that could bring deliverance from death, and they knew it.

Paul gave one of the most scintillating and intellectually challenging discourses that you will find in all the Bible. He was in a very dangerous situation and knew that if he should make a direct attack on their religious beliefs, his life would be in danger. Paul used a very interesting technique here, and approached them with great tact as he exposed the futility of their religion. The Bible says, “Certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, ‘What does this babblers want to say?’ Others said, ‘He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,’ because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, ‘May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak? For you are bringing some strange

things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.’ For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing” (Acts 17:18–21).

Paul stood on the top of Mars Hill, at the most sacred place of the city, the Areopagus, and said to them, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious” (verse 22). This was true; the city had all kinds of idols and shrines, religious paintings, and sculptures everywhere. He continued, “... for as

I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you” (verse 23).

He told them that they were already worshiping the unknown God, one they did not know that they honored with an idol, and that it is the God they didn’t know that he was going to tell them about.

Who is this unknown God? Paul said, He is “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands” (verse 24). There were many temples in that city, but Paul told them that the God of whom he spoke made the heavens, the earth, and everything in it, and does not need a man-made temple to dwell in.

In fact, Paul said in verse 25, *first part*, “Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands,

“
*God will judge us
according to the light that
we have had the opportunity
to receive. It is our duty to
investigate.*”

as though He needed anything.” He’s not worshiped by objects of art or man-made sculptures or anything that can be made by our hands, “since He gives to all life, breath, and all things” (verse 25, *last part*).

Then Paul said in verse 26, concerning this God, “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.” This is a very interesting statement. As human beings, we are tempted to have racial prejudice, political prejudice, religious prejudice, and national prejudice, but the apostle Paul says, that God has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth. We are all related to every other human being by blood.

O, friend, the Bible does not teach that we are to look down on some other nationality, some other race, or people of some other religion. All are created in the image of God, all are made of one blood, and therefore we should look at all others as brothers.

He says, “He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us” (verses 26, 27, literal translation). He challenged them to consider their purpose, to seek and find this Lord, the One who’s made heaven and earth, the One who gives to all life, and breath, and all things; He can’t be worshiped by something made by human hands, as though He needed anything, because He is the One that gives all, gives life, and breath, and everything they have.

“For in Him we live and move and have our being” (verse 28, *first part*).

Paul showed them that he was familiar with their religion and their heathen authors when he said to them, “As also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring’ ” (verse 28, *last part*). He says, “Therefore, since we are

the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising” (verse 29). He showed them that these idols they were worshiping were actually useless, because they were controlled by human power. They could only move as human beings moved them showing that those who worshiped them were in every way superior to what they worshiped. He appealed to them that they should not think that the divine nature is something like this. Man was created in the image of God and was blessed with intellectual power, a perfect and symmetrical body, so we should not think that God can be likened to something that man can make.

Finally, this very interesting excuse was given for their ignorance of the true God. “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent” (verse 30). O, friend, have you ever thought through that text? God has overlooked the time in your past life when, maybe, you didn’t know any better, but when you find out the truth, the Lord says that you need to repent; you need to change your mind. Also, we know from this verse that there is no human being that is infallible, because an infallible being does not need to repent, but it says, “God commands all men everywhere to repent.”

Repentance is one of the first steps toward being saved. It is one of the first steps in the plan of salvation. When John the Baptist came, he preached to the people that they should repent. When Jesus began to preach, He said to the people, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 4:17). When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost he said, “Repent” (Acts 2:38).

When Peter preached to people who did not know the truth, he explained that there is a God in heaven who made everything and doesn’t need anything from us. We cannot do anything to add to His power or glory. He explained that in the time of their ignorance, God

overlooked, but now He commands all men everywhere to repent.

Paul said, “God ... now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained [Jesus Christ]. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30, 31).

God has appointed a day, a certain time in the future, when He is going to judge this whole world in righteousness.

O, friend, are you ready for the judgment? You will never be ready for the judgment unless you have repented of your sins. Have you surrendered your heart to the Lordship and sovereignty of Jesus Christ, or are you worshiping other gods? It may not be a god of gold or silver. It could be a philosophical god. Some people worship their own or other’s intellect, neglecting to worship the One who made it. There were few people who accepted the apostle Paul’s teaching and became Christians. The majority refused having too much confidence in their own philosophy.

The Bible says, “In the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe” (1 Corinthians 1:21).

O, friend, it is the same today as it has been in all ages. Those who think that they are very wise do not accept the wisdom that comes from God alone.

How is it with you? Are you wise in your own sight, or are you willing to accept the knowledge of God that He has revealed in His word? The choice is yours.

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

Pastor John J. Grosboll is Director of *Steps to Life* and pastors the *Prairie Meadows Church* in Wichita, Kansas. He may be contacted by email at: historic@stepstolife.org, or by telephone at: 316-788-5559.

November 25 – December 1

Born of God

Key Text

"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (1 John 5:18).

Study Help: *The Desire of Ages*, 167–177.

Introduction

"Those who know not what it is to have an experience in the things of God, who know not what it is to be justified by faith, who have not the witness of the Spirit that they are accepted of Jesus Christ, are in need of being born again." *Lift Him Up*, 124.

Sunday

THE INVITATION

- a. What invitation does Jesus give to all? Matthew 11:28–30.

Note: "It is a mistake to think that you must come to repentance before you can come to Jesus. Come to Christ just as you are, and contemplate His love until your hard heart is broken." *The Review and Herald*, September 3, 1901.

- b. What was Nicodemus impressed to do and why? John 3:1, 2

Note: "Nicodemus had heard the preaching of John the Baptist concerning repentance and baptism, and pointing the people to One who should baptize with the Holy Spirit. He himself had felt that there was a lack of spirituality among the Jews, that, to a great degree, they were controlled by bigotry and worldly

ambition. He had hoped for a better state of things at the Messiah's coming. Yet the heart-searching message of the Baptist had failed to work in him conviction of sin. He was a strict Pharisee, and prided himself on his good works. He was widely esteemed for his benevolence and his liberality in sustaining the temple service, and he felt secure of the favor of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 171.

Monday

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN

- a. According to Jesus, what must a person do before they can see the kingdom of heaven and why? John 3:3.

Note: "He [Nicodemus] was startled at the thought of a kingdom too pure for him to see in his present state." *The Desire of Ages*, 171.

"No man can of himself understand his errors. 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?' (Jeremiah 17:9). The lips may express a poverty of soul that the heart does not acknowledge. While speaking to God of poverty of spirit, the heart may be swelling with the conceit of its own superior humility and exalted righteousness. In one way only can a true knowledge of self be obtained. We must behold Christ. It is ignorance of Him that makes men so uplifted in their own righteousness. When we contemplate His purity and excellence, we shall see our own weakness and poverty and defects as they really are. We shall see ourselves lost and hopeless, clad in garments of self-righteousness, like every other sinner. We shall see that if we are ever saved, it will not be through our own goodness, but through God's infinite grace." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 159.

- b. How did Jesus explain this truth further to Nicodemus, and what did He mean by it? John 3:4–6.

Note: "Jesus continued: 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit' (John 3:6). By nature the heart is evil, and 'who can bring a clean thing out of

an unclean? not one' (Job 14:4). No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.' 'Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies' (Romans 8:7; Matthew 15:19). The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. 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." *The Desire of Ages*, 172.

Tuesday

TURNING AROUND

- a. What is promised to those who accept the gospel? Galatians 3:14.

- b. Why is it impossible of ourselves to turn from a sinful life? Romans 8:7.

Note: "It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.' 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' (Job 14:4; Romans 8:7). Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness.

"The Saviour said, 'Except a man be born from above,' unless he shall receive a new heart, new desires, purposes, and motives, leading to a new life, 'he cannot see the kingdom of God' (John 3:3, margin)." *Steps to Christ*, 18.

- c. While we cannot of ourselves change our sinful heart, what can we do? Joshua 24:15.

Note: "What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him." *Steps to Christ*, 47. [Emphasis author's.]

Wednesday

HOW CAN THESE THINGS BE?

- a. Who creates in us a new heart? John 3:7, 8.

Note: "The wind is heard among the branches of the trees, rustling the leaves and flowers; yet it is invisible, and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes. So with the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. It can no more be explained than can the movements of the wind. A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working upon the heart. Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ. These may be received through med-

itating upon Him, through reading the Scriptures, or through hearing the word from the living preacher. Suddenly, as the Spirit comes with more direct appeal, the soul gladly surrenders itself to Jesus. By many this is called sudden conversion; but it is the result of long wooing by the Spirit of God—a patient, protracted process.” *The Desire of Ages*, 172.

“The sinner may resist this love, may refuse to be drawn to Christ; but if he does not resist he will be drawn to Jesus; a knowledge of the plan of salvation will lead him to the foot of the cross in repentance for his sins, which have caused the sufferings of God’s dear Son.” *Steps to Christ*, 27.

- b. To be created or “born again” is to receive a new heart—new desires, purposes, and motives. What must we feed upon to be born again? 1 Peter 1:23; 2:2.

Note: “When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is ‘born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever’ (1 Peter 1:23). This new birth is the result of receiving Christ as the word of God. When by the Holy Spirit divine truths are impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to co-operate with God.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 520.

- c. What knowledge does God use to transform the mind of the believer? 2 Corinthians 4:6.

Thursday

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

- a. What must we realize for ourselves about Jesus in order to be changed? John 3:14, 15; 1:29.

Note: “Christ must be revealed to the sinner as the Saviour dying for the sins of the world; and as we behold the Lamb of God upon the cross of Calvary, the mystery of redemption begins to unfold to our minds and the goodness of God leads us to repentance. In dying for sinners, Christ manifested a love that is incomprehensible; and as the sinner beholds this love, it softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires contrition in the soul.” *Steps to Christ*, 26, 27.

- b. When we surrender ourselves to Christ, what will take place? Ezekiel 36:26, 27.

Note: “As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. Holiness finds that it has nothing more to require. God Himself is ‘the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus’ (Romans 3:26). And ‘whom He justified, them He also glorified’ (Romans 8:30).” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 163.

- c. When we are born again, in what alone will we glory? Galatians 6:14.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What essential experience will Christ give all who come to Him?
- 2 What must you realize about yourself if you are to be born again?
- 3 Why do we find it so hard to do the right thing?
- 4 What must you feed upon if you are to experience the new birth?
- 5 What does God promise to do when we surrender all to Christ?

December 2 – 8

Sanctification

Key Text

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:14–16).

Study Help: *The Acts of the Apostles*, 557–567.

Introduction

“The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous work. Day by day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to co-operate with Him by putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits.” *The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1906.

Sunday

HIS PEOPLE MUST BE HOLY

- a. What characteristic of God pervades heaven and must be in all who would enter His presence? 1 Peter 1:14–16.

Note: “The righteousness of God is absolute. This righteousness characterizes all His works, all His laws. As God is, so must His people be. The life of Christ is to be revealed in the lives of His followers. In all His public and private acts, in every word and deed, practical godliness was seen, and this godliness is to be seen in the lives of His disciples.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 198.

“He [God] cannot endure the presence of sin. It is the thing that His soul hates. ... Holiness is the foundation of God’s throne; sin is the opposite of holiness; sin crucified the Son of God. If men could see how hateful sin is, they would not tolerate it, nor educate themselves in it. They would reform in life and character. Secret faults would be overcome. If you are to be saints in heaven, you must first be saints upon the earth.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 145.

- b. What has been the purpose of God for man from the beginning? What do the Scriptures tell of the will of God for us? Ephesians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3.

Monday

IMPUTED AND IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. What steps are enumerated in order to reach the goal of Christian perfection? Hebrews 6:1; Philippians 3:13, 14; 2 Peter 1:5–10.

Note: “The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to ‘go on unto perfection,’ to grow up ‘unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ’ (Hebrews 6:1; Ephesians 4:13). Says the apostle Paul: ‘This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 3:13, 14). And Peter sets before us the steps by which Bible sanctification is to be attained: ‘Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance.’” *The Great Controversy*, 470.

“The way in which we are to work out our own salvation is plainly specified in the first chapter of Second Peter. Constantly we are to add grace to grace, and as we do this, God will work for us upon the plan of multiplication.” *The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1906.

Tuesday

THE WORK OF SANCTIFICATION

- a. While we have Christ’s righteousness imputed to us, how thoroughly is the work of sanctification to be carried out, and for what purpose? 1 Thessalonians 5:23.



The life of Christ is to be revealed in the lives of His followers. In all His public and private acts, in every word and deed, practical godliness was seen, and this godliness is to be seen in the lives of His disciples.

Note: “Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfillment of the covenant God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, His Son, and His Spirit in holy fellowship. Have you been born again? Have you become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then cooperate with the three great powers of heaven who are working in your behalf.” *Ellen G. White Comments, “The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary,” vol. 7, 908.*

“Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the sanctification of the truth, the believer becomes fitted for the courts of heaven; for Christ works within us, and His righteousness is upon us. Without this no soul will be entitled to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven unless qualified for its holy atmosphere by the influence of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ.” *Selected Messages, Book 1, 395.*

commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him’ (John 15:10; 8:29). The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.” *The Great Controversy, 469.*

“The sanctification set forth in the Scriptures embraces the entire being—spirit, soul, and body.” *Ibid., 473.*

- b. **What will be the experience of the truly converted believer? What has such a believer done when he or she responds to the call for repentance? 1 Corinthians 15:57.**
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Wednesday

BIBLE SANCTIFICATION

- a. **What is the goal of Bible sanctification? 1 Thessalonians 3:13.**
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Note: “By the word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is ‘holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12), a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s

Note: “The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, but he will maintain a constant warfare against it. Here is where Christ’s help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims: ‘Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Corinthians 15:57).” *The Great Controversy, 469, 470.*

“No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.” *The Desire of Ages, 555, 556.*

“None are living Christians unless they have a daily experience in the things of God and daily practice self-denial, cheerfully bearing the cross and following Christ. Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances



The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God, the Christian life has but just begun.

toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until he attains to perfection of Christian character, a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality." *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 505.

Thursday

THE PROOF OF SANCTIFICATION

- a. What is the experience of the heart in which the work of sanctification is accomplished? Psalm 119:14–16.

Note: "All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us." *The Desire of Ages*, 668.

- b. What is the evidence of this sanctification? 1 John 2:3–6.

Note: "Righteousness within is testified to by righteousness without. He who is righteous within is not hard-hearted and unsympathetic, but day by day he grows into the image of Christ, going on from strength to strength. He who is being sanctified by the truth will be self-controlled, and will follow in the footsteps of Christ until grace is lost in glory." *The Review and Herald*, June 4, 1895.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What does it mean to be holy?
- 2 Differentiate between imputed and imparted righteousness.
- 3 How is the work of sanctification accomplished?
- 4 What results from true sanctification?
- 5 What is evidence that the soul is sanctified?

December 9 – 15

Righteousness for Today

Key Text

“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7).

Study Help: *Faith and Works*, 91–94.

Introduction

“Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 312.

Sunday

WHY WE ALL NEED RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. To whom will righteousness be freely given? Matthew 5:6.

Note: “Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and ‘God is love’ (1 John 4:16). It is conformity to the law of God, for ‘all Thy commandments are righteousness’ (Psalm 119:172), and ‘love is the fulfilling of the law’ (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him.

“Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 18.

- b. Where are we to look in order to find righteousness? Isaiah 45:22–25.

Note: “In looking to ourselves for righteousness, by which to find acceptance with God, we look to the wrong place, ‘for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God’ (Romans 3:23). We are to look to Jesus; for ‘we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory’ (2 Corinthians 3:18). You are to find your completeness by beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” *Faith and Works*, 108.

Monday

CHRIST TO BE OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. How can we make the righteousness of Christ our own? Romans 3:24–26.

Note: “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.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, 1071.

“Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness.” *Faith and Works*, 102.

- b. How is righteousness received? Romans 4:3–5.

Note: “Without the grace of Christ, the sinner is in a hopeless condition; nothing can be done for him; but through divine grace, supernatural power is imparted to the man and works in mind and heart and character. It is through the impartation of the grace of Christ that sin is discerned in its hateful nature and finally driven from the soul temple. It is through grace that we are brought into fellowship with Christ, to be associated with Him in the work of salvation. Faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners; not that there is any virtue in faith whereby salvation is merited, but because faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin. Faith can present Christ’s perfect obedience

instead of the sinner's transgression and defection. When the sinner believes that Christ is his personal Saviour, then according to His unfailing promises, God pardons his sin and justifies him freely. The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his Substitute and Surety, has died for him, is his atonement and righteousness." *Faith and Works*, 100, 101.

"The best efforts that man in his own strength can make are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. ... Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ; for he is made a partaker of the divine nature, and thus divinity and humanity are combined." *Ibid.*, 93, 94.

Tuesday

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN DAILY LIVING

- a. What attitude should we have to those around us at home? Colossians 3:12, 13.

Note: "From every Christian home a holy light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in action. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy." *The Adventist Home*, 37.

"Mutual kindness and forbearance will make home a Paradise and attract holy angels into the family circle." *Ibid.*, 422.

"Cultivate sympathy for others. Let cheerfulness, kindness, and love pervade the home. This will increase a love for religious exercises, and duties large and small will be performed with a light heart." *Ibid.*, 433.

- b. What is a goal for every Christian? Matthew 5:14-16.

Note: "The first work of Christians is to be united in the family. Then the work is to extend to their neighbors nigh and afar off. Those who have received light are to let the light shine forth in clear rays. Their words, fragrant with the love of Christ, are to be a savor of life unto life.

"The more closely the members of a family are united in their work in the home, the more uplifting and helpful will be the influence that father and mother and sons and daughters will exert outside the home." *The Adventist Home*, 37.

Wednesday

BEING CHRISTLIKE AT CHURCH

- a. What attitude should we have toward others? Philippians 2:3.

Note: "It is not because we are righteous, but because we are dependent, faulty, erring, and helpless ourselves, that we must rely upon Christ's righteousness, and not upon our own." *In Heavenly Places*, 23.

- b. What special regard should we have for one another in the faith? Romans 12:10.

Note: "As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is 'the household of faith' (Galatians 6:10) to care for its needy and helpless ones. Upon no consideration are these to be passed by." *The Ministry of Healing*, 201.

"We must obtain that measure of the grace of Christ that will enable us to dwell together in love and unity in this life, else we can never dwell together in the life to come." *This Day With God*, 372.

"The closer we come to Christ, the nearer we shall be to one another. God is glorified as His people unite in harmonious action." *The Adventist Home*, 179.

- c. What is the evidence that we as church members have accepted Christ and are being sanctified? Ezekiel 20:12.

Note: “No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ. ...

“As the Jews departed from God, and failed to make the righteousness of Christ their own by faith, the Sabbath lost its significance to them.” *The Desire of Ages*, 283.

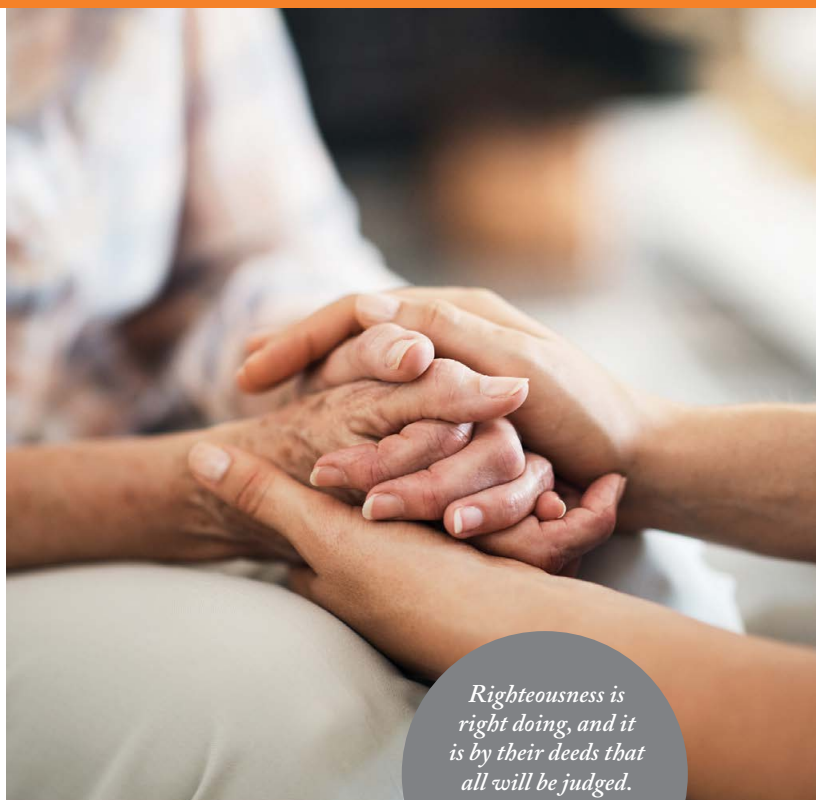
Thursday

BEING A TRUE MISSIONARY TO THE WORLD

- a. How can we reflect Christ and His righteousness to those around us? John 15:4, 5.

Note: “By our words and deeds we may reveal the power of the truth to transform the character. We may each reveal that we depend on Christ’s righteousness, not upon our own manufactured righteousness. We may abide in Christ as the branch abides in the vine, having such a living connection with Him that it is a pleasure to work as He worked, to be a help and blessing to our brethren. We can work the works of Christ, doing those things that are pleasing in His sight.” *The Ellen White 1888 Materials*, 137, 138.

- b. Which attribute of God should we seek to emulate in our dealings with others? Psalms 69:16.



Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do.

Note: “We should be self-forgetful, ever looking out for opportunities, even in little things, to show gratitude for the favors we have received of others, and watching for opportunities to cheer others and lighten and relieve their sorrows and burdens by acts of tender kindness and little deeds of love. These thoughtful courtesies that, commencing in our families, extend outside the family circle help make up the sum of life’s happiness; and the neglect of these little things makes up the sum of life’s bitterness and sorrow. ...

“It is impossible to be in union with Christ and yet be unkind to others and forgetful of their rights.” *The Adventist Home*, 428.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Where are we to look for our acceptance with God?
- 2 How does Jesus pardon the sinner? How complete is this pardon?
- 3 Where are we to begin our work as Christians, and what does this involve?
- 4 If we fail to live in love and unity with our brethren here, what hope do we have for our future life? How should we treat one another?
- 5 How can we show the love of God toward others? If we are unkind to others, what does this reveal?

December 16 – 22

Complete in Christ

Key Text

“And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10).

Study Help: *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 27–37.

Introduction

“Through faith in Christ, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.” *Education*, 257.

Sunday

CALLED TO BE PERFECT

- a. What has Jesus called us to be here in this world?
Matthew 5:48.

Note: “God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect’ (Matthew 5:48). This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.” *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

- b. In whose image are our lives to be perfectly conformed? Romans 8:29.

Note: “The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to

be perfect in their life. Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours.” *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

Monday

COMPLETE IN JESUS NOW

- a. What encouraging declaration is made after we have experienced forgiveness of sin and the new birth?
Colossians 2:10.

Note: “Perfection through our own good works we can never attain. The soul who sees Jesus by faith, repudiates his own righteousness. He sees himself as incomplete, his repentance insufficient, his strongest faith but feebleness, his most costly sacrifice as meager, and he sinks in humility at the foot of the cross. But a voice speaks to him from the oracles of God’s word. In amazement he hears the message, ‘Ye are complete in Him’ (Colossians 2:10). Now all is at rest in his soul. No longer must he strive to find some worthiness in himself, some meritorious deed by which to gain the favor of God.” *Faith and Works*, 107, 108.

- b. Having been justified by faith, in what condition are we to continue to stand? Colossians 4:12, last part.

Note: “The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom. Jesus has large blessings to bestow, rich gifts to distribute among men. He is the wonderful Counselor, infinite in wisdom and strength; and if we will acknowledge the power of His Spirit, and submit to be molded by it, we shall stand complete in Him. What a thought is this! In Christ ‘dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him’ (Colossians 2:9, 10).” *Our High Calling*, 152.

- c. As our Mediator, what does Jesus never cease to do for those who abide in Him by faith? Hebrews 7:25, *last part*.
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Note: “Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There He ceases not to present His people moment by moment, complete in Himself. But because we are thus represented before the Father, we are not to imagine that we are to presume upon His mercy and become careless, indifferent, and self-indulgent. Christ is not the minister of sin. We are complete in Him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we abide in Him by faith.” *Faith and Works*, 107.

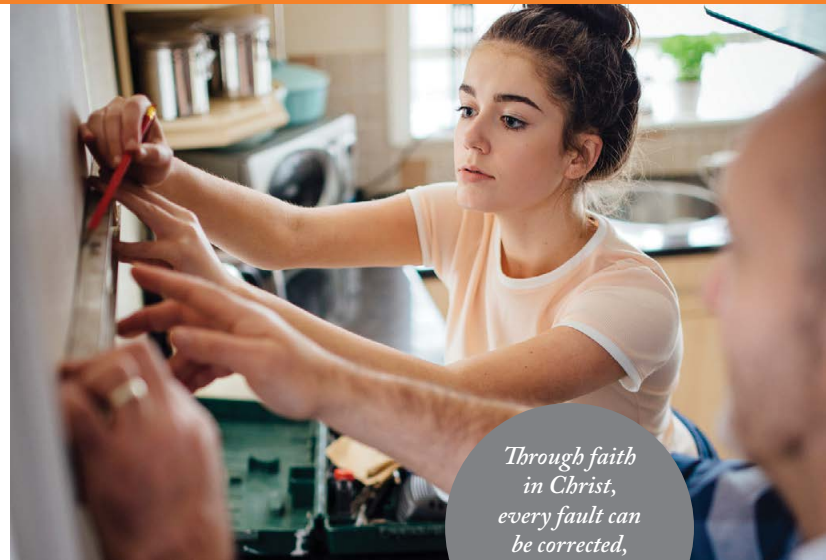
Tuesday

ACCEPTABLE OBEDIENCE TODAY

- a. What essential truth must we understand in our efforts to please God? Philippians 2:12, 13.
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Note: “He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. If a man could save himself by his own works, he might have something in himself in which to rejoice. The effort that man makes in his own strength to obtain salvation, is represented by the offering of Cain. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin; but that which is wrought through faith is acceptable to God. When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we may go on from strength to strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 364.

- b. Whose efforts and religious service failed to find acceptance with God, and why? Luke 18:11, 12.
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*Through faith
in Christ,
every fault can
be corrected,
every excellence
developed.*

- c. By Whose merits are we enabled to stand before God? Hebrews 7:25; Revelation 8:3, 4.
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Note: “The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God’s right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ’s propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 344.

Wednesday

BEING PERFECT TODAY

- a. Abiding in Christ, with full assurance of our acceptance with God, what are we to do now? Hebrews 6:1.
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Note: “We can never see our Lord in peace, unless our souls are spotless. We must bear the perfect image of Christ. Every thought must be brought into subjection to the will of Christ. As expressed by the great apostle, we must come ‘unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ’ (Ephesians 4:13). We shall never attain to this condition without earnest effort. We must strive daily against outward evil and inward sin, if we would reach the perfection of Christian character.” *Selected Messages*, Book 3, 148.

- b. In our best efforts as believers to obey God, wherein lies our sufficiency to do so? 2 Corinthians 3:5.

Note: “Christ is our pattern, the perfect and holy example that has been given us to follow. We can never equal the pattern; but we may imitate and resemble it according to our ability.” *Ye Shall Receive Power*, 369.

“When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man’s best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 382.

“Jesus loves His children, even if they err. ... He keeps His eye upon them, and when they do their best, calling upon God for His help, be assured the service will be accepted, although imperfect.” *Ibid.*, Book 3, 195, 196.

- c. As we go on to perfection, what does the Holy Spirit shed abroad in our heart? What will this lead us to do? Romans 5:5; 1 John 3:18.

Note: “The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 551.

“Where faith is, good works appear. The sick are visited, the poor are cared for, the fatherless and the widows are not neglected, the naked are clothed, the destitute are fed. Christ went about doing good, and when men are united with Him, they love the children of God, and meekness and truth guide their footsteps.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 398.

Thursday

OUR ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

- a. How complete is the forgiveness of sins offered to the repenting sinner? 1 John 1:9.

Note: “Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. Thank God that we are not dealing with impossibilities. We may claim sanctification. We may enjoy the favor of God. We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute. ... The Lord shows, to the repenting, believing one, that Christ accepts the surrender of the soul, to be molded and fashioned after His own likeness.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 32, 33.

- b. What assurance do we have of God’s ability to save us from the power of sin today? Jude 24; Philippians 1:6.

Note: “When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin. The glory, the fullness, the completeness of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance. The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ revealed in the life testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Saviour.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 420.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Explain how “be ye therefore perfect” is both a command and a promise.
- 2 Why is Jesus’s mediation so important for us today?
- 3 What is needed for all our works to be acceptable to God today?
- 4 What does being perfect today mean for believers on a practical level?
- 5 How can we have perfect assurance of our salvation today?

December 23 – 29

The Third Angel's Message in Verity

Key Text

"In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelation 14:5).

Study Help: *The Faith I Live By*, 209–215.

Introduction

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'" *The Review and Herald*, April 1, 1890.

Sunday

BASIC TRUTHS RESTORED

- a. What is the hope of the gospel, and how does this relate to the threefold message of Revelation 14:6–12? Colossians 1:23, 26–28.

Note: "Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 69.

- b. What important doctrine was restored following the Second Advent Movement? Isaiah 56:1, 2; 58:12.

Note: "The Lord has sent us messages for this time to establish Christianity upon an eternal basis, and all who believe present truth must stand, not in their own wisdom, but in God; and raise up the foundation of many generations. These will be

registered in the books of heaven as repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in. We are to maintain the truth because it is truth, in the face of the bitterest opposition. God is at work upon human minds; it is not man alone that is working. The great illuminating power is from Christ; the brightness of His example is to be kept before the people in every discourse." "Ellen G. White Comments," *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, 1152.

Monday

UNITY OF FAITH

- a. What gifts enable the sincere Advent believers to discern the special truths for these times? 1 Corinthians 12:28.

Note: "God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard to the opinion of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ?" *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 29, 30.

- b. How does church unity affect our witness for the truth? John 13:35.

Note: "It is the unity in the church that enables it to exert a conscious influence upon unbelievers and worldlings." *That I May Know Him*, 153.

"Our unity and love for one another are the credentials by which we testify to the world that God has sent His Son to save sinners." *This Day With God*, 120.

- c. What would have been possible if the believers had in full faith accepted the gift of the righteousness of Christ? Ephesians 4:13.

Note: “It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, which Jesus said He would send into the world, that changes our character into the image of Christ; and when this is accomplished, we reflect, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. That is, the character of the one who thus beholds Christ is so like His, that one looking at Him sees Christ’s own character shining out as from a mirror. Imperceptibly to ourselves, we are changed day by day from our own ways and will into the ways and will of Christ, into the loveliness of His character. Thus we grow up into Christ, and unconsciously reflect His image.” *The Review and Herald*, April 28, 1891.

Tuesday

THE JUDGMENT

- a. What great scene was shown to the prophet Daniel, and when did it begin? How is the ministry of Christ associated with it? Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14; 1 John 2:1; Daniel 8:14.

Note: “[Daniel 7:13, 14 quoted.] The coming of Christ here described is not His second coming to the earth. He comes to the Ancient of Days in heaven to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom, which will be given Him at the close of His work as a mediator. It is this coming, and not His second advent to the earth, that was foretold in prophecy to take place at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844. Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies and there appears in the presence of God to engage in the last acts of His ministration in behalf of man—to perform the work of investigative judgment and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.” *The Great Controversy*, 480.

- b. If we have accepted Christ’s imputed righteousness and lived by the power of His imparted righteousness, what verdict will be given in the judgment? Ecclesiastes 12:14; Matthew 12:36, 37; Revelation 22:11.

Note: “All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life. ...

“Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner in the day of God. He may have committed his evil deeds in the light of day or in the darkness of night; but they were open and manifest before Him with whom we have to do. Angels of God witnessed each sin and registered it in the unerring records. Sin may be concealed, denied, covered up from father, mother, wife, children, and associates; no one but the guilty actors may cherish the least suspicion of the wrong; but it is laid bare before the intelligences of heaven. ... Men may be deceived by those who are corrupt in heart, but God pierces all disguises and reads the inner life.” *The Great Controversy*, 483, 486.

Wednesday

THE BLOTTING OUT OF SIN

- a. What is revealed of the condition and character of those who have been sanctified during this sealing time? Revelation 14:1–5.

Note: “The spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb’s book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon’s roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter’s devices.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 475.

- b. What wonderful transaction takes place in the heavenly sanctuary during the judgment of the righteous dead and then the righteous living? Acts 3:19.
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Note: “I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God.” *Early Writings*, 71.

- c. In what spiritual condition must we be when Jesus comes? Hebrews 12:14; 2 Peter 3:14; 1 John 3:2.
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Note: “Be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless’ (2 Peter 3:14). This is the standard for which every Christian must strive, not in his own natural ability, but through the grace given him of Jesus Christ. Let us wrestle for the mastery over every sin, and be able to check every impatient, fretful expression.” *Our High Calling*, 235.

“Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father’s commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble.” *The Great Controversy*, 623.

Thursday

THE RIGHTEOUS OVERCOMERS

- a. What solemn warning is given to guard God’s people from the deceptions of the last-day churches? What responsibility rests on those with this knowledge? Revelation 14:9–11; Ezekiel 33:2–4.
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Note: “The third angel’s message is to be regarded as of the highest importance. It is a life and death question. The impression made by this message will be proportionate to the earnestness and solemnity with which it is proclaimed.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 980.

- b. What is said of those who are overcomers and are thus prepared to meet Jesus at His second coming? Revelation 14:12.
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Note: “God’s denominated people—those who on this earth have witnessed to their loyalty. Who are they? Those who have kept the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; those who have owned the Crucified One as their Saviour.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 981.

“It is not enough to believe *about* Christ; we must believe *in* Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.” *The Desire of Ages*, 347. [Emphasis author’s.]

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 In what sense are we to be “repairers of the breach”?
 - 2 Why is it so important to have unity in the church? How can we do this?
 - 3 To have our sins blotted out, what condition must we be?
 - 4 How can we reach the standard of character which God requires?
 - 5 Why is it not enough to believe about Christ? What does this mean?
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There are life-giving properties in the balsam of the pine, in the fragrance of the cedar and the fir.

Ellen White

Brussels Sprouts

My Mini-cabs

Even though these vegetables are called *sprouts*, actually they are a member of the cabbage family. I just call them mini-cabs because they look like little cabbages. These were first cultivated in Belgium and that is why they are called Brussels sprouts because Brussels is the capital of Belgium. AND when you read the following, you will want to always include these little mini-cabs into your diet also!

“Brussels sprouts contain a chemical called *sinigrin*, which suppresses the development of precancerous cells. It works by persuading the precancerous cells to commit suicide—a natural process called

apoptosis—and so powerful is the effect that it’s entirely possible that the occasional meal of Brussels sprouts could help reduce the incidence of colon cancer.

“Brussels sprouts are high in *isothiocyanates* and *sulforaphane*, which are compounds known to help fight cancer by inhibiting cell proliferation, neutralizing carcinogens, and helping to detoxify nasty environmental toxins. Sulforaphane, a particularly potent member of the isothiocyanate family, increases the production of certain enzymes known as ‘phase-2 enzymes,’ which can ‘disarm’ damaging free radicals and help fight carcinogens. It’s believed that phase-2

enzymes may reduce the risk of prostate cancer. According to research from the Department of Urology at Stanford University published in *Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers and Prevention*, sulforaphane is the most potent inducer of phase-2 enzymes of any phyto-2 chemical known to date. And in a review article from the 11th Annual Research Conference on Diet, Nutrition, and Cancer from the American Institute of Cancer Research, the authors stated that ‘isothiocyanates are well-known protectors against carcinogenesis.’” *The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth*, Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S., 27.

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH ONIONS AND GARLIC

Ingredients

½ lb. Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed, halved (or quartered)
1 yellow onion, diced or cut into strips
3 cloves garlic or more, minced

Process

- Place the onions and garlic in the bottom of a pan, and top with the Brussels sprouts.
- Cook uncovered on medium heat until the onions begin to sizzle and steam.
- Cover the pot; turn the stove down to very low and let cook for about 45-60 minutes.





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*If people only knew the value
of the products of the ground,
which the earth brings forth in
their season, more diligent efforts
would be made to cultivate the
soil. All should be acquainted
with the special value of fruits
and vegetables fresh from the
orchard and garden.*

Ellen White

