

HISTORIC

LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

According to Revelation 13:1–17, the United States of America is the beast that arises from the earth. We know this because: (1) after the first beast receives a deadly wound in 1798, it becomes a world power (Revelation 13:1–12), (2) it comes up out of the earth, in contrast to other beasts of Daniel and Revelation that come up from the sea (Revelation 17:15), (3) it was “to grow up perfectly like a plant.” As George Townsend said, “like a

The Mark of the Beast

silent seed we grew into an empire,” (4) it would influence the thinking of the world (Revelation 13:14), and (5) it was to be gentle and innocent in its appearance when it arose (Revelation 13:11).

However, the United States of America ultimately becomes an intolerant, persecuting power forcing all to receive the mark of the papacy (Revelation 13:12 and 15–17). Sunday worship is not commanded anywhere in the Bible, yet it will become the mark of the beast. The papacy has said that Sunday keeping is a mark of their authority: “Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act, and the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical authority in religious matters. ...

“... Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her – she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.” *The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, Third Edition.

The United States, on behalf of the Church of Rome, will force all to receive the mark of the papacy and any refusing to receive the mark will be unable to buy

or sell, and then a death decree will be enacted against them.

How will this happen? “Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejecters of Sunday of their error, affirming that the laws of the land should be obeyed as the law of God. They will lament the great wickedness in the world and second the testimony of religious teachers that the degraded state of morals is caused by the desecration of Sunday. Great will be the indignation excited against all who refuse to accept their testimony” *The Great Controversy*, 591.

Notice the sequence of events: (1) great wickedness will develop in the United States, (2) this wickedness will be so great that people will long for the violence and lawlessness to end, (3) supernatural spirits will say with human religious teachers that the degraded moral state is the result of the desecration of Sunday, (4) a Sunday Law will be passed and the spirits will say the laws of the land should be obeyed as the law of God, and (5) their testimony will turn the world against those who keep the law of God.

In the final judgment, every person will be judged over this issue (Revelation 14:9–12; Revelation 22:14, 15; Revelation 19 and 20). Which side will you be on? **LM**

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OF ADVENTISM

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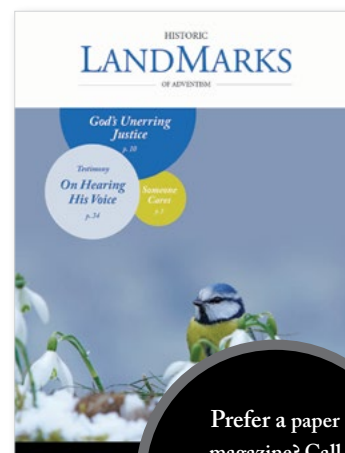
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Someone Cares

By Marshall Grosboll

Everyone needs someone who cares for them. Everyone needs a personal friend, but often when we need a friend the most, there is no one to fill the void.

Sometimes those whom we thought were friends fail us, and often even our truest friends and closest loved ones do not understand us.

In the heart of every person there are forebodings which the tongue cannot utter, feelings which cannot be expressed; experiences the heart has locked within; a burden of guilt that no one shares; uncertainties and perplexities no one comprehends; critical times of loss – divorce, death or rejection – when we need arms around us that are often not there.

There is a longing within every heart for a true friend, someone who has shared the same trials, someone to listen and to walk by our side. When we do not find such a one, the human heart grows discouraged and despondent. One of the main reasons for marriage is to satisfy this heart longing for companionship. And yet, too often, marriage may simply increase the loneliness. So, what is the solution?



We find the solution where all solutions are found – in the Bible. The solution for the lonely heart is Jesus, but if Jesus is the solution, why do Christians experience the same loneliness and heartache as those in the world? Why does church seem so empty? Why do Christian homes break up? Why do Christian young people get so desperate for friendship that they marry those who are not converted or well suited to themselves? The answer is that most Christians are Christians in name only and do not experience the solution for heartache and loneliness that Jesus offers.

The Bible gives a graphic example of someone in need of a true friend. It picks the loneliest situation in the world – the person who is lonely in marriage. Suppose that one is very lonely in their marriage and then meets someone whom they believe understands and cares for them much better than their spouse. The Bible gives the wrong solution and the right solution.

“Do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. ... So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man” (Romans 7:1–3).

Divorce and remarriage are the wrong solutions, for that is breaking the express commandment of God. We can never hope to find happiness, peace or true friendship by rebelling against God. But there is an implied solution even within the prohibition: “If, while her husband lives, she marries another man. ...” If her husband should die, then she could marry her “true” friend with God’s blessing. So the true solution is death of one of the partners. But which partner must die?



Marriage is to satisfy the heart's longing for companionship. And yet, often marriage may increase loneliness.

Paul presents a solution that is even stranger – we are to kill not our partner, but ourselves. “Therefore, my brethren, You also have become dead ... that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God” (Romans 7:4). [Emphasis supplied.]

The one caught in a bad and lonely marriage must die. What a solution! I must die in order to find a solution from my loneliness? The Bible presents no other solution to one’s personal and emotional needs.

Jesus said, “He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:38). A cross is a painful death. The next verse says, “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it” (verse 39).

The Bible’s way seems backward: losing life to save it, dying the only way to live. Only through the resurrecting power of God can one find life by dying. The non-Christian cannot understand this miracle, but the Christian finds a fulfilling life through death by faith in God’s power to raise him from the dead. It is the ultimate faith to submit to death, as Isaac did (see Genesis 22). When Christ raises you up from the dead, He forms a lasting and

intimate friendship with you that will never bring disappointment.

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him” (Romans 6:3–8).

Those who have died have been freed from sin. A dead person cannot steal. A dead person cannot lie. A dead person cannot covet. A dead person cannot feel sorry for himself. And so we are to die to self. We must give up that precious “self” that we have always tried to protect, defend, pity and exalt. In giving up self we are really fulfilled.

According to the world, God’s way seems foolish and backward. The Bible says, “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken

together, and running over will be put into your bosom" (Luke 6:38). In the world we get by keeping, but Christ said we get by giving! Only Christians can understand these strange solutions.

"For the message of the cross [dying in order to live] is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written:

'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.'

... Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians 1:18, 19, 25).

Christ's way is utter foolishness with the world.

How does one find happiness by giving up happiness? How does one find fulfillment by giving up his own needs? Peter once asked Jesus, "We have left everything and followed You, therefore what will we have?" Jesus answered, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time ... and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first" (Mark 10:29–31). Those who have given up self the most will receive the most. Those who have retained the most of self will receive the least.

It is only through death that one can find happiness, fulfillment or friendship. When Jesus foretold His death to His disciples, they wondered how He was going to establish His kingdom if He was going to die. Jesus told them that it was only through death that His kingdom could be established; for it is only through death that life is produced. Jesus illustrated it by a grain of wheat (see John 12:24, 25). As long as a grain of wheat remains dry and intact, it remains alone and lonely. It may be preserved for a hundred years in that secure state, but it will always be alone. But if it is put into the ground, it will get wet and split apart and apparently

be destroyed. Out of that death will spring forth a new life that will produce a hundred grains of wheat that are a part of the parent stalk. No longer is the wheat alone or lonely, but now it has a hundred companions that are a part of itself.

Like all of us, the disciples had to learn this hard lesson that in giving up self we gain life and in dying we find happiness and fulfillment. After a night in prayer and all-day teaching and healing, Jesus was very tired and at the end of the day the disciples took Jesus across Galilee by boat, at which time Jesus fell asleep as the disciples guided the boat. A great windstorm suddenly arose, and the disciples instinctively began to try to save their lives. Their first and natural thought was of themselves, not Jesus – they forgot all about Him. They did not say, "We must save Jesus; let us row harder." Instead, they tried with all their might to save self, but found themselves powerless against the terrible storm.

Finally, when all else failed, they remembered Jesus and waking Him they said, "Teacher, do You not care that We are perishing?" Then He [Jesus] arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful?' (Mark 4:38–40)? [Emphasis supplied.] They seemed more concerned about themselves than Jesus dying. Self was not yet dead in these disciples and in trying to preserve it, they almost lost it. Had they been thinking more about Jesus' safety they would never have been in the predicament of almost drowning for as soon as the storm arose, Jesus would have immediately calmed the waters.

It is in seeking the happiness of others that we ourselves are blessed. This is the basic principle of Christianity. Only by giving up what we have do we get what we are looking for.

The religious leaders in the New Testament tried hard to be righteous. They would do anything to be righteous. They made rules and regulations, offered long prayers, had tedious religious ceremonies, all for the purpose of reaching their goal of making themselves righteous. But the more they tried to

“

It is in seeking the happiness of others that we ourselves are blessed. This is the basic principle of Christianity.



find righteousness for themselves, the more unrighteous they became until they were filled with so much hate that they crucified Jesus.

“We are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6). It is when we quit trying to seek righteousness for ourselves and start trying to bring glory and righteousness to the Lord that we too find righteousness ourselves.

The question of our life should not be, “What can I do that I might be righteous?” but “What can I do that I might bring glory and honor to the Lord Jesus Christ?” That is the way Jesus lived. He did not live to glorify Himself, but to bring glory to His Father.

There is One who cares for us very much, but He cannot always show us His care because we are doing everything for ourselves. There is Someone who can bring us happiness such as no other person can, but if we are seeking to find happiness for ourselves, He cannot do for us that which He would like to do. For that to be accomplished, we must have a submissive spirit.

“He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness” (Psalm 107:9). Millions are seeking for happiness, but each one fails. Only our Maker can fulfill our deepest longings. “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” “The LORD lifts up the humble; He casts the wicked down to the ground” (Psalm 147:3, 6). The one whom God helps is the one who is humble, the one who has died to self.

This dying to self and trusting one’s care and keeping to the Lord is what the Bible calls conversion. It affects every aspect of life. When we are converted, we live in such a way as to bring glory to the Lord rather than glory to ourselves. That results in the Lord bringing glory to us.

Jesus said, “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love. ... These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that



your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another [not to be loved, but to love] as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends” (John 15:10–15). If we put Him first, He will put us first. Jesus said, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne” (Revelation 3:21).

So Jesus says, I have called you friend; I will be a Friend that sticks closer than a brother; I am One who cares. Do you need Someone who cares for you? who understands you? who knows your heart’s deepest burdens? The Bible says that Jesus wants to be that Friend. As we give up self, then Jesus will seek for the happiness and goodwill for us. He can bring us far more happiness than we can ever bring to ourselves. “He who finds his life will lose it, but he who loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 10:39).

“Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. ... Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind.

Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. ... The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.” *Steps to Christ*, 100.

May you experience the joy that only a true friendship can bring. May you experience the truest joy that only the truest Friend can bring. There is Someone who cares, and His name is Jesus. **LM**

Pastor Marshall Grosboll, with his wife Lillian, founded *Steps to Life*. In July 1991, Pastor Marshall and his family met with tragedy as they were returning home from a camp meeting in Washington state, when the airplane he was piloting went down, killing all on board.

Trust in the Lord

By W.D. Frazee

“Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”

Psalms 37:1-11

In these eleven verses we have set before us something to do and something not to do, noting first what we're told not to do. Verse 1 reads, "Fret not thyself." You will find this repeated in the seventh and eighth verses. Apparently, it is one of the great themes in this scripture. Don't get anxious; don't get worried; don't murmur and complain; don't be bothered about anything. Somebody says, Well, that's very well for David to write down there, but David didn't live in our time. That is true, but the Holy Spirit does and He's the One who inspired this.

Take a look at the other side of the coin and see what we are to do if we are not to fret. We are to trust. Consider the wonderful message of this same Psalm as it relates to trust. Note that trust is not a substitute for work. You'll find that in the 3rd verse. "Trust in the LORD, and do good." Trust in the Lord, and do something. Faith is not a substitute for action, rather it inspires action. As someone has said, Faith is so good it works.

Another sidelight occurs in the latter part of the third verse, "Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land." *Dwell* means *to live, to stay, to inhabit*; in other words, the way to meet problems is not to run away because they fret us. Settle down and meet the problem by trusting God and by doing good. And what is the result? "Verily thou shalt be fed," satisfied, physically and spiritually. Another translation says, "And enjoy security." Philippians 4:19 echoes that wonderful promise: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Now notice Psalm 37:4: "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." That is also translated, "He shall give thee the petitions of thy heart." In other words, He will give you what you ask for. Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7). Trust, then,



*A
part of
trusting is
resting and
waiting.*

is not a substitute for prayer, just as it is not a substitute for work. Rather it inspires prayer as it inspires work. The more we trust God the more our petitions will be sent to Him.

Paul says in Philippians 4:6, "Be careful [anxious] for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." What a wonderful combination of trust and prayer. What a difference it makes to God and to us if our prayers are banging on the door as if God had to be waked up and we were trying to change His mind and get Him interested, or whether we come as children to a loving father or mother, saying, I know you're interested and here is the thing that's on my heart. Trust and prayer belong together. Notice the wonderful promise, "And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." What an order!

**There's not a craving in the mind
Thou dost not meet and still;
There's not a wish the heart can have,
Which Thou dost not fulfill.**

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER, 1860.

What a God! He is there at the center of the universe, marshalling all the forces of omnipotence to give you what you want, to grant your heart's desires, not only to fill your needs, your basic requirements, but even to gratify your wishes. What a friend! Oh, to trust

Him, to come with confidence knowing that He's waiting to hear our requests. "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)? He loves to give.

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37:5). Notice the marginal reading: "Roll thy way upon the Lord." The picture is of a burden too heavy for us. Jesus says to let go of it and let it roll on Him. Peter picks up the thought and echoes it in 1 Peter 5:7, "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." That word translated *casting* has the thought of *flinging*, throwing the burden down at Jesus' feet, an active choice of the mind, choosing to let go of the worry, the fretting care and giving it to Jesus. "Cast thy burden on the Lord. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." The trust goes with the committal. As we turn over the burden to Him, we are to believe He accepts it and accepts us, and makes Himself responsible for our success. "Trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." As another translation puts it, "Leave all to Him, rely on Him and He will see to it." Will He do it? Oh, He says He will. He will act without any question.

Now that beautiful seventh verse: "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him." A part of trusting is resting and waiting. Trust does not do away

with the need for waiting. Some people suppose that if a man had faith, enough faith, strong enough faith, that he could get things done in an instant. They're looking for somebody like that. The devil will have some miracle workers around before long to show us spectacular miraculous things, but they'll be from hell, not from heaven. The people of God in this last generation are distinguished by patience. Revelation 14:12 says, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." And patience is developed by waiting.

So, trust is not a substitute for waiting. Trust is not something that makes waiting unnecessary. Trust inspires waiting. It keeps us hopeful during the waiting period, whether it be long or short. In James there is a parallel statement. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth" (James 5:7, *first part*). Whether it's apples or pears, grapes or strawberries, the farmer must wait for the harvest. There is no way to put in the plant today and reap the crop tomorrow. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (verses 7, *last part*, 8).

Notice that expression again, "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him" (Psalm 37:7). The margin says on *rest*, "Be silent to the Lord." In an earlier verse we learned that we are to pour out our heart's requests in supplication; we are to make known our desires in petitions but along with it we are to learn to be silent. "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). In the quietness God will speak. Be silent to the Lord and wait patiently for Him. When we are waiting, wondering, it is sometimes a hard time to be still, but trust is exhibited in quietly, patiently, calmly waiting. When we have prayed, when we have worked,

there's a time to wait – quietly, trustfully, before God.

Think of Joseph in Egypt, ten years in Potiphar's house as a slave, then unjustly accused and thrown into prison. Then his hopes are raised as, having interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker, he is promised that he will be remembered in the throne room. Nevertheless, the chief butler forgot him. Can you imagine how Joseph felt, forgotten? But it was all in God's providence. We usually think that God is always working to help people to remember things, but He also lets some people forget things. And it might be that God could allow somebody to forget something that you want them very much to remember. But after two years, one day that man woke up. The hour had struck. God's time had come, and Joseph left the dungeon forever to be the prime minister of Egypt. Joseph had learned the lesson of crying to God for help, doing anything and everything he could to work out the plan, and then waiting, waiting, waiting. Thank God for these precious lessons. Resign yourself unto the Lord and wait.

Trust, true trust, goes deeper, higher, further than anything we've yet looked at. Trust enables us, when we have prayed, when we have worked, when we have waited, to accept a result which is contrary to the thing we thought we wanted. Trust enables us to join with Paul in saying we know that "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). And we love God enough to trust Him and we trust Him knowing that He loves us.

Take this beautiful passage in *Steps to Christ*, page 122: "Jesus is our friend; all heaven is interested in our welfare. We should not allow the perplexities and worries of everyday life to fret the mind and cloud the brow. If we do, we shall always have something to vex and annoy. We should not indulge a solicitude that only frets and wears us, but does not help us to bear trials.

"You may be perplexed in business; your prospects may grow darker and darker, and you may be threatened with loss; but do not become discouraged; cast your care upon God, and remain calm and cheerful. Pray for wisdom to manage your affairs with discretion, and thus prevent loss and disaster. Do all you can on your part to bring about favorable results. Jesus has promised His aid, but not apart from our effort. When relying upon our Helper, you have done all you can, accept the result cheerfully."

That's true with a crop, it's true with a business, it's true in our medical work as we try to help sick people. It's true with every human circumstance. We are to pray, asking for what we believe is God's will. We are to work seeking to accomplish what we believe is God's will. We are to wait whether the time be long or short till the answer comes and if that answer comes as we've expected, how joyously we pour out our song of thanksgiving, but if a final answer that comes is no, trust still carries on, trust still says, Lord, I thank Thee.

This was the lesson that Jesus was seeking to teach Martha and Mary as recorded in John 11. You remember that Lazarus fell sick and, knowing of Christ's love for their brother, they simply sent Him the message, "The one You love is sick" (John 11:3, *last part*). They thought Jesus would drop everything and come, but He just stayed where He was. Pretty soon Lazarus died and they thought, What does all this mean? They couldn't figure it out. Had Jesus forsaken them? No. Had He forgotten them? No. He had sent them the message in answer to their message, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God" (verse 4). And how wonderfully it finally worked out.

Friends, we must never, and I stress this, we must never make our faith in God dependent upon the way He answers our prayers. He knows better than we do. He loves us better than we love ourselves. To trust Him does not mean

that we get what we want; it means that we learn to submit to His way so that He gets what He wants. Somebody says, but Brother Frazee, you just read that if we delight ourselves in the Lord that He will give us the desires of our heart. Precisely. And Martha and Mary got more than they desired when their brother came back from the grave. It was a far more abundant answer than if Christ had come and simply broken the fever and raised up the sick man. God has a thousand ways of answering our prayers of which we know nothing. Sometimes the explanation of the answer awaits the eternal world. Jesus said to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13:7).

In *The Ministry of Healing*, 474, we are told: "In the future life the mysteries that here have annoyed and disappointed us will be made plain. We shall see that our seemingly unanswered prayers and disappointed hopes have been among our greatest blessings." We love to read about marvelous, spectacular answers to prayer and they are wonderful. The lines in the top right corner express a great truth.

We have never learned really to trust until we've mastered the principles set out in Psalm 37. Far on past the answers that are spectacular, far on past those experiences, comes the chapter on trusting God when there seems to be no answer or when the answer is no. This instead of coming from less faith is possible only when there's more faith.

The apostle Paul had a thorn in his flesh. His eyesight had been left greatly diminished after that meeting with Christ on the road to Damascus and how that scholarly man longed for good eyesight that he might continue his earnest study of the Old Testament scrolls and that he might write out the messages to the churches, but for reasons that God did not see fit fully to explain, Paul was left with poor eyesight. He carried that thorn in the flesh all his life, and he says, "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me"

Sometimes when hearts are weak
He gives the very gifts believers seek;
But often faith must learn a deeper rest,
And trust God's silence when He does not speak;
For He whose name is love
Will send the best to those who seek.

He knows, He loves, He cares;
Nothing this truth can dim.
He gives His very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him.

The Weaver, Source Unknown



(2 Corinthians 12:8). God finally said no to Paul and answered him: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly" then he says, "will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, . . . in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (verses 9, 10).

Oh friends, prayer and trust and waiting and even work, all joined together, are not some sort of slot machine where you put in a quarter and wait and here comes the candy bar or the toy. There is more to it than that. We're not dealing with a computer; we're dealing with a Creator who is our friend. And He knows better than we do what we need. If He knows and He loves us, why worry our heads about it? Why not just wait until He gives it to us? Trusting Him means that we have faith in what He says and we choose to cooperate with Him and He has said that it is a part of His plan to grant us an answer to the prayer of faith that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask.

To trust Jesus means that we pray because He has asked us to pray. We work

because He has invited us to be partners with Him. We wait because that is His assignment. And through it all, in it all, and after all, we trust, we believe that He is in charge, that He is seated on the throne and that He is marshalling all the powers of the universe to carry out in our lives that which is best for us. Trust Him then. Trust Him when dark days assail. Trust Him when there seems to be no answer. Trust Him patiently, calmly waiting. **LM**

Elder W.D. Frazee studied the Medical Missionary Course at the College of Medical Evangelists in Loma Linda, California. He was called to Utah as a gospel medical evangelist. During the Great Depression, when the church could not afford to hire any assistants, Elder Frazee began inviting professionals to join him as volunteers. Thus began a faith ministry that would become the foundation for the establishment of the Wildwood Medical Missionary Institute in 1942. He believed that each person is unique, specially designed by the Lord, of infinite value, and has a special place and mission in this world which only he can fill. His life followed this principle and he encouraged others to do the same.



God's Unerring Justice

By Sudhir Pandit

It is a sad, yet sober reality, perhaps even unavoidable, that human justice often falls short of being just. Unscrupulous prosecutors and corrupt judges frequently succeed in condemning innocent victims to jail time and even to death. The premier example of justice gone awry is that of Jesus Christ. Falsely accused and convicted by evil men, He was condemned to death by the highest court in the Jewish nation for a crime He had never committed. This unfortunate scenario has been repeated countless times in the course of human history, especially in the case of Christian martyrs. Perfectly blameless words and acts deliberately misconstrued, motives impugned and maligned, they were assigned by unjust human tribunals to the rack, the stake, or the sword to suffer a martyr's fate. We have been warned that Sabbath keepers will likewise experience this miscarriage of justice at the end of the world.

But even without resort to fraud and deceit, human jurisprudence is seriously flawed on two counts:

I Being framed by fallen human legislatures, the laws are not perfect. Note the following insightful words of inspiration: “Men had well-nigh lost the knowledge of the true God. Their minds were darkened by idolatry. For the divine statutes, which are ‘holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12), men were endeavoring to substitute laws in harmony with the purposes of their own cruel, selfish hearts.”

Prophets and Kings, 15.

Examples of such deficient laws include those dealing with abortions, rights of homosexuals, and laws attempting to stifle the conscience.

2 Human laws can operate only in the outward domain of the words and acts of people, and not the inner domain of the character. This is the reason we so often read about “lone wolves,” “sleeper cells” and psychologically deranged would-be murderers and criminals walking freely abroad in society. They cannot be charged until the act is either carried out or its intent expressed in some manner, and then it makes the headlines.

In sharp contrast to human jurisprudence is God’s jurisprudence. In the Bible we have been provided a compendium of laws revealing the will of God for us. This affords us an answer to the second of life’s core questions: What is my *raison d’être* – Why am I here? It is to carry out the will of the great Creator God. The Bible also gives us soul-satisfying answers to life’s first big question about our origin (Where did I come from?) and the third question relating to our final destiny (Where am I headed?). But we find ourselves against a huge problem at this point because the Scriptures also declare: “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:9). With our limited capacity we can-



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not fully comprehend the mind of God and how His justice operates in every instance. How can anyone serve One whose actions he/she cannot understand, much less agree with? We all have troubling questions which God will answer only in the great hereafter. Notice the following Scripture, revealing a principle of God’s dealings, which was a matter of great perplexity to me:

“Thou shewest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is His name” (Jeremiah 32:18).

I was puzzled! From my earthbound perspective I was unable to wrap my mind around the notion of children suffering for the sins of their fathers. How was this just and equitable? Jesus reinforced it to the Jews of His day: “That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar” (Matthew 23:35).

The prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Roman General, Titus

Vespasian besieged Jerusalem killing 1.2 million Jews, leaving the city and the temple in ruins, and creating the diaspora by scattering the Jews into every country under the sun. It was an act of God’s retributive wrath against a nation that had crucified His Son – except it was a whole generation after the crucifixion in AD 31! It is highly unlikely that any of the original actors in the death of Jesus were still alive. Certainly, Caiaphas was long gone, along with Pilate and Herod and the Sanhedrin. The only ones alive from that time were likely the little children whose mothers wept for Jesus along Via Dolorosa. But they were too little to be aware of what was going on, much less could they be held liable for it. So where was God’s justice in punishing a completely different generation than the actual perpetrators?

This enigmatic ethic is evidenced in several other Scriptures as well. Notice God’s dealings with the Amorites in Palestine: “But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Genesis 15:16).

Our end time prophet offers an inspired commentary on this verse: "Although this nation was conspicuous because of its idolatry and corruption, it had not yet filled up the cup of its iniquity, and God would not give command for its utter destruction."

... The compassionate Creator was willing to bear with their iniquity until the fourth generation. Then, if no change was seen for the better, His judgments were to fall upon them." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 208. Clearly, the judgments of God would fall on the fourth generation,

while sparing the first three who were just as guilty. Was this really just and fair? I wondered.

The excerpt continues with more thought-provoking insight:

"With unerring accuracy the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations. While His mercy is tendered with calls to repentance, this account will remain open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has fixed, the ministry of His wrath commences. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. There is no more pleading of mercy in their behalf." Ibid.

Mark the two concepts expressed in the passages above: 1) The concept of the *Cup of Iniquity*, and 2) The concept of the *Accretion (accumulation) of Guilt*.

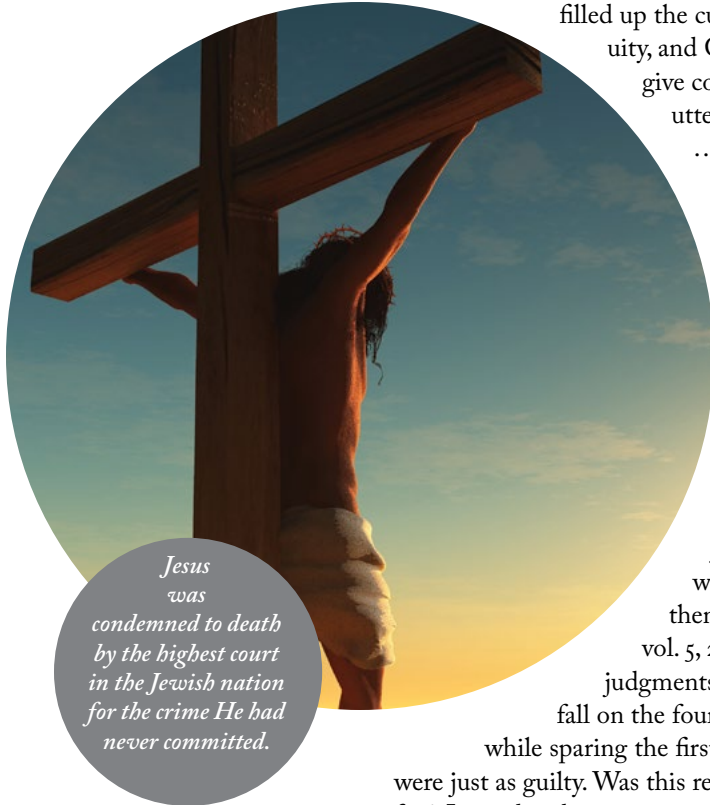
The Cup of Iniquity is a metaphor for a mysterious "vessel" in which God collects and stores unconfessed and unforgiven sins. Because it is of limited capacity, which God alone determines, the cup can be filled up at some point. The concept of the Accretion of Guilt further teaches that sin can be under-

stood as an objective product of human will and action, like drops of poison, which can add up over time. From the inspired records we understand that individual cups are placed in the hands of each person at birth, while national, corporate cups are placed in the hands of the leaders. Obviously, individual cups cease to exist at death, while national cups roll over to succeeding generations until God intervenes. We see the filling up of individual cups (e.g., King Saul) as well as national cups in the histories of both Israel and Judah.

Prophecy indicates that the United States will also fill up her cup of iniquity whenever the National Sunday Law is passed: "The people of the United States have been a favored people; but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and 'national apostasy' will be registered in the books of heaven. The result of this apostasy will be national ruin." *The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1893. This cup in the hands of U.S. leaders has been gradually filling up over many generations. It will be filled to the brim with the passing of the National Sunday Law.

In line with the concept of the full cup, the sufferings of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane offer an amazing insight. Three times He prayed, "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 sins of the whole human race were crushing the life out of Him. He was suffering the wrath of God against sin on behalf of each child of Adam. And since the ministry of God's wrath begins only when the cup of iniquity is full, the cup that Jesus held in His trembling grasp was clearly overflowing with the poison of each individual cup of humanity.

Our feeble minds cannot comprehend the enormous cup that Jesus had to drink in order to save us. Is it any wonder He perspired great drops of blood before Gabriel was commissioned to strengthen Him to drink it? But in emptying our cups He made provision that they might remain empty, allowing us to escape the penalty of our own sins. Forever we should be grateful for the cup that the Savior drained in our stead!



Jesus
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never committed.

But now we are faced with a conundrum: The Bible also explicitly declares: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezekiel 18:20). This scripture effectively sweeps away the doctrine of Original Sin, which as Seventh-day Adventists we reject. So, how can we justify the act of God in punishing one generation for the sins of previous ones, when His Word clearly teaches individual accountability? It posed an insurmountable dilemma until I was able to grasp an important truth that had eluded me for years. It was stated in the Spirit of Prophecy, but it had never registered with me before. With reference to the 3rd plague we read:

“The angel of God declares: ‘Thou art righteous, O Lord, ... because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy’ (Revelation 16:5, 6). By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets.” *The Great Controversy*, 628.

Here was an act of God’s justice, completely outside the realm of human jurisprudence. With unerring accuracy, the God of Heaven was able to read the thoughts and purposes of humanity lurking within the deepest recesses of the mind. Here was the infallible basis for God’s judgments! The light finally came on in my mind. God did not need to wait until the secret desire or purpose manifested itself in action. I had misapprehended Divine justice



With unerring accuracy, the Infinite One still keeps an account with all nations.

by assuming it worked on the same level as human justice. While human jurisdiction was limited to the observable words and acts, God’s jurisdiction embraced also the very heart and mind, enabling Him to render perfect judgment based entirely on the hidden thoughts and purposes. Amazing!

Thus, the apparently contradictory Scriptures are harmonized: Every man will pay the penalty for his own rebellion (in keeping with the principle of individual accountability) while later generations will be punished for the sins of their forefathers for harboring the same wicked thoughts and purposes. God’s foreknowledge enables Him to predict with unfailing accuracy the potential for the same evil deeds, given the opportunity. Thus, a corrupt mind will inevitably devolve into corrupt deeds under the proper circumstances. Individual accountability is still preserved in this scenario. But because they collectively contribute to the filling up of the national cup by the same rebellious purposes as their forebears, God can justifiably rain His retributive wrath on their heads.

We have now a credible explanation for some other obscure passages of inspiration:

I The Death Sentence against God’s people we know is an exercise in futility because not one saint suffers martyrdom under it. Yet we read in Revelation 16:5, 6 regarding the 3rd plague: “And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.” The only reason the angels can speak of the shedding of blood as a done deed is because of the murder potential inherent in the Death Decree.

2 The Spirit of Prophecy numbers the 144,000 among the martyrs of the ages. In describing them after the time of Jacob’s Trouble, Ellen White states the following: “There stood revealed the throne of God. Around it were ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands upon thousands, and close about the throne were the martyrs. Among this number I saw the very ones



"The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son."

Ezekiel 18:20

who were so recently in such abject misery, whom the world knew not, whom the world hated and despised."

Selected Messages, Book 3, 428.

This is an amazing statement because we know that not one of the 144,000 will suffer death at the hands of their enemies. Notice: "God would not suffer the wicked to destroy those who were expecting translation and who would not bow to the decree of the beast or receive his mark. I saw that if the wicked were permitted to slay the saints, Satan and all his evil host, and all who hate God, would be gratified. And oh, what a triumph it would be for his satanic majesty to have power, in the last closing struggle, over those who had so long waited to behold Him whom they loved!" *Early Writings*, 284. Yet, strangely, they are included among the martyrs. How can this be if they were never killed? It is because they possessed the faith of the martyrs. Ready and willing to seal their testimony with their blood, they had taken their stand on the hill of God's law on which they were willing to die. And God recognizes this fact by conferring on them the high honor of wearing a red border on their garments. So here again we see God acting from His knowledge of the heart and not merely the outward reality. What an amazing God!

3 Ellen White has much to say about "cherished" sins: "The righteousness of Christ will not cover one cherished sin. A man may be a law-breaker in heart; yet if he commits no outward act of transgression, he may be regarded by the world as possessing great integrity. But God's law looks into the secrets of the heart. ... Only that which is in accord with the principles of God's law will stand in the judgment." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 316. As depicted here, cherished sins are not necessarily open and observable, but they have the potential to break out under the proper circumstances. A cherished sin resides in a corrupt heart. It may not be indulged for lack of opportunity, yet it cannot accord with God's law and will be condemned in the Judgment. Sadly, there will be many in the lake of fire, like the rich young ruler, (Matthew 19:16–22) who may not have broken the Ten Commandments outwardly, but with pride, envy, covetousness, selfishness, lust or malice resident in the heart (known only to God, of course) they could not be saved!

That God will stand fully vindicated in His dealings with sin and sinners is without question. This is why "every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (Romans

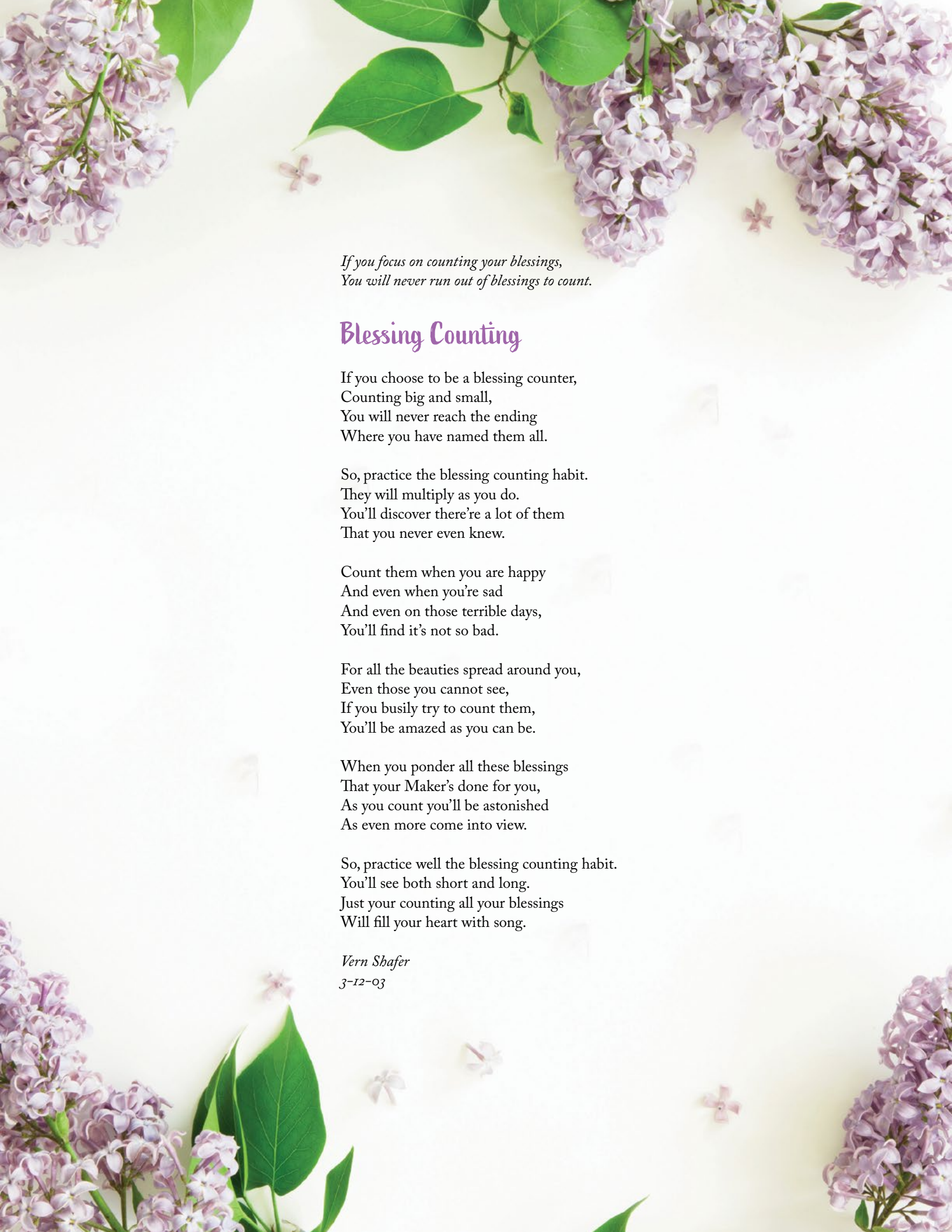
14:11). "To declare, ... at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). In undertaking the salvation of the human race, God acts from a divine, infallible perspective. His judgments will be able to pass the closest scrutiny of intelligent beings. And the reason He is able to guarantee that sin will never arise the second time (Nahum 1:9) is because He saves only those whose hearts are devoid of any secretly cherished sin. Like Joseph, they will not sin even under ideally hidden circumstances because they live as in the sight of a holy God. Not only do they love righteousness, but they hate sin. Thus, with sin eradicated from the heart by His grace, God accomplishes the complete eradication of sin from the universe and ensures its eternal non-emergence, all in the context of free, uncoerced human will. Hallelujah!

"Let us strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand" (*Maranatha*, 241) who have crucified and died to self. They have no guile in their mouths because they have none in their hearts (Revelation 14:5). Their prayer throughout has been, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24).

Amen!

[All emphasis supplied.] **LM**

Dr. Pandit is a retired cardiologist living in Arkansas with his wife Dorothy. He is proud to call himself a historic Seventh-day Adventist. He, with his wife, is involved in backing two self-supporting ministries in India 1) Medical Missionary Training and Lifestyle Center in South India and 2) A printing ministry in Western India. They are also founding members of a "home church" located in Hot Springs, AR. He can be contacted via his email address: sudor777@gmail.com, or phone: 870-356-4768.



*If you focus on counting your blessings,
You will never run out of blessings to count.*

Blessing Counting

If you choose to be a blessing counter,
Counting big and small,
You will never reach the ending
Where you have named them all.

So, practice the blessing counting habit.
They will multiply as you do.
You'll discover there're a lot of them
That you never even knew.

Count them when you are happy
And even when you're sad
And even on those terrible days,
You'll find it's not so bad.

For all the beauties spread around you,
Even those you cannot see,
If you busily try to count them,
You'll be amazed as you can be.

When you ponder all these blessings
That your Maker's done for you,
As you count you'll be astonished
As even more come into view.

So, practice well the blessing counting habit.
You'll see both short and long.
Just your counting all your blessings
Will fill your heart with song.

Vern Shafer
3-12-03

Life of Jesus Predicted in the Old Testament

Clues – KJV (use Old Testament spelling)

Across:

- B2 What Jesus would make the dumb to do Isaiah 35:6 / Matthew 15:31
 B10 These little ones would praise Him Psalm 8:2 / Matthew 21:16
 B20 He would have this for His enemies Psalm 109:4 / Luke 23:34
 C14 He would come out of this place..... Hosea 11:1 / Matthew 21:14, 15
 D4 He would be redeemed from this..... Psalm 49:15 / Matthew 28:6
 E9 He would be betrayed by a Psalm 41:9 / Luke 22:47, 48
 E16 He will cause these to rejoice Isaiah 29:19 / Luke 6:20
 E21 He would be called this of God Psalm 2:7 / Matthew 3:16, 17
 F1 He would be hated without this..... Psalm 69:4 / John 15:25
 G7 He would cause these to hear..... Isaiah 35:5 / Mark 7:37
 G16 A messenger would do this for His way..... Isaiah 40:3-5 / Luke 3:3-6
 H2 He would enter Jerusalem upon this Zechariah 9:9 / Mark 11:7-11
 J6 He would heal these..... Isaiah 61:1, 2 / Luke 4:18, 19
 K19 He would be called this..... Deuteronomy 18:15 / Acts 3:20, 21
 L4 None of His bones would be this Psalm 34:20 (Exodus 12:46) / John 19:34, 36
 L11 One of His names would be this..... Isaiah 7:14 / Matthew 1:23
 N1 He'd be sold for pieces of silver Zechariah 11:12, 13 / Matthew 27:9, 10
 O10 He would teach people with this..... Psalm 78:2-4 / Matthew 13:34, 35
 O18 His body would be this Zechariah 12:10 / John 19:34, 37
 Q2 Rather than accepted, He'd be Isaiah 53:3 / John 1:11
 Q12 One of these would conceive..... Isaiah 7:14 / Luke 1:26-31
 Q22 What He would do for us all Isaiah 35:4 / Matthew 18:11
 S8 His kingdom would be on David's Isaiah 9:7 / Luke 1:32
 S15 What kinds of witnesses would speak? Psalm 35:11 / Mark 14:57, 58
 S21 These would be pierced Psalm 22:16 / John 20:25-27

Down:

- A8 This would be spit upon Isaiah 50:6 / Matthew 27:30
 A18 What He'd do on God's right hand Psalm 110:1 / Mark 16:19
 A21 He would die with these Isaiah 53:12 / Matthew 27:38
 A24 He would make the lame to do this Isaiah 35:6 / Luke 7:22
 B5 These would be parted..... Psalm 22:18 / Matthew 27:35
 B10 What He would do with our sins..... Isaiah 53:11 / Romans 5:8
 B14 He would be this of a woman Genesis 3:15 / Galatians 4:4
 D7 This would be offered to Him Psalm 69:21 / John 19:28-30
 D12 He would be born here Micah 5:2 / Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4-6
 E3 This would happen to Him (two words) Daniel 9:26 / Hebrews 2:9
 E9 He would be this by His father Psalm 22:1 / Matthew 27:46
 E18 In time His mouth would not be Isaiah 53:7 / Mark 15:4, 5
 G14 He'd be descended from this patriarch..... Genesis 22:15-18 / Matthew 1:1
 H24 He'd be like Melchizedek as this..... Psalm 110:4 / Hebrews 5:5, 6
 K2 He would be this even to Gentiles Isaiah 42:6 / Ephesians 3:6
 K5 Even these did not accept Him..... Psalm 69:8 / John 7:5

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Answer Key:

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- L8 He would heal blind Isaiah 35:5 / Mark 10:46–52
 L11 He would come through this son's line Genesis 17:19 / Luke 3:34
 M19 Many of these would be killed Jeremiah 31:15 / Matthew 2:16–18
 N13 He would preach in this area..... Isaiah 9:1, 2 / Matthew 4:12–15
 O16 This message would come before Him..... Malachi 4:5, 6 / Matthew 11:13, 14
 O24 He would be descended from this king..... Jeremiah 23:5 / Luke 3:31
 Q2 He would be buried with these Isaiah 53:9 / Matthew 27:57–60



Walk in the Light

I was shown that God's people dwell too much under a cloud. It is not His will that they should live in unbelief. Jesus is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. His children are the children of light. They are renewed in His image, and called out of darkness into His marvelous light. He is the light of the world, and so also are they that follow Him. They shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The more closely the people of God strive to imitate Christ, the more perseveringly will they be pursued by the enemy; but their nearness to Christ strengthens them to resist the efforts of our wily foe to draw them from Christ.

I was shown that there was too much comparing ourselves among ourselves, taking fallible mortals for a pattern, when we have a sure, unerring pattern. We should not measure ourselves by the world, nor by the opinions of men, nor by what we were before we embraced the truth. But our faith and position in the world, as they now are, must be compared with what they would have been if our course had been continually onward and upward since we professed to be followers of Christ. This is the only safe comparison that can be made. In every other there will be self-deception. If the moral character and spiritual state of God's people do not correspond with the blessings, privileges, and light which have been conferred upon them, they are weighed in the balance, and angels make the report, Wanting.

With some the knowledge of their true state seems to be hidden from them. They see the truth, but perceive not its importance or its claims. They hear the truth, but do not fully understand it, because they do not conform their lives to it, and therefore are not sanctified through obeying it. And yet they rest as unconcerned and well satisfied as though the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, as token of God's favor, went before them. They profess to know God, but in works deny Him. They reckon themselves His chosen, peculiar people, yet His presence and power to save to the uttermost are seldom manifested among them. How great is the darkness of such! yet they know it not. The light shines, but they do not comprehend it. No stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes them believe that they are right, and that God accepts their works, when they are sinning against Him. They mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof. They suppose that they are rich, and have need of nothing, when they are poor, wretched, blind, and naked, and need all things.

There are some who profess to be Christ's followers, yet put forth no effort in spiritual things. In any worldly enterprise they put forth effort, and manifest ambition to accomplish their object, and bring about the desired end; but in the enterprise of everlasting life, where all is at stake, and their eternal happiness depends upon their success, they act as indifferent as though they were not moral agents, as though another were playing the game of life for them, and they had nothing to do but wait the result. Oh, what folly! what madness! If all will only manifest that degree of ambition, zeal, and earnestness for everlasting life that they manifest in their worldly pursuits, they will be victorious overcomers. Everyone, I saw, must obtain an experience for himself, each must act well and faith-

fully his part in the game of life. Satan watches his opportunity to seize the precious graces when we are unguarded, and we shall have a severe conflict with the powers of darkness to retain them, or to regain a heavenly grace if through lack of watchfulness we lose it.

But I was shown that it is the privilege of Christians to obtain strength from God to hold every precious gift. Fervent and effectual prayer will be regarded in heaven. When the servants of Christ take the shield of faith for their defense, and the sword of the Spirit for war, there is danger in the enemy's camp, and something must be done. Persecution and reproach only wait for those who are endowed with power from on high to call them into action. When the truth in its simplicity and strength prevails among believers, and is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, it will be evident that there is no concord between Christ and Belial. The disciples of Christ must be living examples of the life and spirit of their Master.

Young and old have a conflict, a warfare, before them. They should not sleep for a moment. A wily foe is constantly on the alert to lead them astray and overcome them. Believers in present truth must be as watchful as their enemy and manifest wisdom in resisting Satan. Will they do this? Will they persevere in this warfare? Will they be careful to depart from all iniquity? Christ is denied in many ways. We may deny Him by speaking contrary to truth, by speaking evil of others, by foolish talking or jesting, or by words

that are idle. In these things we manifest but little shrewdness or wisdom. We make ourselves weak; our efforts are feeble to resist our great enemy, and we are conquered. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34), and through lack

of watchfulness we confess that Christ is not in us.

Those who hesitate to devote themselves unreservedly to God make poor work of following Christ. They follow Him at so great a distance that half the time they do not really know whether they are following His footprints or the footsteps

of their great enemy. Why are we so slow to give up our interest in the things of this world and take Christ for our only portion? Why should we wish to keep the friendship of our Lord's enemies, and follow their customs, and be led by their opinions? There must be an entire, unreserved surrender to God, a forsaking and turning away from the love of the world and earthly things, or we cannot be Christ's disciples.

The life and spirit of Christ is the only standard of excellence and perfection, and our only safe course is to follow His example. If we do this He will guide us by His counsel and afterward receive us to glory. We must strive diligently and be willing to suffer much in order to walk in the footsteps of our Redeemer. God is willing to work for us, to give us of His free Spirit, if we will strive for it, live for it, believe for it; and then we can walk in the light as He is in the light. We can feast upon His love and drink in of His rich fullness.

Testimonies, vol. 1, 405-409. [LM](#)

“
*There is too much
comparing ourselves
among ourselves, taking
fallible mortals for a
pattern, when we have
a sure, unerring
pattern.*”

Alfred the Great

Once there was in England a good king named Alfred. He was so brave and wise and did so many fine things for his people that he is always called Alfred the Great.

When Alfred was a little boy, his mother used to teach him from the wonderful book known as the Bible. She had five sons, Alfred being the youngest. One day she called the five boys to her and showed them the Holy Bible. She said:

“I’ll give this book to the one of you that learns to read it first.”

The five young princes began to study hard. They studied one reading lesson after another, as fast as they could. The Bible was a fine prize, and each one of them was anxious to win it.

Not very long afterwards, one of the boys came to his mother and said, “Mother, I believe that I can read the book now.” And sure enough, when she gave him a test, he could read it; and he received it as a prize.

Now, which of the five princes do you think it was who won the prize?

Yes, it was Alfred, the youngest of the five. He won the beautiful book, and he loved books all his life.

While Alfred was king, the Danes were fighting his people – the English. The Danes were strong, fierce people who came in boats from another country. They wanted to live in England, and they tried to rob and kill Alfred’s people.

King Alfred had a hard time fighting the Danes, but at last he won in one or


two battles and made them stay in one part of the country by themselves. He drew a long line between his people and the Danes and would not allow the Danes to cross the line.

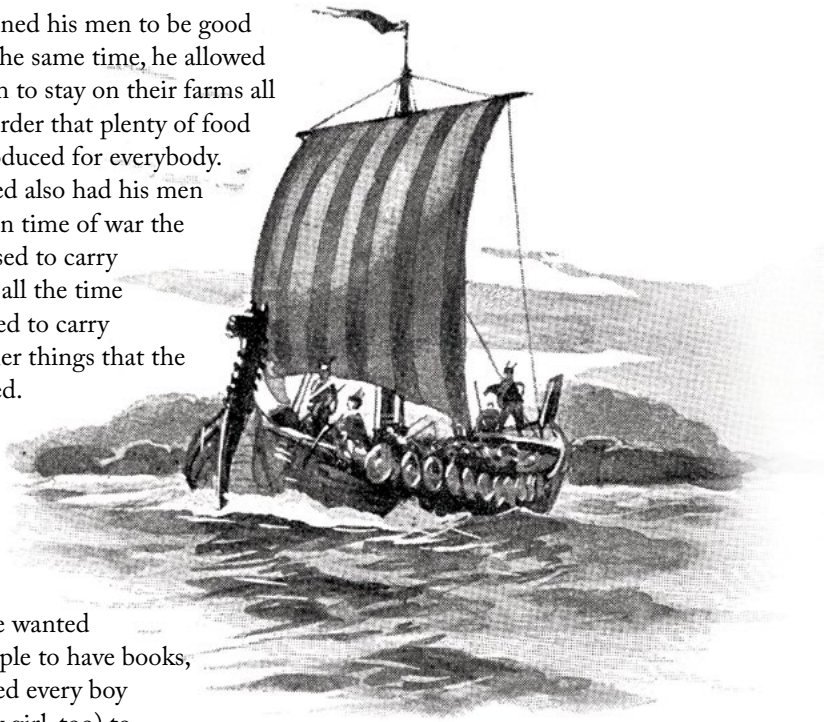
Alfred trained his men to be good soldiers. At the same time, he allowed some of them to stay on their farms all the time in order that plenty of food might be produced for everybody.

King Alfred also had his men build ships. In time of war the ships were used to carry soldiers, and all the time they were used to carry food and other things that the people needed.

All his life Alfred the Great loved books. He loved books so much that he wanted all of his people to have books, and he wanted every boy (maybe every girl, too) to learn to read.

So King Alfred built schoolhouses and hired school teachers. He gathered together many good books and many good teachers. But as long as he lived there was one book that he always loved best: it was the Bible – the book he had first learned to read.

History Stories for Children, John W. Wayland, © 1991, 79–81. 



When One Is Too Many



I am an avid stitcher. I love working counted cross-stitch patterns. I learned from my mother when I was in my early 20s, and it has since been a pleasing outlet for my creativity and also a way to relieve stress.

Many years ago, I was in Silver Dollar City and found a small, hole-in-the-wall shop that sold cross-stitch sampler patterns. Around the top over all four walls were old, completed samplers and as I gazed around the room at the delightful colors and intricacies of the different patterns, I noticed one sampler in particular. It began A B C D as you

would expect, but then skipped to F G H and so on. Between the D and F there was a caret, an insertion mark that indicated something was being added at that spot, and above the caret was an E stitched at a crooked angle. I was intrigued. I thought why wouldn't they recount, remove the incorrect stitching and just make the correction. I asked the storekeeper and he told me that a couple hundred years earlier people believed that only God was perfect, so they would deliberately make a mistake to prove that belief to be true.

Sometime after my visit to that shop, I began stitching a set of four patterns, seasonal flowers – winter, spring, summer and fall – in different baskets and pots. The first three I completed perfectly, but while I stitched the flowers of the fourth pattern perfectly, I incorrectly counted while stitching the flowerpot. I didn't notice at first. It took a couple or three rows before I began to see the results of the error I had made. I didn't have to deliberately make a mistake to prove that God is perfect and I am not. I thought I should take the stitching out and do it correctly, but then I thought about what I'd learned that day in that shop. One mistake could change everything in a picture. So, I left it and you can see that the error caused my flowerpot to have a crack in it.

That got me thinking about spiritual choices. The decisions we make regarding right and wrong, the choices we make that result in yielding to temptation and ultimately sin. One sin can lead to another and then another. We are often unaware of what we have done until the results can be seen, like the crack in the flowerpot. You might say, "I made a choice and I felt so bad when I realized what I had done, that I corrected the action and I've never done it again." Praise God! I worked another, very elaborate cross-stitch pattern of a Japanese geisha. She had a flowing robe and in the fold of the robe, I made a mistake. I searched and searched to find that mistake, but I was never able to locate it so that I could correct it. As a result, while no one else can see the error and no matter how well I may have been able to get back on track, the results of that error in counting can still be seen, if only by me.

It is the same with sin. One sin can have consequences, unfortunately, that cannot be changed. You might sin and realize what you've done and correct your course, but the consequences of that sin will remain; sometimes seen by all, like the flowerpot and sometimes, like the Japanese geisha, seen only by you and God.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). **LM**

Your Letters

"I look forward to the *LandMarks* magazine each month. I am so happy to hear that they are being printed out now in Nigeria. May God continue to bless all of our brethren in this world, and also the Steps to Life ministry."

—DC, Colorado

"I love the magazine!"

—FC, North Carolina

"Thank you for the *LandMarks*. It is a blessing."

—BW, Colorado

"I am so thankful for *LandMarks*! I read them over a lot, and loan them out when I can. Thorough articles on foods, correlating with your broadcasts. Health information is always a subject I can share with others, then bring up other subjects."

—JR, California

March Sermon of the Month

Ten Virgins

By John J. Grosboll

The golden oil that feeds the lamps are messages sent from heaven to get us through the dark night.

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

From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

March 2021

Dear Friend,

During the Christmas season, while in a city far from our home, my wife was walking outside a huge shopping mall. A car driving by stopped her and one of the occupants offered her a wrapped gift. Both of us were thrilled when she opened the wrapping to find that we had been given a copy of the book *The Great Controversy*.

We carry several copies of *The Great Controversy* with us for the same purpose. We had no idea who gave us this wonderful missionary book, but we wanted to see their efforts bear fruit, so when days later we were several hundred miles away in another state we gave that very book to a young woman who appeared very happy to receive it.

The time will come suddenly when you will not be able to give out literature. The night is coming when no one can work (John 9:4). When that day does come, we each want to know that we have distributed the message of truth to as many as possible.

"Thousands of books containing the precious light of present truth should be placed in the homes of the people in our large cities." *Southern Union Recorder*, November 20, 1902.

"Our books and papers are to be brought before the notice of the people; the gospel of present truth is to be given to our cities without delay. Shall we not arouse to our duties?" *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 63.

"There are many places in which the voice of the minister can not be heard, places which can be reached only by publications—the books, papers, and tracts, that are filled with the Bible truth that the people need. Our literature is to be distributed everywhere. The truth is to be sown beside all waters; for we know not which shall prosper, this or that. In our erring judgment we may think it unwise to give literature to the very ones who would accept the truth most readily. We know not what may be the good results of giving away a leaflet containing present truth." *The Southern Watchman*, January 5, 1904.

Your brother praying for a finished work,



John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath Offering



Pastor Emmanuel Okerie ministering.



The dedication of Brother Enyinnaya's twin baby girls.

Nigeria Camp Meeting

December 20–26, 2020

By Pastor Domingo Nunez

Praise God for another joyous camp meeting experience in Nigeria! Attendees included those of the Pentecostal faith and members from the Seventh-day Adventist conference church. These individuals were fervent in their attendance and were found in meeting every night.

One man indicated that he wanted to fellowship with them, while others opted for more studies. Many thanks to God for this!

Bibles were given to those faithful in attendance and Bible study. These Bibles have made a great impact in various villages and the joy and gladness manifested by those who receive them is so encouraging. Please pray that God will lead them to the truth of His word in these copies.

More Bibles are needed for this year's gospel work, as many are now appreciating God's word more during the uncertainty of the world-wide pandemic.

Thank you, brothers and sisters, for your continued support of this ministry outreach in Nigeria. If you wish to help send more Bibles to Nigeria, please mark the donation *Nigeria*.

God bless you all through the knowledge of His Son. [LM](#)

from the
Mission Fields

A Motivating Testimony

from Bolivia

By Pastor Doming Nunez

José Luis Siles is the pastor of the local church in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. In 2020, José nearly lost his mother to the coronavirus. But it was not God's plan for her to die; instead she would live. This is her story.

Carmen Rosa Ugarte del Carpio was orphaned at a very young age in the city of La Paz Bolivia. La Paz is very deeply rooted in Catholicism, and having been raised Catholic, Carmen believed very strongly in the worship of virgins and other folklore and the many rites and cults associated with them. It also was difficult to speak with Carmen regarding religion because her oldest son Jaime is a Catholic priest.



Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia



Jose Luis enjoys a Sabbath afternoon Bible study with his mother, Carmen.

José Luis tried to explain the truths of the Bible as believed by the Adventists, but Carmen rejected his efforts. However, she knew him to be a good son, always attentive to her needs, always there when she needed help and he always showed her love.

When the pandemic began, Carmen's family was only able to communicate with her by phone and since they were unable to see her and assess her health, they were greatly concerned. Her many pre-existing health issues, such as diabetes, made her more vulnerable to the coronavirus.

In mid-May, Carmen got sick. José Luis' sister contacted him hoping he could do something to help their mother. Because the health systems in Bolivia had already collapsed, José Luis brought her to his home where she would be under the care of his wife, Lili. José Luis also contacted Lili's sister, Ester, a doctor in Santa Cruz.

Ester came to see Carmen only once and was able to take her for tests to de-

termine that she had severe pneumonia and was in a very serious condition.

They worked to control her diabetes, gave her the medications prescribed by the doctor as well as homemade herbal remedies, but it seemed that Carmen had reached a point where she could die at any moment.

José Luis asked his sisters to pray and contacted Pastor Nunez for assistance in anointing their mother. They had done all they could; they would now wait to know God's will for Carmen.

Carmen did recover and during that time José Luis spoke to her more about the word of God and she willingly accepted the truth shown her.

When the restrictive measures were lifted in Santa Cruz, they were able to meet again on Sabbath and Carmen told José Luis that she had decided to faithfully attend church every Sabbath from then on.

Every Sabbath, Carmen attends church and receives Bible studies. When



Surreal natural landscapes in Bolivia.

she learned that Pastor Nunez would arrive in December 2020, she told her whole family that she wanted to be baptized. She publicly received the Lord in her heart and was baptized December 12, 2020. What joy to know that Carmen had accepted the Lord as her personal Saviour. Now José Luis prays for his sisters' conversions.

José Luis asked Carmen why she had decided to be baptized. She told him that she had seen the change in him, that he is a good son to her and because of the love that he shows to her. She compared this with the lack of love and concern from her other son, the priest, and recognized the difference between a religion that is lived in the heart and one that is no more than customs and traditions.

This was the witness of Carmen's conversion, a very humble daughter of God, taken to death's door, but who found new life in her Lord and Saviour, Christ Jesus. [LM](#)

Let it Snow

When the world wears white again and everything disappears under a thick blanket of snow that's when the magic of winter unfolds as nature unveils a world of wonders in letting it snow.

Snow crystals are natural works of art, as fragile as they are ephemeral. Each crystal is unique, and yet all develop in accordance with the same six-fold symmetry.

When it is barely below freezing, the first snow crystals begin to form inside the clouds. Over time they join up to form bigger flakes and once they're heavy enough, they fall from the clouds – and it snows. Each flake is unique. No two snowflakes are exactly alike.

Unlike raindrops or hailstones, snowflakes fall gently from the sky. Once a snowflake touches water, it immediately melts, releasing the air inside. This creates a high-pitched sound that is unique to each flake and inaudible to the human ear without the assistance of technology. On the descent to the ground some of these fragile structures run into warmer pockets of air and melt, but most of them make it all the way to the ground where they form a blanket that keeps growing thicker.

During particularly frosty nights, a fascinating phenomenon occurs. The

moisture in the air freezes and turns into hoarfrost. Overnight the landscape is covered with ice crystals. The result is a winter panorama picture book. Sun and hoarfrost frequently go hand in hand as cloudless winter weather is especially cold. However, hoarfrost doesn't only accumulate on boughs and branches, but also on the blanket of snow. Its crystals differ considerably from the snow below. Hoarfrost is created at about minus eight degrees Celsius (between 17° – 18° Fahrenheit) or lower and the moisture in the air freezes directly on surfaces. Freezing cold winter nights provide ice.

Electrostatic fields align the water molecules hexagonally and this basic structure holds steady as the water slowly freezes and the snow crystal gradually grows until it's finished. Between minus 12 and minus 18 degrees Celsius (10 and 0° Fahrenheit) the classic six-armed snow stars or dendrites appear. It's the temperature that determines how finely branched they become. Freezing water gives off heat which decreases at higher temperatures and this, in turn, causes additional variations in structure because a bigger surface facilitates a discharge of heat. Consequently, dendrites turn out to be distinctly less branched when

they're created at lower temperatures. So not all snow is alike and at very low temperatures, snow crystals take on the form of little tiles, columns and cylinders.

The ice of the snow crystals is colorless and transparent. At the border surfaces between ice crystals and air, the white sunlight is reflected and scattered and with enough randomly distributed ice crystals scattering light in all directions, the overall color that results are white.

So-called condensation kernels serve as seeds around which droplets form out of the cloud's mist. Moisture accumulates around minute particles of dust and soot. Such particles also serve as freezing kernels for snow crystals to begin to form when the clouds are cold enough. Then they grow linked together and descend as snowflakes to the earth.

Let it Snow, The Secrets of Nature, Klaus T. Steindl, ©2008.

“He giveth snow like wool: He scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes” (Psalm 147:16). “The Lord says, ‘You are stained red with sin, but I will wash you as clean as snow. Although your stains are deep red, you will be as white as wool’ (Isaiah 1:18).” *Steps to Jesus*, 46. [LM](#)

Q:

What does it mean to be “rich toward God”?

A:


“But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:20, 21 NKJV).

“Christ points out the way in which those who have worldly riches and yet are not rich toward God may secure the true riches. He says: Sell that ye have, and give alms, and lay up treasure in heaven. The remedy He proposes for the wealthy is a transfer of their affections from earthly riches to the eternal inheritance. By investing their means in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, and by blessing the needy with their means, they become rich in good works and are ‘laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life’ (1 Timothy 6:19). This will prove a safe investment. But many show by their works that they dare not trust in the bank of heaven. They choose to trust their means in the earth rather

than send it before them to heaven, that their hearts may be upon their heavenly treasure.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 681.

“Houses and lands will be of no use to the saints in the time of trouble, for they will then have to flee before infuriated mobs, and at that time their possessions cannot be disposed of to advance the cause of present truth. I was shown that it is the will of God that the saints should cut loose from every encumbrance before the time of trouble comes, and make a covenant with God through sacrifice. If they have their property on the altar and earnestly inquire of God for duty, He will teach them when to dispose of these things. Then they will be free in the time of trouble and have no clogs to weigh them down.” *Early Writings*, 56, 57.

“Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Luke 12:33, 34 NKJV). [LM](#)



Houses and lands will be of no use to the saints in the time of trouble.



Toxic Drugs Not Needed to Relieve Stress

The vast majority of American adults say they feel anxiety or stress – every day. As one of the most stressed nations on earth, it's time to start taking a serious look at the connection between chronic stress and the immune system.

What do we already know about chronic stress? We know it has a significant unwanted impact on your immune system. An overview of studies surrounding stress and the immune system shows a link between stress and how the immune system functions that goes back decades. Additional studies have found that chronic stress increases your risk of inflammation, and elevated levels of inflammation increase the likelihood of cancer and heart disease.

When you're feeling stressed out, depressed, or lonely, you shouldn't be surprised if you end up getting physically sick.

Chronic mental stress is a big threat to your future health, according to many studies

Back in the 1980s, an immunologist and psychologist found it intriguing to see studies linking stress to infection. They went on to do their own study on medical students, discovering that the stress of three-day exams decreased the students' immunity.

Since then, hundreds of studies have been done on the links between stress and health. Those studies have revealed unique patterns. When people experienced stress for a significant duration of time, their immunity went downhill, leading to the conclusion that too much stress can wreak havoc on the immune system.

How does stress affect your immune system? It triggers chemical reactions in the body, releasing the stress hormone cortisol, which can decrease white blood cells. Keep in mind, white blood cells are designed to help us with infections.

Researchers also discovered that individuals who are already sick or older are at a greater risk of stress-related immune dysfunction. In aging adults, even mild depression may suppress their immune system. Some experts even believe that stress may be responsible for up to 90% of all diseases and illnesses, including the big ones like heart disease and cancer.

Chronic stress also increases the risk of inflammation – which increases the rate of tissue damage and infection risk. The effects of stress tend to be cumulative, which means that every-day stress may eventually lead to serious health problems. Unfortunately, the only “solution” that Western medicine offers is a toxic drug, that only adds to stress – especially in the liver!

Your state of mind and how you respond to stressful situations dramatically influences the development of disease or wellbeing. But if you're dealing with chronic stress, there's something

you can do to help your body fight it more effectively.

New research conducted by the University of Konstanz psychologists and published in the journal *Scientific Reports* discovered that giving yourself a few minutes of downtime boosts both physical and mental relaxation significantly. And surprisingly, it only takes ten minutes to see the positive effects!

According to this new research, just ten minutes of massage resulted in higher levels of physiological and psychological relaxation in individuals. And it wasn't just massage.

Taking ten minutes to rest also increased relaxation, although not quite as much as massage did. This is the first solid indication that even short-term relaxation may reduce stress on both a physical and mental level by boosting the parasympathetic nervous system, which is the body's main engine for relaxation.

This study shows that massage, and even rest, boosts the parasympathetic nervous system, also resulting in less perceived mental stress. According to researchers, understanding relaxation, which is the opposite of stress, offers an

excellent way to better understand the negative effects stress has on the body and mind.

The exciting thing about this new study is that it shows us that even short periods of rest or massage are enough to counteract the effects of stress. Researchers found that you don't even need a professional massage to reap the relaxation benefits. Having a loved one rub your shoulders for just ten minutes or even taking a moment to close

your eyes and relax for ten minutes can boost your body's own engine of relaxation. Of course, when you add slow, deep breathing to the equation, it's even more effective!

www.naturalhealth365.com/stress-immune-system-3574.html

While massage and rest are beneficial in reducing stress, “Let us turn from the dusty, heated thoroughfares of life to rest in the shadow of Christ's love. Here we gain strength for conflict. Here we learn how to lessen toil and worry, and how to speak and sing to the praise of God. Let the weary and the heavy-laden learn from Christ the lesson of quiet trust. They must sit under His shadow if they would be possessors of His peace and rest.” *Counsels on Health*, 251, 252. LM



When you're feeling stressed out, depressed, or lonely, you may end up physically sick.

The Blessing of Humility

By John J. Grosboll

How much money does a person need? Many poor people believe that they would be happy if they were well-fixed financially and many who are comfortable believe that they would have less worries if they had more money. The Jones family wish they were like the Ritzes, and the Ritzes wish they were wealthy like the Vanderbilts. So, Jesus' teaching is a great paradox to what we tend to think. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Happy are the poor?"

Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord revealed the following information to the human race several hundred years

before the birth of Christ. "For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 57:15).

The One who inhabits eternity, says, "I dwell with the one that has a humble spirit." In Isaiah 66:2, He says, "All those things My hand has made, and all those things exist," says the LORD. "But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word." "

So, the Lord says that He looks on the person who is humble. There are many Bible texts that reveal that a person who is proud is not known by the Lord. After Mary, the mother of Jesus, was informed by the angel Gabriel that she would become the mother of the Messiah, she says, "My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state [poor person] of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. ... He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty" (Luke 1:47, 48, 53). God has promised to help those who are poor and are of a contrite and poor



spirit, but the rich are sent away because they don't feel any need.

In Revelation the 3rd chapter, there is found a description of the Christian church in the last days. It says, "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit [spue] you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—" (verses 15–17).

These people are rich in material things, but spiritually they are "miserable, wretched, poor, blind, and naked." After Job obtained a vision of his spiritual poverty and he stopped trying to justify himself, his misery and wretchedness came to an end. The Lord delivered him from the problem that the devil had brought upon him. His captivity was turned into victory and he experienced happiness again in his life.

We see the same thing in the life of the prophet Isaiah. When he recognized his spiritual poverty, he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone" (Isaiah 6:5)! He sensed his spiritual imperfection which now appeared to him in a new and hideous light. This changed attitude made it possible for God to cleanse him from his sin and then to use him as a spokesman for others (see Isaiah 6).

Something similar happened to the proud-spirited Simon Peter when he fell at Jesus' feet. In Luke 5:8–10, it says, "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!' For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.' So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." Notice, immediately when he



The Jones family wish they were like the Ritzes, and the Ritzes wish they were wealthy like the Vanderbilts.

acknowledged his condition, Jesus commissioned him to be a fisher of men.

The apostle Paul was once a proud and haughty Pharisee, but when he was changed he acknowledged himself to be "the chief of sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). When he acknowledged his sinful condition, he was elevated to become the chief of the apostles. So, recognition of our real spiritual condition and need is the first step in the beatitude ladder of spiritual progress that leads to the kingdom of heaven. In the first beatitude Jesus said, "Blessed [that is, happy] are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3).

The person who is proud in his heart has not yet taken the first step toward the heavenly kingdom. Recognition of sin, the crying out for pardon, for cleansing from guilt, are the beginning of the pathway to Zion and to happiness. There can be no blessed or happy state where there is unconfessed and unforgiven sin. Isaiah 48:22 says, "There is no peace," says the LORD, 'for the wicked.'

So, a contrite, a humble, a penitent spirit is the first qualification for citizenship in the kingdom of God and

for service in the cause of righteousness. Jesus, our Saviour, was this way Himself. Notice what He says concerning His own character: "I am gentle [meek] and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29). He was not proud. Notice what the apostle Paul says about the humility of Jesus: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery [a thing to be grasped] to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:5–8). This example of humility by Jesus, the majesty of heaven and king of the universe, is one that no human being could ever match.

In Jesus is an example of unparalleled humility. Jesus said, "I am lowly in heart." He might have stated this beatitude in the negative. Instead of saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," He could have said instead, "Unhappy are the proud in spirit." It would have been true. Of all people, the poor in spirit are

the most happy, and the proud-spirited end up being the most miserable. The proud in spirit are exceedingly sensitive to every little slight or wrong, real or imagined, that causes pain and discomfort. The proud in spirit are touchy and easily offended. They are miserable night and day because of hurt feelings and are often too selfish to be happy.

The only remedy for spiritual pride is the crucifixion of the proud, selfish flesh. Those who are dead to sin do not become offended. The apostle Paul said, “How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” “Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:2, 11).

Dead people are not sensitive. The psalmist wrote, “Great peace have they who love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Psalm 119:165 KJV). Offense naturally thrives where sin abounds. It was a proud and sensitive angel who committed the first sin. And the more he sinned, the more sensitive he became. We live in a world where all are suffering with proud flesh. Sinful flesh is always proud. It was impossible for Jesus to keep from offending His hearers because they were so sensitive and proud in their spirit. At the close of one of His sermons, almost everybody fled from Him (see John 6). The Pharisees were continually offended at His teachings. In fact, even the disciples were often grieved. Truth always offends those who are in error and sinners resent their shortcomings being pointed out.

However, a person who is poor in spirit can be corrected, and if willing to be corrected, then they are in position where they can be blessed. Jesus illustrated the contrast between the poor in spirit and the proud in spirit in a story. He told about two worshipers who went up to the temple to pray. “He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and

prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 18:9–14).

Notice, the Pharisee did not pray to God. Jesus made it very clear that he prayed a boasting speech to himself. It was not even a prayer at all, but a boast of his inbred and acquired righteousness. He did not even make a request. He simply thanked God that he was everything that he should be. He was grateful that he was different from others, especially from the poor publican.

The publican, however, was poor in spirit. He recognized his spiritual poverty. He cried out, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” He alone was justified and justification leads to happiness because the Bible says that when we’re justified by faith, then we have peace with God. Oftentimes we don’t realize that this same spirit of Phariseism is the common spirit in Christendom today. The first beatitude is “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This beatitude is very up to date because pride of spirit, self-sufficiency is more prevalent in the Christian world today, perhaps, than ever before. Phariseism is not extinct. In fact, when Jesus speaks of the condition of the Christian church in the last or remnant phase of its existence, it is described as a church with a Pharisaical attitude. As already seen in Revelation 3:15–17, this attitude leads Christians to believe they need nothing when in reality they have need of everything.

The spirit of Phariseism is the natural spirit of human nature and it is just as prevalent now as in the days when Jesus was among men. The church in its present condition is proud in spirit. Its members do not recognize their spiritual condition; in fact, they even boast of their spiritual wealth. In their own estimation, they are rich and

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You say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.

Revelation 3:17

increased in goods. They believe they are ready to go to heaven when in reality, they are wretched, miserable, poor, and blind, and naked, spiritually, and the Lord says, “I’m about to vomit you out of My mouth.” In other words, you are about to commit the unpardonable sin.

The message that describes the spiritual pride of the last-day church also provides a complete remedy. Notice what Jesus says to the church of the last days: “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see” (verse 18). He’s talking about spiritual gold and spiritual clothing, and spiritual eye salve. The gold, spiritual gold, represents the amount of faith and love a person has. Gold enables a person to get whatever they want. In the spiritual world, faith enables you to get whatever you need. In the physical world, if you have gold, you are wealthy. In the spiritual world, if you have love, you are wealthy. The Bible says that love is the bond of perfection (Colossians 3:14). But Jesus also says, “Buy from me white garments.” The Bible says clearly in Revelation 19 that the white garment is the righteousness of the saints that is imparted to them by Jesus Christ.

Then there is the eye salve which is needed today more than ever before. The modern church, in its own attitude and condition, shows that we are in desperate need of eye salve, which is the ability to discern and tell the difference between good and evil. The solution to our situation is to see and behold the character of Jesus Christ. The more we see in Him, the less we will see to esteem in ourselves. Just as soon as the modern church changes its attitude toward its own condition and needs, Jesus will abundantly supply His people with the pure gold of faith and love. The robe of His spotless righteousness and the anointing with the spiritual eye salve



will restore spiritual vision to be able to tell the difference between good and evil.

There is a poverty that makes rich. There was another church described in Revelation that was a very poor church. They, as well as everyone else thought that they were poor, but notice what Jesus says about them: “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:9).

Spiritual wealth awaits those who feel poverty-stricken in spirit. Many of the poorest people in this world are spiritually rich. In the same way, many of the richest people in this world are moral paupers and spiritual bankrupts. True riches, those that the Lord wants to give you, are the heritage of those only who recognize their spiritual need. The Bible says, “Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them who love Him” (James 2:5)?

Paul says, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), there dwells no good thing” (Romans 7:18, literal translation). Whom Christ pardons, He first makes penitent. If you have a sense of your deep soul poverty, if you know that you have no goodness of your own, you may find righteousness and strength by looking to

Jesus. Notice this promise that was given to the poor in spirit. It reads, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).

Do you recognize your spiritual poverty, and would you like to exchange that poverty for the riches of His grace? It does not matter what your past experience has been or however discouraging your present circumstances might be. Come to Jesus just the way you are – weak, helpless, and despairing – and you will find that He will take you in. He said, “The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (John 6:37). While you are a great way off, He will come to you and impart to you His righteousness that will change everything in your life. Trust Him!

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

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On Hearing His Voice

By Timothy M. Rittenour

It was my fourth...DUI. The officers cancelled my driver's license on the spot and removed the license plates from my vehicle. I walked to a nearby motel and checked in. I was despondent beyond words. I could not believe what had just happened to me. It seemed I had no control over my urge to drink and would, without a thought, put myself and others at risk in the process of doing so. I could not stop even though I had been through treatment three or four times over the last 20 years.

I had grown up a Seventh-day Adventist. I knew the truth. I had an Adventist education and when I was in my late teens, I had surrendered my life to Christ and been baptized, but somehow through the years I had lost my hold on Jesus and drifted away. I had attempted to return to Him several times, but the

devil always had a foothold in my life and sucked me back into his service. Now alcohol had become my "best friend" and master.

While sitting on the bed in the motel and looking at my hopeless and miserable life, I decided I had no reason to live. Death seemed like a welcome release from my pain. I overdosed on some of my medications hoping never to wake up and then made a noose with my belt and cinched it around my neck as hard as I could wondering how I could hang myself in the motel room. Needless to say, I eventually fell asleep and woke up the next morning. How I wished I hadn't.

That morning I began pacing the room and wondering what to do. My mind was a buzz with dejected thoughts. I was filled with shame and

guilt and misery and hopelessness. Finally, with nowhere to go and no one to turn to I half-heartedly asked God for help ... not expecting an answer, given my life of sin in the face of knowing better.

Suddenly, somehow through my gloomy wretched thoughts, I heard the voice of God speaking to my heart. I knew it was Him. I had heard that voice before. He told me that He could and would help me, but I had to be willing to give up some things. What did He ask me to give up? Well, alcohol, of course, but also caffeine and nicotine. I also had to turn over my money to a trusted friend or relative along with my phone and the keys to my vehicle. I needed to move away from the town I was living in and move in with or by family that loved me and were faithful SDA's.

Just a few moments after I heard God's proposal, I went to my knees and emphatically and without reservation agreed to His requests and surrendered my life to Jesus. I held nothing back. Jesus was my only hope, and I knew it and I put my all on the altar.

This experience is described in Matthew 18:8, 9 where Jesus says, "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." I felt I was cutting off a hand and plucking out an eye, but I did so with the utmost determination. My present and future life depended on it.

In my surrender to Jesus, I began confessing my many sins and asking for His forgiveness. I had to have a new heart and a new life. "Therefore if any man (any man! including me!) be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things (ALL THINGS! all my "things" were as "filthy rags") are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Here is another description of my experience found in Ezekiel 36:24-29, *last part*: "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleanness."

To this day I can hardly believe the transformation that has taken place in my heart and life from that moment till now. I got up from my knees feeling I was a new man. My desire for drink and other chemicals left me. I had peace and hope and joy in my heart and felt a cleansing process had begun in my life. Jeremiah 4:14 says,

"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved."

I continue that washing and cleansing daily now. I had a conversion, but I need that conversion experience daily yea, hour by hour.

Now my greatest joy is Jesus and by the eye of faith I want to see Him standing over me as I drink in His word, discern His presence as I go about my day. I want His companionship more and more and to be like Him in every way. I still feel my sinfulness. I still bemoan the contrast of my life with the life of my Savior, but I am on His narrow way headed for a home in heaven.

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). I am so happy I have a complete sin-pardoning Savior who can take away my sin. I don't want to serve sin and the devil. I've done so long enough. Moses chose rather to "suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25) and I want to make that choice too. I am not interested in a gospel that does not take away my sin. I want complete victory, not a partial victory over my sins. "Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin" (1 John 3:5). Oh how much I want to remain "in Him" and He in me.



How about you dear friend? Do you have a "sin which doth so easily beset" you (Hebrews 12:1)? Are your promises to "quit" like the proverbial "ropes of sand"? I've been there. I know what that is like. I have been in the miry pit with a sense of hopelessness crushing me. I stand with Paul feeling I am among the "chief" of sinners. But Paul says,

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). He saved me. He SAVED even me! He can do the same for you. You may feel like surrender is like cutting off an arm or plucking out an eye, but I tell you it is SO worth it! Heaven

is cheap enough! Don't delay. If you have not done so already, why not make that decision, the decision to place your all on the altar. Let Jesus take away your sin, all of your sin, and begin a new life with Him today! He loves you. He is waiting and longing to embrace you and cleanse and heal your heart and mind so you may "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

I am still leaving my money and phone and keys in the hands of someone I am with daily and trust. I can use them when I need to, of course, but I am with someone when I do. It may be that for me I will need this safeguard till Jesus comes. That is fine with me. These have been stumbling blocks to me. If I have Jesus, I am happy and content and need nothing more. LM

Timothy Rittenour is a retired ER Physician living in Minnesota. He is the father of five children, two of whom are missionaries in Africa.

March 28 – April 3, 2021

The Christian Home

Key Text

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made He a woman, and He brought her unto the man. And Adam said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:21–24).

Study Help: *The Ministry of Healing*, 349–394.

Introduction

“As a rule, children inherit the dispositions and tendencies of their parents, and imitate their example.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 118.

Sunday

1 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HOME

1.a. Why did God create Eve? Genesis 2:18.

Note: “Men and women can reach God’s ideal for them if they will take Christ as their helper. What human wisdom cannot do, His grace will accomplish for those who give themselves to Him in loving trust. His providence can unite hearts in bonds that are of heavenly origin. Love will not be a mere exchange of soft and flattering words. The loom of heaven weaves with warp and woof finer, yet more firm, than can be woven by the looms of earth. The result is not a tissue fabric, but a texture that will bear wear and test and trial. Heart will be bound to heart in the golden bonds of a love that is enduring.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 362.

1.b. Describe the finding of a wife for Isaac? Genesis 24:37–67.

Note: “God Himself gave Adam a companion. He provided ‘an help meet for him’ (Genesis 2:18)—a helper corresponding to him—one who was fitted to be his companion, and who could be one with him in love and sympathy. Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self, showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 46.

Monday

2 HUSBANDS AND WIVES

2.a. What is the husband’s responsibility when married? Ephesians 5:25.

Note: “It is no evidence of manliness in the husband for him to dwell constantly upon his position as head of the family. It does not increase respect for him to hear him quoting Scripture to sustain his claims to authority. It will not make him more manly to require his wife, the mother of his children, to act upon his plans as if they were infallible. The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. Christ’s authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church.” *The Adventist Home*, 215.

2.b. Is only the wife to submit? Ephesians 5:21, 22.

2.c. Ephesians 5:23 says that the husband is the head of the wife, but this has a qualification. If this qualification is not met, then the husband is not the head of the wife and she should not submit to him. What is this qualification? Ephesians 5:25, 28, 29, 33.

Tuesday

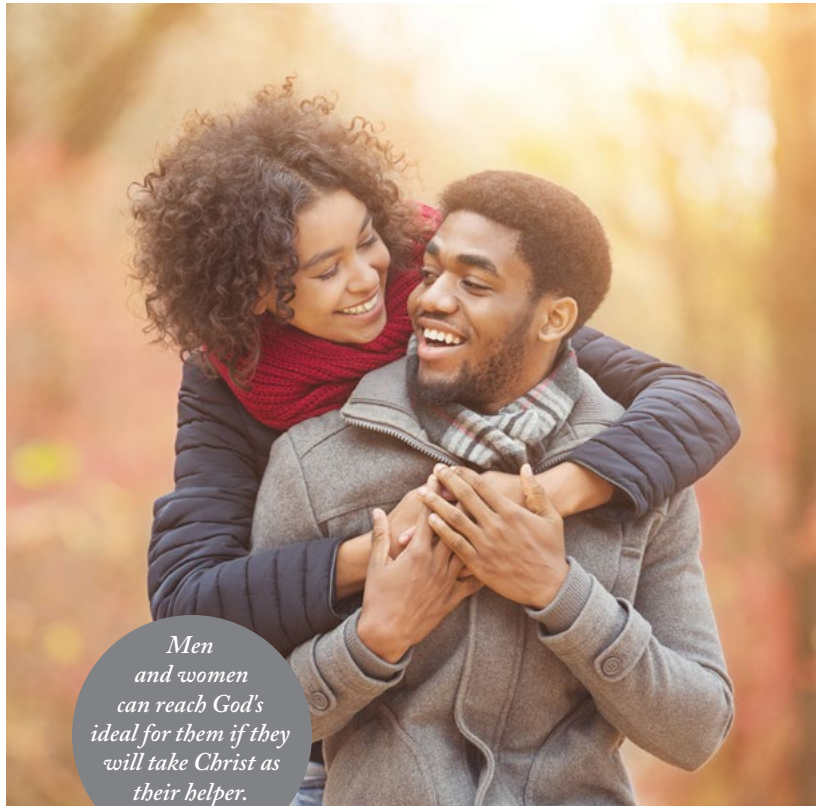
3 CHILDHOOD INFLUENCES

3.a. Why are discipline and training necessary in childhood? Proverbs 29:15.

Note: “Children should never be flattered, for flattery is poison to them; but parents should show a sanctified, tender regard for them, thus gaining their confidence and love.” *The Review and Herald*, January 24, 1907.

“Whenever the mother can speak a word of commendation for the good conduct of her children, she should do so. She should encourage them by words of approval and looks of love.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 532.

“One of the characteristics that should be especially cherished and cultivated in every child is that self-forgetfulness which imparts to the life such an unconscious grace. Of all excellences of character this is one of the most beautiful, and for every true lifework it is one of the qualifications most essential.



Men and women can reach God's ideal for them if they will take Christ as their helper.

“Children need appreciation, sympathy, and encouragement, but care should be taken not to foster in them a love of praise. It is not wise to give them special notice, or to repeat before them their clever sayings. The parent or teacher who keeps in view the true ideal of character and the possibilities of achievement, cannot cherish or encourage self-sufficiency. He will not encourage in the youth the desire or effort to display their ability or proficiency. He who looks higher than himself will be humble; yet he will possess a dignity that is not abashed or disconcerted by outward display or human greatness.” *Education*, 237.

3.b. What lesson can be learned from the choice of environment as revealed in the experience of Lot? Genesis 13:10–13.

Note: “The sinful conduct of his [Lot’s] daughters was the result of the evil association of that vile place [the city of Sodom]. Its moral corruption had become so interwoven with their character that they could not distinguish between good and evil.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 167, 168.

Wednesday

4 EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT

4.a. What promise is given to those who wisely train up their children? Proverbs 22:6.

Note: “Neither infants, children, or youth should hear an impatient word from father, mother, or any member of the household; for they receive impressions very early in life, and what parents make them today, they will be tomorrow, and the next day, and the next. The first lessons impressed upon the child are seldom forgotten. ...

“The impressions made on the heart early in life are seen in after years. They may be buried, but they will seldom be obliterated.” *Child Guidance*, 193, 194.

4.b. Name Biblical examples of good childhood training.
2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15; Luke 1:6, 15, 76, 80.

Thursday

5 EXCESSES AND INDULGENCES

5.a. What counsels are given against a lack of punishment or training? 1 Samuel 2:29, 30; 3:13, 14.

Note: “In some families the wish of the child is law. Everything he desires is given him. Everything he dislikes, he is encouraged to dislike. Indulgence is supposed to make the child happy, but it only makes him restless and discontented. Indulgence has spoiled his appetite for plain, healthful food, and for the plain use of his time; self-gratification has done the work of unsettling his character for time and for eternity.” *The Review and Herald*, May 10, 1898.

“Do not educate your children to think that your love for them must be expressed by indulgence of their pride, extravagance, and love of display.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 451.

5.b. What things better than wealth can be given a child to help him become a healthy adult? Proverbs 3:11–18.

Note: “Better than any other inheritance of wealth you can give to your children will be the gift of a healthy body, a sound mind, and a noble character. Those who understand what constitutes life’s true success will be wise betimes. They will keep in view life’s best things in their choice of a home.

“Instead of dwelling where only the works of men can be seen, where the sights and sounds frequently suggest thoughts of evil, where turmoil and confusion bring weariness and disquietude, go where you can look upon the works of God. Find rest of spirit in the beauty and quietude and peace of nature. Let the eye rest on the green fields, the groves, and the hills. Look up to the blue sky, unobscured by the city’s dust and smoke, and breathe the invigorating air of heaven. Go where, apart from the distractions and dissipations of city life, you can give your children your companionship, where you can teach them to learn of God through His works, and train them for lives of integrity and usefulness.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 366, 367.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How is environment important in family life?
- 2 How can husbands and wives help each other in managing a home?
- 3 Describe how the home atmosphere and surrounding environment affect the early development of children.
- 4 What lessons should the child learn first even in babyhood from his parents?
- 5 What are the most important gifts we can give to our growing children?

April 4 – 10, 2021

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Key Text

“These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7).

Study Help: *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 131–160; vol. 5, 36–45.

Introduction

“The youth are receptive, fresh, ardent, hopeful. When once they have tasted the blessedness of self-sacrifice, they will not be satisfied unless they are constantly learning of the Great Teacher.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 471.

Sunday

1 THE TRAINING OF YOUTH

1.a. How should the training of children be different from the training of animals? 1 Chronicles 28:9; James 3:3.

Note: “Children have an intelligent will, which should be directed to control all their powers. Dumb animals need to be trained, for they have not reason and intellect. But the human mind must be taught self-control. It must be educated to rule the human being, while animals are controlled by a master and are trained to be submissive to him. The master is mind, judgment, and will for his beast. A child may be so trained as to have, like the beast, no will of his own. Even his individuality may be merged in the one who superintends his training; his will, to all intents and purposes, is subject to the will of the teacher.

“Children who are thus educated will ever be deficient in moral energy and individual responsibility. They have not been taught to move from reason and principle; their wills have been controlled by another, and the mind has not been called out, that it might expand and strengthen by exercise.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 132.

1.b. How can “Peter’s ladder” be applied to raising children? 2 Peter 1:5–8.

Note: “The severe training of youth, without properly directing them to think and act for themselves as their own capacity and turn of mind will allow, that by this means they may have growth of thought, feelings of self-respect, and confidence in their own ability to perform, will ever produce a class who are weak in mental and moral power. And when they stand in the world to act for themselves they will reveal the fact that they were trained like the animals, and not educated. ...

“Those parents and teachers who boast of having complete control of the minds and wills of the children under their care would cease their boastings could they trace out the future lives of the children who are thus brought into subjection by force or through fear. These are almost wholly unprepared to share in the stern responsibilities of life. When these youth are no longer under their parents and teachers, and are compelled to think and act for themselves, they are almost sure to take a wrong course and yield to the power of temptation. They do not make this life a success, and the same deficiencies are seen in their religious life.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 133, 134.

Monday

2 BALANCE IN EDUCATION

2.a. Why is manual labor important for every child/youth? Haggai 2:4, *last part*; 1 Kings 19:19; Lamentations 3:27; 2 Thessalonians 3:7–12. What can we learn from the example of Elisha?

Note: “In the quietude of country life, under the teaching of God and nature and the discipline of useful work, he [Elisha] received the training in habits of simplicity and of obedience to his parents and to God that helped to fit him for the high position he was afterward to occupy. ...

“While co-operating with his father in the home-life duties, he was learning to co-operate with God.” *Prophets and Kings*, 217, 218.

“And now, as in the days of Israel, every youth should be instructed in the duties of practical life. Each should acquire a knowledge of some branch of manual labor by which, if need be, he may obtain a livelihood. This is essential, not only as a safeguard against the vicissitudes of life, but from its bearing upon physical, mental, and moral development. Even if it were certain that one would never need to resort to manual labor for his support, still he should be taught to work. Without physical exercise, no one can have a sound constitution and vigorous health; and the discipline of well-regulated labor is no less essential to the securing of a strong and active mind and a noble character.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 601.

2.b. What is the four-fold goal of childhood education?

Luke 2:40, 52.

Note: “If the physical powers are not taxed equally with the mental, too much strain is brought upon the latter. Unless every part of the human machinery performs its allotted tasks, the mental powers cannot be used to their highest capability for any length of time.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 522.

Tuesday

3 INSTRUCTION

3.a How often are children to be instructed from God’s word? Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

Note: “The power of self-restraint strengthens by exercise. That which at first seems difficult, by constant repetition grows easy, until right thoughts and actions become habitual. If we will we may turn away from all that is cheap and inferior, and rise to a high standard; we may be respected by men and beloved of God.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 491.

Wednesday

4 CONSCIENCE

4.a. What things should a person think about to develop a good conscience? Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Note: “The removal of one safeguard from the conscience, the failure to do the very thing that the Lord has marked out, one step in the path of wrong principle, often leads to an entire change of the life and action. ... We are safe only in following where Christ leads the way.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 320.

4.b. How is man’s conscience to be educated and guided? John 14:6, 26; 16:13.

Note: “He whose conscience is a sure guide will not stop to reason when light shines upon him out of God’s Word. He will not be guided by human counsel. He will not allow worldly business to stand in the way of obedience. He will lay every selfish interest at the door of investigation and will approach the word of God as one whose eternal interest is hanging in the balance.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 325.

“Every room in the soul temple has become more or less defiled, and needs cleansing. The cobwebbed closet of conscience is to be entered. The windows of the soul are to be closed earthward and thrown wide open heavenward that the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness may have free access. The memory is to be refreshed by Bible principles. The mind is to be kept clear and pure that it may distinguish between good and evil.” *Ibid.*, 327, 328.



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have an
intelligent will,
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Thursday

5 PERCEPTION AND MOTIVATION

5.a. How does a person become changed for the worse?
For the better? Jeremiah 2:13; 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Note: “As those sacred precepts in which God has opened to men the perfection and holiness of His character are neglected, and the minds of the people are attracted to human teachings and theories, what marvel that there has followed a decline of living piety in the church.” *The Great Controversy*, 478.

“Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 355.

5.b. What should one’s personal aim be? Philippians 3:14.

Note: “The specific place appointed us in life is determined by our capabilities. Not all reach the same development or do with equal efficiency the same work. God does not expect the hyssop to attain the proportions of the cedar, or the olive the height of the stately palm. But each should aim just as high as the union of human with divine power makes it possible for him to reach.” *Education*, 267.

“Let the youth be impressed with the thought that education is not to teach them how to escape life’s disagreeable tasks and heavy burdens; that its purpose is to lighten the work by teaching better methods and higher aims. Teach them that life’s true aim is not to secure the greatest possible gain for themselves, but to honor their Maker in doing their part of the world’s work, and lending a helpful hand to those weaker or more ignorant.” *Ibid.*, 221, 222.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Discuss the difference between education and training.
- 2 How are habits established?
- 3 Once habits are formed, how do they determine one’s destiny?
- 4 Discuss the importance of conscience.
- 5 How can one obtain a symmetrical education?

April 11 – 17, 2021

The Mind

Key Text

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).

Study Help: *Medical Ministry*, 110–117; *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 349–353.

Introduction

“The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 347.

Sunday

1 THE ORIGIN OF THOUGHTS

1.a. Where do both good and evil communication and thoughts have their origin? Luke 6:45; Matthew 15:18.

Note: “The mind controls the whole man. All our actions, good or bad, have their source in the mind. It is the mind that worships God, and allies us to heavenly beings.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 426.

“When the thought of evil is loved and cherished, however secretly, said Jesus, it shows that sin still reigns in the heart. The soul is still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. He who finds pleasure in dwelling upon scenes of impurity, who indulges the evil thought, the lustful look, may behold in the open sin, with its burden of shame and heart-breaking grief, the true nature of the evil which he has hidden in the chambers of the soul. The season of temptation, under which, it may be, one falls into grievous sin, does not create the evil that is revealed, but only develops or makes manifest that which was hidden and latent in the heart.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 60.

1.b. What is the function/purpose of the brain? Proverbs 23:7.

Note: “The brain is the capital of the body, the seat of all the nervous forces and of mental action. The nerves proceeding from the brain control the body. By the brain nerves, mental impressions are conveyed to all the nerves of the body as by telegraph wires; and they control the vital action of every part of the system.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 69.

“The brain is the organ and instrument of the mind and controls the whole body. In order for the other parts of the system to be healthy, the brain must be healthy.” *Counsels on Health*, 586.

“The brain is the citadel of the being.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 299.

Monday

2 THE INTERNAL/EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIP

2.a. Describe the relationship between the mind and the physical appearance. Proverbs 15:13, *first part*; Nehemiah 2:2.

2.b. Why is it so important to protect the healthy function of the mind (heart)? How can we do this? Proverbs 4:23, 27.

Note: “The [spiritual] heart is to be carefully kept and guarded. ‘What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul’ (Mark 8:36, 37)? Christ must abide in the heart by faith. His word is the bread of life and the water of salvation. Trust in its fullness comes to us through constant commu-

nion with God. By eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ we gain spiritual strength. Christ supplies the lifeblood of the heart, and Christ and the Holy Spirit give nerve power. Begotten again unto a lively hope, imbued with the quickening power of a new nature, the soul is enabled to rise higher and still higher.” *Counsels on Health*, 593.

Tuesday

3 A BATTLE OF ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

- 3.a. Describe the basic battle of the great controversy within human hearts. Galatians 5:16, 17. Why are we warned in this regard? 1 Corinthians 10:12.

Note: “Satan well knows the material with which he has to deal in the human heart. He knows—for he has studied with fiendish intensity for thousands of years—the points most easily assailed in every character; and through successive generations he has wrought to overthrow the strongest men.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 457.

“In every soul two powers are struggling earnestly for the victory. Unbelief marshals its forces, led by Satan, to cut us off from the Source of our strength. Faith marshals its forces, led by Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. Hour by hour, in the sight of the heavenly universe, the conflict goes forward. This is a hand-to-hand fight, and the great question is, Which shall obtain the mastery? This question each must decide for himself. In this warfare all must take a part, fighting on one side or the other. From the conflict there is no release.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 328.

- 3.b. What is Satan doing in these last days? Job 1:7; Revelation 12:12.

Note: “The work of Satan as an accuser began in heaven. This has been his work on earth ever since man’s fall, and it will be his work in a special sense as we approach nearer to the close of this world’s history. As he sees that his time is short, he will work with greater earnestness to deceive and destroy. He is angry when he sees a people on the earth who, even in their



The brain nerves are the only medium through which Heaven communicates to man and affects his inmost life.

weakness and sinfulness, have respect to the law of Jehovah. He is determined that they shall not obey God.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 167, 168.

“The temptations of Satan are greater now than ever before, for he knows that his time is short and that very soon every case will be decided, either for life or for death.” *Early Writings*, 46.

Wednesday

4 SATAN’S METHODS TO CONTROL THE MIND

- 4.a. Explain Satan’s techniques to gain control over the human mind.
- Lying: Genesis 3:1–5.
 - Deception: Matthew 24:4; Acts 5:3.
 - Flattery and inducements: Luke 4:5, 6.
 - Threats and intimidation: Acts 4:15–18, 21.
 - Force: Acts 5:26–29, 40.

Note: “Satan exercised his power of hypnotism over Adam and Eve, and this power he strove to exercise over Christ.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1081.

4.b. Upon whom is Satan focusing his main attention in these last days? Matthew 24:24; Revelation 12:17.

Note: “False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to God’s people. Thus Satan will try to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Most seducing influences will be exerted; minds will be hypnotized.” *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 293.

“Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God’s people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God’s tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in Exodus 31:12–18. They are to take their stand on the living word: ‘It is written.’ This is the only foundation upon which they can stand securely. Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope.” *Ibid.*, vol. 9, 16.

Thursday

5 GOD’S METHODS TO DEVELOP THE MIND

5.a. Describe God’s method of developing human mental faculties. Joshua 24:15; Proverbs 23:26; Philippians 2:5.

Note: “The Lord requires His people to use their reason, and not lay it aside for impressions. His work will be intelligible to all His children. His teaching will be such as will commend itself to the understanding of intelligent minds. It is calculated to elevate the mind.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 230.

“God sets before man life and death. He can have his choice.” *Early Writings*, 221.

“Now we may go into a cellar and stay there and look around into its dark corners, and we can talk of the darkness and say, ‘Oh, it is so dark here,’ and keep talking about it. But will it make it any lighter? Oh, no! What are you going to do? Come out of it; come out of the dark into the upper chamber where the light of God’s countenance shines brightly.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 490, 491.

5.b. How does God’s method of influencing the mind differ from Satan’s? Isaiah 1:18, 19; John 8:32, 44.

Note: “God does not force the will or judgment of any. He takes no pleasure in a slavish obedience.” *The Great Controversy*, 541.

“In His dealing with sin, God could employ only righteousness and truth. Satan could use what God could not—flattery and deceit.” *Ibid.*, 498.

“God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan’s constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself.” *Ibid.*, 591.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the relationship between the mind and the body?
- 2 Where is the battleground of life’s greatest conflict?
- 3 What methods does the adversary use to control the will?
- 4 Discuss God’s methods of developing the human mind in preparation for eternity.

April 18 – 24, 2021

The Influence of the Mind

Key Text

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee” (Isaiah 26:3).

Study Help: *The Ministry of Healing*, 241–259; *Education*, 123–127.

Introduction

“As a safeguard against evil, the preoccupation of the mind with good is worth more than unnumbered barriers of law and discipline.” *Education*, 213.

Sunday

1 HEALTH AND YOUR MIND

1.a. Describe the relationship existing between the mind, emotions, and body. Isaiah 21:3, 4.

Note: “Disease is sometimes produced, and is often greatly aggravated, by the imagination. ... Many die from disease the cause of which is wholly imaginary.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 241.

“Many are diseased physically, mentally, and morally, because their attention is turned almost exclusively to themselves.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 647.

“Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. Nine tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here. Perhaps some living home trouble is, like a canker, eating to the very soul and weakening the life forces. Remorse for sin sometimes undermines the constitution and unbalances the mind. There are erroneous doctrines also, as that of an eternally burning hell and the endless torment of the wicked, that, by giving exaggerated and distorted views of the character of God, have produced the same result upon sensitive minds.” *Ibid.*, vol. 5, 444.

1.b. How can you keep your mind and thoughts in good spiritual health? Philippians 2:5–8.

Note: “The relation which exists between the mind and the body is very intimate. When one is affected, the other sympathizes. The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of right-doing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood, and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life.” *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, 13.

Monday

2 DISEASE THAT BEGINS IN THE MIND

2.a. What has a negative effect on the mind? Proverbs 27:3, 4. Name some things which are life-producing. Proverbs 3:13.

Note: “The influence of the mind on the body, as well as of the body on the mind, should be emphasized. The electric power of the brain, promoted by mental activity, vitalizes the whole system, and is thus an invaluable aid in resisting disease. This should be made plain. The power of the will and the importance of self-control, both in the preservation and in the recovery of health, the depressing and even ruinous effect of anger, discontent, selfishness, or impurity, and, on the other hand, the marvelous life-giving power to be found in cheerfulness, unselfishness, gratitude, should also be shown.” *Education*, 197.

2.b. How does our mind affect our body? Proverbs 17:22.

Note: “A great deal of the sickness which afflicts humanity has its origin in the mind and can only be cured by restoring the mind to health. There are very many more than we imagine who are sick mentally.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 184.

Tuesday

3 THE MIND, THE CITADEL

3.a. What directs, commands and controls the human body and its components? Proverbs 23:7, *first part*.

Note: “The brain is the capital of the body. If the perceptive faculties become benumbed through intemperance of any kind, eternal things are not discerned.” *The Review and Herald*, September 8, 1874.

“Every organ of the body was made to be servant to the mind. The mind is the capital of the body.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 136.

3.b. How does the Bible describe the effects of alcoholic beverages on the mind? Proverbs 23:29–35.

Note: “On every side, Satan seeks to entice the youth into the path of perdition; and if he can once get their feet set in the way, he hurries them on in their downward course, leading them from one dissipation to another, until his victims lose their tenderness of conscience, and have no more the fear of God before their eyes. They exercise less and less self-restraint. They become addicted to the use of wine and alcohol, tobacco and opium, and go from one stage of debasement to another. They are slaves to appetite. Counsel which they once respected, they learn to despise. They put on swaggering airs, and boast of liberty when they are the servants of corruption. They mean by liberty that they are slaves to selfishness, debased appetite, and licentiousness.” *Temperance*, 274.

Wednesday

4 DETERMINING HAPPINESS IN LIFE

4.a. What principles help us in the cultivation of our own happiness? 1 Peter 1:22; 4:8; John 13:34, 15.

Note: “A cultivated intellect is a great treasure; but without the softening influence of sympathy and sanctified love, it is not of the highest value. We should have words and deeds of tender consideration for others. We can manifest a thousand little attentions in friendly words and pleasant looks, which will be reflected upon us again. Thoughtless Christians manifest by their neglect of others that they are not in union with Christ. It is impossible to be in union with Christ and yet be unkind to others and forgetful of their rights. Many long intensely for friendly sympathy. God has given each of us an identity of our own, which cannot be merged in that of another; but our individual characteristics will be much less prominent if we are indeed Christ’s and His will is ours. Our lives should be consecrated to the good and happiness of others, as was our Saviour’s. 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.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 539, 540.

4.b. How do heavenly inspired writings affect our mind? Isaiah 26:3; Psalm 19:7, 8.

Note: “The Bible is our guide in the safe paths that lead to eternal life. God has inspired men to write that which will present the truth to us, which will attract, and which, if practised, will enable the receiver to obtain moral power to rank among the most highly educated minds. The minds of all who make the word of God their study will enlarge. Far more than any other study, this is of a nature to increase the powers of



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comprehension, and endow every faculty with new vigor. It brings the mind in contact with broad, ennobling principles of truth. It brings us into close connection with all heaven, imparting wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding.” *The Youth’s Instructor*, October 13, 1898.

Thursday

5 NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE MENTAL FOODS

- 5.a. List some of the effects of negative mental foods.
Mark 7:20–23; 1 Timothy 5:13.

Note: “It is best for every soul to closely investigate what mental food is served up for him to eat. When those come to you who live to talk, and who are all armed and equipped to say, ‘Report, and we will report it,’ stop and think if the conversation will give spiritual help, spiritual efficiency, that in spiritual communication you may eat of the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God. ... We are not to be tattlers, or gossipers, or talebearers; we are not to bear false witness. We are forbidden by God to engage in trifling, foolish conversation, in jesting, joking, or speaking any idle words. We must give an account of what we say to God. We will be brought into judgment for our hasty words, that do no good to the speaker or to the hearer. Then let us all speak words that will tend to edification. Remember that you are of value with God. Allow no cheap, foolish talk or wrong principles to compose your Christian experience.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 458.

- 5.b. Contrast the results obtained from evil thoughts with those of good thoughts. Luke 6:43–45.

Note: “When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to choose another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord’ (2 Corinthians 3:18).” *Steps to Christ*, 72.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Where do most diseases have their origin, and how can such diseases be avoided?
- 2 What is the commander of the body, and how is it to be protected?
- 3 How do decision-making and Bible study affect mental health?
- 4 Explain why a proper mental diet is important.

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Once upon a time there was a testing procedure used by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to determine the antioxidant capacity of fruits and vegetables. It was called the ORAC test (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity).

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Kale is also loaded with calcium, iron, vitamins A, C, and bone-building K. It contains seven times the beta-carotene of broccoli and 10 times as much lutein and zeaxanthin, eye-promoting carotenoids known to help protect against macular degeneration. And 2 cups contain about 4g of protein and 3g of fiber, making it an all-around nutritional powerhouse vegetable. *Better Nutrition*, February 2020, 17. [LM](#)

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



WINTER GREENS SALAD

Ingredients

1 large bunch curly green kale, ribs removed, chopped into small pieces, sprinkled lightly with salt, massaged for about 30 sec.

1 medium avocado, diced

Dressing

½ cup sundried tomatoes

¼ cup soak water

6–8 Tbsp. olive oil

Juice and zest of 1 medium lemon (¼ cup juice), or to taste

1 ½ Tbsp. honey

1 Tbsp. nutritional yeast, optional

½ tsp. salt, scant

¼ tsp. red pepper flakes

Process

Cover sundried tomatoes in boiling water for a few minutes to rehydrate. Remove from water; reserve ¼ cup soak water; let cool. Transfer tomatoes and soak water to blender. Add oil, lemon juice and zest, honey, nutritional yeast and salt; blend until smooth. Stir in pepper flakes. Combine prepared kale and dressing; toss until thoroughly coated. Gently fold in avocado and enjoy.





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