

HISTORIC  
**LANDMARKS**  
OF ADVENTISM

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Be Given You*

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## From the Editor

*John J. Grosboll*

# Enforcing the Mark of the Beast

**T**he Bible predicts in Revelation 13 that just before the end of the world the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:1–10) is going to be enforced upon the whole human race. If you do not consent to receive this mark or worship the image, to the beast you will not be able to buy or sell (verses 16, 17). Eventually there will be a law that if you do not receive this mark or worship the image you will be killed (verse 15). In spite of this pressure, the people of God will not receive it (verse 2).

God has written His official response to the enforcement of the mark of the beast and the worship of its image 2000 years before its occurrence. (See Revelation 14:9–12.) From this important passage of scripture, we can learn several important things. (1) The worship of any image is contrary to the second commandment and forbidden in the law of God. (2) Receiving the mark of the beast will expose you to receive the wrath of God (verse 10). The only people who receive the wrath of God are those who obey unrighteousness (Romans 2:8) so the mark of the beast involves unrighteousness. (3) All unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17). (4) Sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4) so the mark of the beast involves the breaking of one or

more of the commandments. (5) Those who keep God's commandments do not receive the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:12). (6) The special mark of this power is its deliberate attempt to change times and law (Daniel 7:25). A careful examination reveals that the little horn power of Daniel 7 and the beast power of Revelation 13:1–10 are the same entity. (7) The only time mentioned in God's law is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. (8) Those who receive the mark of the beast will also receive the seven last plagues (Revelation 16:2). (9) A great number of those who are deceived by the false prophet and receive the mark of the beast will still be alive when Jesus returns in the clouds of heaven (described in symbolic language in Revelation 19:11–21) and will at that time be destroyed (verses 20, 21). So, the destiny of those alive in the final generation of this world's history will be determined by either keeping the commandments of God or receiving the mark of the beast in order to buy and sell.

Interestingly for the first time in the history of the world we are in a situation where the governments of the world are capable of preventing a person from buying or selling from centrally located computers that control the flow of digital money. **LM**

HISTORIC

## LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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**LANDMARKS** is a magazine of Steps to Life, a ministry established in 1988 by Seventh-day Adventists. It is dedicated to the publication of the historic doctrines held by God's true people in all ages. Its special emphasis is to present truth (2 Peter 1:12)—those historic doctrines espoused by Seventh-day Adventist pioneers in the nineteenth century. Its purpose is to help all of God's remnant people to press together in unity, holding high the banner on which is inscribed the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This magazine is designed to help believers to defend the faith and to expose the flood of false doctrine by which the truth is being assailed in these last days. It is the goal of **LANDMARKS'** editors to present articles based on truth from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Viewpoints of writers and/or contributors expressed outside of articles printed in this publication are not necessarily the views of this magazine's editors and are not endorsed by Steps to Life Ministries.

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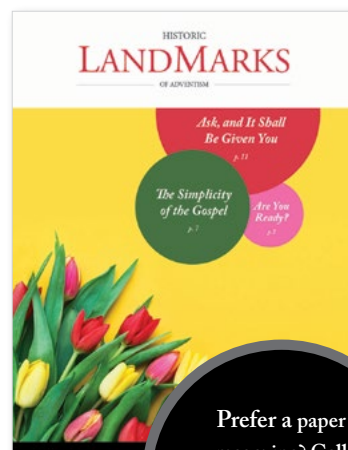
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# *Are You Ready?*

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By John J. Grosboll

**A**s a frequent traveler, I have missed my flight or ride on occasion and have also watched it happen to others. Once, I had a long time to fill as my flight was delayed almost two hours. While waiting, I observed a plane that was ready to leave. The ticket agent announced the last call for the flight several times. Finally the door was closed, and the plane pulled away from the jetway. A short time later, two young ladies came running from the other end of the concourse to the counter and asked if they could board, but the ticket agent said, "I'm sorry, it's too late." I thought of all the times that I had missed my plane. It is frustrating when you intend to be somewhere and something happens that you are delayed. You may be almost there, but do not quite make it. Pray that the Lord helps you that no matter what happens, you will not be too late for what is really important.





The Bible says that at the end of time many people will not be ready for the Lord's return. It will be a terrible experience to realize they need to be ready now or risk not being ready at all. They will be almost saved, but totally lost. What good will it do for you or me to say on that day, "I was almost saved?" Do you think that will bring you any comfort on the day of judgment?

When I come to the end of my life in this world, whether by death or translation, I want to be ready, don't you? The Scripture records the dying testimony of a man who, coming to the end of his life, was ready. A short time before his death, the apostle Paul wrote a letter to Timothy. He knew that very soon he would be martyred and sacrifice his life for the cause of the gospel, but he wasn't sad because he was ready. He said, "For I am now ready to be offered" (2 Timothy 4:6, *first part*, KJV). Notice that Paul didn't say, "I'm almost ready." He was able to say, "I am ready." How could he be so sure?

Acts 9:3, 4 says that Paul was on the Damascus road when, "As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' Then the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.' ... 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do'" (verses 5, 6). Some manuscripts also add the words, "It is hard for you to kick against the pricks," plus the words, "Lord, what do You wish for me to do?" The Lord told him to go to Damascus and wait until Ananias came.

In Acts 9:17, it says, "Ananias ... entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.'" Paul not only received his sight, but he received spiritual eyesight



and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. "Immediately ... he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized" and "Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God" (verses 18, 20). Paul continually preached this same story about Jesus.

The Damascus Road experience was a turning point in Paul's life. He was converted. The word in the New Testament that is translated *conversion* means *to turn around*. Paul's life was completely turned in the opposite direction from where he had been headed before. He had set out to persecute Christians, but left Damascus preaching Jesus.

When Jesus said to him, "Why are you persecuting Me?" Paul saw himself in a new light and realized that by persecuting these men and women, he had hurt the heart of Jesus. He realized what a terrible, wretched person he was. And unless we realize how terrible and wretched we are, there is not much of a chance that we are going to be converted. There will be no change in our heart or our life as long as we think we're pretty good. Do you know that if you or I hurt even one of the Lord's children, including little children, we have hurt Jesus Himself and in the day of judgment we will have to give an account? In persecuting the Christians, Paul was

persecuting Jesus. We need to talk and act toward other people in the same way we would with Jesus.

The Pharisees and Sadducees had a high opinion of themselves, but not too many of them were converted. One of the first steps to being converted is to realize that in the heart and spirit dwells no good thing, as Paul says in Romans 7:18. When he saw that he was a wretched sinner who had been hurting Jesus by persecuting His followers, then he realized his own need of Jesus.

The Bible says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9). Are you going to cling to your preconceived ideas about yourself or are you going to believe what the Bible says? As a Bible-believing Christian, I have to believe when the Bible says that there is no good thing in me, it is the truth. I have no righteousness except that which I receive from Someone outside of myself.

Upon Paul's return to Jerusalem, he went to the temple to tell the Jews what happened to him on the Damascus road and to make confession to the people regarding the terrible things he had done. He was found in the temple by an angry crowd who ran to seize him and kill him. This effort was halted by the Roman commander of the garrison in

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*At the end of world's events, you may be almost saved, which means you are totally lost. Be ready!*

Jerusalem and he took Paul from the crowd and arrested him. But Paul sought another chance to tell his fellow Jews what Jesus had done for him and on the steps of the garrison barracks, chained and on the way to prison, Paul asked if he could address the people.

He told them of the Damascus experience, how in his blindness he was finally able to see himself as he truly was. He was able to understand the Scriptures he had memorized as a Jewish scholar and that righteousness comes from the Lord. He now saw that in persecuting God's people he had been hurting Jesus. He wanted them to know what Jesus had done to change his life and that He could do the same for them. Paul had repented and now wanted to confess to his countrymen; and he had many confessions to make. He was responsible for the imprisonment or death of many Christians and his participation in the stoning of Stephen. Imagine how difficult it was for Paul to confess to these Jewish Christians that he was the one responsible for the death of their wife or husband, their pastor, deacon or elder.

But the people would not listen to Paul and Jesus had said to him, “‘Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me’” (Acts 22:18). Paul thought that if he confessed and told them about Jesus, they would turn around just as he had. But the Lord knew differently and sent him far away to the Gentiles (verse 21).

Later in Acts 26:12–19, we find the account of Paul before Agrippa. He shared his conversion experience with Agrippa and concluded by saying, “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision” (verse 19). Paul had made a decision in his life and was determined to follow it through.

Realizing his true condition and need of a Saviour, he repented and surrendered. He said, “Lord, what do You want me to do” (Acts 9:6)? There is no such thing as salvation without confession. Sins that are uncon-

fessed are unforgiven. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). But remember, the first word of the text is “If.” Sins that are unconfessed are written in the books of heaven against our name and if not confessed, they remain, and we will meet them at the end of the millennium. Paul confessed his sins and consecrated himself to Christ as a servant. He dedicated his life and everything that he had to Jesus. From then on, he had confidence in salvation. Because of these decisions, Paul was able later to say, I'm ready.

Paul says in Romans 1:15: “So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome.” From the Damascus road and every day after, whatever God wanted him to do, he said, Lord, “I am ready. I'm Yours.”

Paul came to the end of his life with the wonderful experience of having no regrets; of knowing he had made the right decisions; that the time for his departure was at hand and he was ready. He recounts very briefly the experience of his life when he said, “I have fought the good fight” (2 Timothy 4:7).

Paul had a good deal to say about this fight in his epistles. He mentioned the fight to gain absolute control over his body. He said, “I discipline my body and bring it into subjection [absolute slavery], lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified [that is, rejected]” (1 Corinthians 9:27). The fight involves bringing the body, appetite and passions into strict subjection to the higher powers of the mind. Paul also wrote, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:11–13).

In this fight, one of two things will happen to everyone in the world. There's no truce. When the devil comes as a roaring lion, we

will either conquer him in the strength of the Lord or be conquered. “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. There is a war going on, and there is only one winner.

Ellen White wrote to encourage a young man who was not winning the war to fight and to win the war. When you are in battle and you lose ground, if you’re going to win, you have to recover that ground again. And this young man had lost some ground. She wrote, “Pure religion has to do with the will. ...

“Your promises are like ropes of sand, and you regard in the same unreal light the words and works of those in whom you should trust.

“You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. If you fight the fight of faith with all your will power, you will conquer.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 513.

Are you fighting with everything you’ve got? God has promised to help, but He doesn’t promise to help us unless we try with everything we have, with all our will power. “Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable. ...

“But you need not despair. ... It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession and work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your whole nature will



then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ, and even your thoughts will be subject to Him. You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire; but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life.” Ibid., 513, 514.

There is no victory without a fight. You choose.

“Will you not say, ‘I will give my will to Jesus, and I will do it now,’ and from this moment be wholly on the Lord’s side? Disregard custom and the strong clamoring of appetite and passion. Give Satan no chance to say: ‘You are a wretched hypocrite.’ Close the door so that Satan will not thus accuse and dishearten you. Say, ‘I will believe, I do believe that God is my helper,’ and you will find that you are triumphant in God.” Ibid., 514.

Have you said, Lord, I choose to yield my will to You and fight the fight of faith with everything I have? I will give my will to Jesus and I will do it now. “By steadfastly keeping the will on the Lord’s side, every emotion will be brought into captivity to the will of Jesus. ...

“Talk faith. Keep on God’s side of the line.” Ibid. If you do this, God will be your helper.

Someone may say, I am so weak that I cannot resist. What should we do if

we feel this way? “Many a man cries in despair, ‘I cannot resist evil.’ Tell him that he can, that he must resist. He may have been overcome again and again, but it need not be always thus. He is weak in moral power, controlled by the habits of a life of sin. ...

“Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency.” *Temperance*, 112. Imagine friends, though my past life with its habits of sin has had an effect on my character, God says there is deliverance in Jesus.

“The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, so far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their evil propensities. They do not yield the will to God. They do not choose to serve Him.” Ibid.

We must fight if we want to have victory.

“You may believe and promise all things, but your promises and your faith are of no account until you put your will on the right side. If you will fight the fight of faith with your will power,



there is no doubt that you will conquer." Ibid., 113.

"The very feeblest prayer that we can offer, Jesus will hear. He pities the weakness of every soul. Help for everyone has been laid upon Him who is mighty to save." Ibid., 114.

When Paul says, "I have fought the good fight" he is talking about the struggle for our will. If we yield our will to God and choose to follow and obey Him and exert all the effort we have, He has promised to help us to gain the victory. He has promised you victory.

Then Paul makes this exciting statement: "I have finished the race" (2 Timothy 4:7). Many times in his writings, Paul likens the Christian life to running a race. He says, I have finished my race, I have finished the path marked out for me to run. The people who receive the prize are not those who begin the race but those who finish it. We must be running the race every day if we want to finish the course, for none of us knows how many more days we have left to run.

Paul says, "Therefore, also we having such a great cloud of witnesses set around us, let us lay aside every weight [hindrance], and the easily entangling sin" (Hebrews 12:1, literal translation). This weight is the easily entangling, or besetting, sins Paul speaks of. We all have besetting sins. What constitutes a besetting sin for one is not the same as for another, but be assured, we all have them. Paul says to take those sins which are easy for you to be entangled with and lay them aside; get them out of the way so that you can run the race.

Have you ever tried to run a race with weights on your legs? It's all right for a practice run, but you never want to do that in a real race. Have you laid aside that besetting sin, keeping your eye on the mark and saying, I'm going to reach the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus; I'm going to reach the end of the course? If you don't, you will not be able to say, I have finished the course.



"When tempted to murmur, censure, and indulge in fretfulness, wounding those around you, and in so doing wounding your own soul, oh! let the deep, earnest, anxious inquiry come from your soul, Shall I stand without fault before the throne of God? Only the faultless will be there. None will be translated to heaven while their hearts are filled with the rubbish of earth. Every defect in the moral character must first be remedied, every stain removed by the cleansing blood of Christ, and all the unlovely, unlovable traits of character overcome." *Maranatha*, 58.

It is easy for us to look around and say, "Well, so and so is worse than I am." Will it give you satisfaction at the end of your life to say, I didn't finish the course, but they didn't either? We must have compassion for those who realize they are not ready, but are waiting for a better opportunity, like Felix (Acts 24:25). They need to know that the very best opportunity is today. "Now [today] is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). We must have compassion for those who have lost their faith and are doing nothing to rid their lives of besetting sin, nor surrendering their will to God. Those who no longer fight nor run the race, who are going nowhere, or are sidetracked by spending more time with faithless things than with the word of

God that would build up their faith, are allowing the devil to have the victory in their lives. The world offers an abundance of distractions that can weaken one's faith in the word of God.

It is a fact that there will be Seventh-day Adventists who will go to heaven alone because those in their very own family are not fighting the fight of faith nor running the race. Jesus said in Matthew 10, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (verse 37).

Each of us has to decide if we will run the race or wait for family or friend. The best way to encourage others to run the race is to run it yourself. Do not wait. Exhibit an influence that will encourage others to cast aside their sins and run too.

When you come to the end, will you, like Paul, have kept the faith? Who is going to receive the crown of righteousness? Paul says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Timothy 4:8 KJV). The crown is laid up for the one who is ready, for the one who fights the good fight. It is laid up for the one who finishes the course and has kept the faith.

This world is full of people who are hoping and desiring to be saved, but they'll be lost if they do not choose today to get ready. They are waiting for a better opportunity which never comes. The only way to be ready when you come to the end of life's road is to decide to be ready today.

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

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# *The Simplicity of the Gospel*

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By Michael C. Wells

**W**hen Jesus was on earth, He tried to help the people find salvation by using parables and stories that they could relate to their own lives. However, their minds had been dulled by the molding of the church leaders of their day which made it hard for them to comprehend the meaning of these lessons. Each lesson was a key to open their minds to the wonders of the Kingdom of Heaven. They had been inundated with “holy” traditions of the church and had lost sight of the true significance of the Law of God.

As Jesus went about doing miracles and wonders in the sight of the people, He slowly tried to point them back in the right direction that would lead to salvation. “I am the gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture,” Jesus said to them (John 10:9 NIV). He was trying to help them understand that the burnt sacrifices, the weekly tithe, the good works, the attendance of church on the Sabbath, would not bring them salvation, but in Him was the fullness of the God-head and only through Him could they be saved.

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*We do not earn  
 salvation by our  
 obedience; for salvation  
 is the free gift of God, to  
 be received by faith.  
 Obedience is the fruit  
 of this faith.*”

“We do not earn salvation by our obedience; for salvation is the free gift of God, to be received by faith. But obedience is the fruit of faith. ‘Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him’ (1 John 3:5, 6). Here is the true test. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in us, our feelings, our thoughts, our purposes, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God as expressed in the precepts of His holy law. ‘Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous’ (1 John 3:7). Righteousness is defined by the standard of God’s holy law, as expressed in the ten precepts given on Sinai.”  
*Steps to Christ*, 61.

Jesus, of course, encouraged good works; He set down conditions that require our tithe, but He always and continually pointed back to Himself as the way, the truth and the life for a fulfilling and sanctified life. “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’” (John 14:6 NIV). Jesus is the embodiment of righteousness, so if we are to be righteous, it stands to reason we need Him embodied in us. How do we obtain this holy character? That is probably the most commonly asked question among Christians that genuinely want to be like Jesus.

The answer is simple, but in practice it takes a struggle. The gospel of Christ is simply this: confess your sins and make restitution where applicable, repent of your sins by turning from them and commit them no more, and then follow the Lord in all that He says. After all, He gave us the free gift of salvation through His glorious sacrifice, He paid the price for our lives, He did all He could do to make the way as easy as possible for us to have salvation. Our part is to give all of ourselves back to Him.

The struggle is quite real, and many become discouraged, but Jesus is right there next to us,

waiting for us to reach out to Him for help. Many are tempted by sin and trials, and Paul said if we are not in a struggle, then we may be lacking. “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). We all have fallen short of godliness and this is the reason we need our Saviour each day to guide us. We must help one another in this fight, for we wrestle with powers unseen. The prophet tells us to uplift one another when we see a brother or sister struggling with sin. The gospel may be simple but the fight for our soul is ongoing.

“There is many a brave soul sorely pressed by temptation, almost ready to faint in the conflict with self and with the powers of evil. Do not discourage such a one in his hard struggle. Cheer him with brave, hopeful words that shall urge him on his way. Thus the light of Christ may shine from you. ‘None of us liveth to himself’ (Romans 14:7). By our unconscious influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged, and repelled from Christ and the truth.” *Steps to Christ*, 120.

So, how do we have success in the Christian walk? It is through the love of God that all things are possible. The books of John are the books of love, for he talks about how to have that success in Christ. Love conquers all as it is applied to our lives. It can overcome temptation, strife, anger, family issues, faultfinding, evil surmising, and most of all pride and selfishness. These are all enemies of love. Love that flows from the heart is tender, self-sacrificing, humble, and kind, it gives off a scent of a sweet-smelling fragrance. The one who loves is the one who is close to Christ. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34).

Love is the simplicity of the gospel because it encompasses all that Jesus taught. In love, we keep His commandments simply because He said to. There are no questions about it. We know that He loves us and all that He requires of us will only bring happiness and peace. By embracing the love of Jesus, we can become holy. He willingly sends the Holy Spirit to us as soon as we ask



*Love conquers all as it is applied to our lives. It can overcome temptation, strife, anger, family issues, faultfinding, evil surmising, and most of all pride and selfishness.*

for it, for He will not withhold that for which we ask. If we will submit to His will, He marries His Spirit with our will to make it one.

“‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son’ (John 3:16). He gave Him not only to live among men, to bear their sins, and die their sacrifice. He gave Him to the fallen race. Christ was to identify Himself with the interests and needs of humanity. He who was one with God has linked Himself with the children of men by ties that are never to be broken. Jesus is ‘not ashamed to call them brethren’ (Hebrews 2:11); He is our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Brother, bearing our human form before the Father’s throne, and through eternal ages one with the race He has redeemed—the Son of man. And all this that man might be uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin that he might reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.” *Steps to Christ*, 14.

As we follow the love of Jesus to its finality, the Lord will use it to sanctify us. This is not a work that we can perform; it must be achieved through the working of the Holy Spirit. Only He can create the changes needed in each life. No one person is the same as another; therefore, a special work must be done in each one. “Whoever has been born of God does

not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God” (1 John 3:9). The way we can see this change being wrought in us is through love. “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7).

“What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told His disciples: ‘When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth’ (John 16:13). And the psalmist says: ‘Thy law is the truth’ (Psalm 119:142). By the Word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is ‘holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12), a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him’ (John 15:10; 8:29). The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.” *Maranatha*, 231.

The law of truth is the law of love in Christ Jesus. In it He has set before us the path to holiness and happiness.

Jesus said He knows His sheep and His sheep know Him. They know Him because of the great love they have for Him. Not because they loved Him first, but because He first loved them and showed them true love. “We love Him because He first loved us” and if we love Him, He says, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (1 John 4:19; John 14:15). His commandments are not burdensome because we love Him. If you love your wife or husband or mother or father, would you not try to please them, and do as they ask? How much more so for the One who gave all for us that we may not perish, but have everlasting life with Him.

Jesus illustrated this simple gospel of love in the parable of the good Samaritan. Here was a man beaten and robbed and left to die on the side of the road. The priest and Levite who saw the man beaten and bruised walked past on the other side of the road. They did not want to get involved. They had pressing business in town that would further their own self-interest much more than to help this poor man. These were the professed leaders of God’s church that showed disdain for those who were of a lower class than they. Yet a Samaritan man stopped to help this man. The Samaritan was of a class of people that the



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*A new commandment  
I give to you, that you  
love one another; as I have  
loved you, that you also love  
one another.*

*John 13:34*

Jews considered to be lower than themselves and would have nothing to do with them. Yet the Samaritan saw the pain and suffering of this injured man who was near death and offered him the hand of love. He didn't know if this man was rich or poor, Jew or Greek, a godly person or an atheist.

All he knew was that he needed help. So, he lifted him up and took him to shelter and paid for his care that he might be made well again. The prophet of God remarks about this love shown by the one who was inspired by the love of God, for love only comes from the God of Heaven.

“All this is but a fulfillment of the principle of the law—the principle that is illustrated in the story of the good Samaritan, and made manifest in the life of Jesus. His character reveals the true significance of the law, and shows what is meant by loving our neighbor as ourselves. And when the children of God manifest mercy, kindness, and love toward all men, they also are witnessing to the character of the statutes of heaven. They are bearing testimony to the fact that ‘the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul’ (Psalm 19:7). And whoever fails to manifest this love is breaking the law which he professes to revere. For the spirit we manifest toward our brethren declares what is our spirit toward God. The love of God in the heart is the only spring of love toward our neighbor. ‘If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?’ Beloved, ‘if we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us’ (1 John 4:20, 12).” *The Desire of Ages*, 505.


Oh, what perfect love to love one another as Christ loved us. It is the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus. Love motivates us to confess our sins, and Jesus has promised to cleanse us. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Love is the inspiration that turns us to repentance.

“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation” (2 Corinthians 7:10). Love is the catalyst that drives us to follow all that Jesus has said and to “Live by every word of God” (Luke 4:4). “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing” (1 John 4:8; 1 Corinthians 13:3). But through our love for God and one another, we can be confident that Jesus is living through us. “Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:5).

Looking forward, we can see that time is short and if we are to live in Christ, we must prepare for the future. We must pray more fervently, we must struggle harder, we must send up more supplications for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on us that we may fulfill the plan that God has for each of our lives. Most of all, we must ask the God of Heaven to fill us with His love that we may have a change of heart.

The beginning of a life in Christ demands love and not strife. It requires sacrifice and not slothfulness, and that love will produce the perfect character that will fit us for Heaven. Let us come boldly before the throne of God with hearts filled with love for perishing souls. Let us work tenderly, recognizing that we are no better than the worst person in this world. If we love God, we will love them, too, and try to reach those within our sphere of influence.

Remember, on the cross of Calvary Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34). We were once one of those people mired in sin without hope until Someone who loved us lifted us up. Let us give the gift of love that was given to us back to others.

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

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# *Ask, and It Shall Be Given You*

By Lawrence Nelson

*Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."*

*Matthew 7:7, 8*

Expanding on these verses, Ellen White in *The Signs of the Times*, August 7, 1901, wrote, "It seems so sad that we praise God so little. Gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving need now to be searched for, and cultivated as lost arts. They are more precious to the Lord Jesus than all the treasures of gold and silver which the earth contains. Every human being should appreciate the kindness and love wherewith God has loved us. When we were yet enemies, Christ gave His life that we might be saved. How much have we appreciated this gift?"

This passage should cause us to do some very serious thinking. Somehow, we forget to express audibly the praise and thanksgiving which the Lord's ser-

vant tells us Jesus longs for and desires to hear from our lips.

Continuing in this same article, we discover the most precious gift that Jesus can give to us. "In His instruction to His disciples, Christ dwelt upon the great gift of the Spirit, declaring that nothing was too great to be expected from the coming of the divine Spirit. He longed to quicken and enlarge the conception of His disciples by communicating to them His own complete appreciation of God's love, that they might be able to comprehend the value of the gift of all gifts, given by God with the giving of His beloved Son—the gift of the Holy Spirit. On all who love and serve God this gift has been bestowed. Christ has made provision for all to receive

His Spirit; for He desires to see human nature released from the bondage of sin, and, by the power which God gives, renewed, restored, raised to a holy rivalry with the angels." Ibid.

Notice that nothing is too great for the Holy Spirit to accomplish. Note as well that God compares the gift of the Holy Spirit to the gift of His Son. What is further impressive is that it is the gift of the Spirit, which alone can release us from the power of sin.

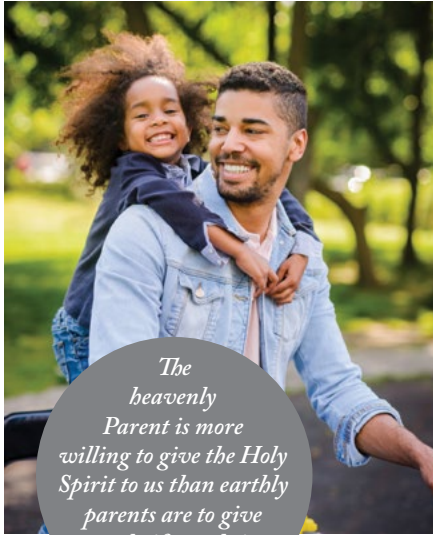
"To the woman at the well Christ said, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. ... Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall

never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life' (John 4:10, 14)." Ibid.

But note the following statement: "Yes; in giving the Holy Spirit, it was impossible for God to give more. To this gift nothing could be added." Ibid. No wonder it tells us in Scripture that God can supply all of our needs. It is impossible for God to give us more. Philippians 4:19 tells us, "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "The Holy Spirit is the vital presence of God." *The Signs of the Times*, August 7, 1901. Think that through. The Holy Spirit is actually the presence of God with us "... and if appreciated will call forth praise and thanksgiving, and will ever be springing up unto everlasting life. The restoration of the Spirit is the covenant of grace. Yet how few appreciate this great gift, so costly, yet so free to all who will accept it. When faith takes hold of the blessing, there comes rich spiritual good. But too often the blessing is not appreciated. We need an enlarged conception in order to comprehend its value." Ibid.

"Christ declared, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.'" "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him' (Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 11:11-13)." Ibid. Why is it in our church services, home worship and daily prayers to God we ask so little for this Divine power?

"O what amazing love and condescension! The Lord Jesus encourages His believing ones to ask for the Holy Spirit.



*The heavenly Parent is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to us than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children.*

By presenting the parental tenderness of God, He seeks to encourage faith in the reception of the gift. The heavenly Parent is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children." Ibid. All have seen many a parent sacrifice to give their children almost anything they desire. This is what God wants to do for us.

"What greater thing could be promised? What more is necessary to awaken a response in every soul, to inspire us with a longing for the great gift? Shall not our half-hearted supplications be turned into petitions of intense desire for this great blessing?" Ibid.

Perhaps we need to consider why so many in God's true church are satisfied with their present experience, unconcerned that they lack the power from the Holy Spirit to overcome sin as Christ overcame.

Listen to God as He describes what He sees among His people in Revelation 3:17 and 18: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white

raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Seldom do we hear prayers that plead with God for the precious gift that would change our condition. What can be said that will engender the need and desire for the Holy Spirit above everything else in this world?

Perhaps the following story of a small boy will help. The boy desired a trumpet and was inspired to play in the band like Kenneth, one of the big boys he had always admired. He pleaded with his father for a trumpet, but Father tried to explain to him that Kenneth was a big boy with lots of strength and he was so small that he might not have enough wind to blow a trumpet. Yet the boy still pleaded for a trumpet, poking out his chest and flexing his biceps to show his father his strength. Father's argument was that if his boy was so strong, he would be able to keep the wood box filled without being asked and keep the kitchen water pot filled for his mother. But then came the excuses, the wood gave him splinters and the water pot spilled on his clothes. However, Father said he would watch him for the next few months, and if he could keep up with the wood box and water, he would know his son was big enough to blow a trumpet in the band and would get him one. Off ran the boy to the wood pile. He not only filled the wood box, but he piled the wood in every small nook and corner of the kitchen until Mother had to tell him to not bring more until she needed it. He filled the water pot to the brim till it leaked over the edge when the dipper was placed in the pot and then proceeded to fill all of mother's pots and pans until she had to say, STOP! What made the difference? The boy wanted a trumpet.

Oh, if we could only realize that the greatest gift of all heaven is available to us if we would ask. If we would cast off the stupor that Satan is placing around



us and comprehend the value of this gift, surely we would plead for this gift so intensely that God would hear and answer.

Did He not say, “Ask, and it shall be given you”? And the wonder of it all is that God urges us to plead for this precious gift. No wonder Ellen White continues: “We do not ask for enough of the good things God has promised. If we would reach up higher and expect more, our petitions would reveal the quickening influence that comes to every soul who asks with the full expectation of being heard and answered. The Lord is not glorified by the tame supplications which show that nothing is expected. He desires everyone who believes, to approach the throne of grace with earnestness and assurance. Do we realize the magnitude of the work in which we are engaged? If we did, there would be more fervency in our prayers. Our entreaties would rise before God with convincing earnestness. We would plead for power as a hungry child pleads for bread. If we realized the greatness of the gift, if we desired the attainment of the blessing, our petitions would ascend with earnestness, importunity, urgency. It would be as if we were at the gate of heaven, soliciting entrance.” *The Signs of the Times*, August 7, 1901.

As I read these startling thoughts, I was reminded of the pangs of hunger that I have seen in some countries. I have seen people and children so hungry that they have explored fresh cow dung with their bare hands searching for a grain or two that passed through the cow’s digestive system that they might relieve their hunger. And to think that the servant of the Lord says we should plead with God using such strong language, that we would plead for power as a hungry child pleads for bread.

She says, “I do not understand the tameness in the requests offered to God. We are to urge our way into the very presence of God, into the Holy Place of the Most High.” Ibid. That means into the sanctuary. “We are to plead for that



which we most need—the bread of life, the leaf from the tree of life. As Jacob wrestled with the angel, saying, ‘I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me’ (Genesis 32:26), so we are to ... ask with an urgency that will not be turned away, that expects God to bestow His blessings with a liberality that is an assurance to all fear.” Ibid.

Then she quotes from Isaiah 45:11 and 12: “‘Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and His Maker, Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands *command ye Me*’” (verse 11). Ibid. [Emphasis supplied.] Are we approaching this subject like that? “‘I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded’” (verse 12). This is the word of the Lord, which is Yea and Amen. Then let your prayers be more fervent, more heavily weighted with faith and hope. Let the intensity of your desire be proportionate to the value of the object you wish to obtain.

“The greatness of the gift and our need of it should fill us with a hungering desire for it.

“Have we reason to believe that an earnest application to the Source of all power for the deep moving of the Holy Spirit upon hearts will be crowned with success? Certainly; but before we talk to others in regard to this, let us first talk

with God. Plead with Him as if your life was depending upon the gift you desire. Remember that the blessing is promised unconditionally, absolutely, certainly. If you ask in faith, presenting the name of God’s Son as your endorsement, your prayer will be heard and answered. God’s goodness makes this promise unchangeable. The infallibility of the promise is to inspire faith in the one who asks, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive.’

“We should ask with an earnestness that will not be denied. The Lord has an intense desire that everyone should take advance steps in absolute certainty, relying upon God. He is the light and life of all who seek Him.” Ibid. Then notice carefully: “The measure which we receive of the holy influence of His Spirit is proportionate to the measure of our desire to receive, of our faith to grasp, and of our capacity to enjoy the great goodness of the blessing, and to impart it to others.” Ibid.

Ellen White, in the continued article in *The Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1901, shifts the emphasis from the sincere desire when asking for the gift, to pointing out the condition upon which we receive the gift from heaven. “‘Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth’ (Matthew 7:8). Christ is here presenting a law of the divine government. Asking for the Holy Spirit is connected with receiving this gift. The Lord reads

the hearts of all men. He selects from His subjects those He can use, choosing material which can be worked. He selects the most unpromising subjects, and through them magnifies His own wisdom and power by causing them to sit among the princes.”

Imagine, by the power of the Holy Spirit, He can take an individual whose mind has been so filled with evil that it's almost unable to comprehend the goodness of God and so develop him that they can sit among princes. “In all ages He has used human beings to carry out His purposes. He chooses subjects who will not be perverted, who in all righteousness and faith will honor His name. He passes by the men who have perverted the capabilities He has given them, and selects men of His own wisdom, who make Him their trust, their dependence, their efficiency. He hews and polishes the rough stones He has quarried out of the world. He works through men who realize that they must submit to the ax, the chisel, and the hammer, lying passive under the divine hand. Through those who voluntarily submit themselves to Him in all matters, who seek Him in faith and hope, He works out His plans.” Ibid.

The church of Rome, Satan's masterpiece, demands blind obedience from its followers, and regardless what truth God may open to them, they are not allowed to investigate it with their own God-given intelligence. They must accept only that which has been taught by the so-called fathers of pagan tradition. In fact, before becoming a priest of Rome, a man must swear by an oath never to question any teaching of the church even if he discovers that such a doctrine is contrary to God's eternal word.

On the other hand, God cannot use any man in His church who has become so worldly-wise that he feels safe to question God's teachings. God does invite men to study and search for truth. When such a man is Spirit-filled, he will

not because of his higher learning believe he can find a better way, but instead will come to the conscious decision never to question God's declared truth.

Another condition for receiving the Holy Spirit is to impart it to others. “Those who ask because they wish to impart to others will not be disappointed. God will reward those who come to Him in earnest faith. He assures us that the thought of His majesty and sovereignty should not keep us in fear. He will do much more graciously than we suppose if we will come to the footstool of His mercy. He urges His sovereignty as a reason for His great and merciful bountifulness in supplying the demands upon Him. He pledges Himself to hear our prayers, declaring that He will hear them. He condescends to appeal from the instinct of parental tenderness to the infinite benevolence of Him whose we are by creation and redemption. He says, ‘If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him’ (Matthew 7:11). The needy and soul-hungry never plead with God in vain.” Ibid. What a promise!

Then comes these enlightening words: “Humanity [that's us] and divinity [that's God] must be linked together in the experience of every overcomer. In our weakness we are to accept Christ's power. He gives us the assurance, ‘All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world’ (Matthew 28:18–20).” Ibid. Having received this precious gift, we should be the happiest people on this earth.

Now notice how she describes the Spirit-filled remnant. “In view of this tell me who should wear countenances more bright and cheerful, more full of

sunshine, than those who live by faith in the Son of God. In Him the needy and hungry find all their wants supplied. But let us not forget that those whom God has blessed with the good things of this life are to be His helping hand, to supply the necessities of His needy ones. They are to be laborers together with Him. They are—His stewards in trust, and are to use their goods for the advancement of His work, that His name may be glorified. The Lord desires to employ the church as a channel through which to communicate His bounties. If His people would keep the channel open, receiving the spiritual and temporal gifts of His grace, and imparting them to the needy, there would be no sick ones neglected, no orphans crying for food. The hearts of the widow and the fatherless would sing for joy.

“God has given man the richest of His gifts. This He has done that man may dispense His bounties. Medical missionary work and the Gospel ministry are the channels through which God seeks to pour a constant supply of His goodness. They are to be as the river of life for the irrigation of His church.” Ibid.

In my travels, many times I have gone through the great places of California where the vegetables are grown, and you see those tremendous ditches of water, where the water goes down the row to every plant. Isn't it interesting that God wants us to thus irrigate the church from the supply of the Holy Spirit that is within us. She says, “... rivers of life for the irrigation of His church.” Ibid. Oh what a different world this would be if every Seventh-day Adventist were filled with the Holy Spirit. Our churches would be filled to overflowing.

“There is not the semblance of an excuse for the lifeless condition of a people who know the plain, ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ God calls their attention to the words, ‘Ye are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven’

(Matthew 5:14, 16). He reminds us that we have only to ask, and we shall receive; to seek, and we shall find; to knock, and it shall be opened unto us." Ibid.

After we ask, we are told to: "Throw open the windows of the soul heavenward, and close them earthward." Ibid. We must turn away from the earthly environment and the devil-made entertainments that take our thoughts earthward and instead lift our voices in praise and thanksgiving for God's greatest gift. We should be often in prayer and in the study of the Godly counsels written to us. It is thus that we shall become mighty and powerful for God. The windows of our soul must be turned heavenward.

There is a responsibility in receiving this wonderful gift. "The Lord has made His church the repository of divine influence. The heavenly universe is waiting for the members to become channels through which the current of life shall flow to the world, that many may be converted, and in their turn become channels through which the grace of Christ shall flow to the desert portions of the Lord's vineyard.

"The heavenly universe is burdened with the magnitude of the divine gifts which it has to impart." Ibid. Think of it, "Angels are longing for the great joy of imparting the grace of God to men who will impart it to their fellow-men. The commission is, 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations' (Matthew 28:19). All who belong to the church are commanded to shine. Every receiver of divine grace is held accountable for the souls of those within his reach who are in the darkness of unbelief, ignorant of the rich blessings God is waiting to bestow upon them.

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name' (John 1:12). Those who take part in the solemn rite of baptism, in the name of the highest authorities of heaven, pledge themselves to come out from



*The church of Rome demands blind obedience from its followers, and regardless what truth God may open to them, they are not allowed to investigate it.*

the world, to separate themselves from its idolatrous practises. God places His sign upon them, making them members of the royal family. And they on their part pledge themselves before angels and before men to live for Christ. They are buried with Him in baptism in the likeness of His death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection. 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on this earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory' (Colossians 3:1-4)." Ibid.

Are you truly ready to be filled with the Spirit of God? "In the day of final accounts, what will the church give as a reason for her strange indifference to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth? My brethren and sisters, keep the temple of God pure and holy, that He may use it to the glory of His name. God will enlarge His faculties and multiply His gifts to you, as you make use of them to gather souls under the blood-stained banner of the Redeemer. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." Ibid.

Finally, we are told the startling truth of why so many today fail to overcome: "By yielding to the temptations of the

enemy, by losing sight of God, you have lost the sense of what a child of God ought to be. Your powers of perception are clouded. But the way is open for your spiritual life to be reinforced with new power." Ibid.

Oh, God help us to be more earnest and determined in our requests for the power of God in our lives to prepare us for Jesus' coming. Let there be thanks and praise ascending from our lips, as if we were standing at the very gates of heaven.

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

*For more than fifty years, **Lawrence Nelson** served the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a pastor, evangelist, and then in Conference, Union, and General Conference leadership. When God laid upon him the responsibility to "tell it like it is" to alert the people how the church was leading them into the worldwide ecumenical movement, he was forbidden to preach in any church within the Oregon Conference. Though nothing could be found in his preaching that was contrary to the doctrines of the church, he was considered divisive. As a result, Keep the Faith Audio Tape Ministry was born. Elder Nelson passed to his rest on April 18, 2012.*



# John the Baptist Clues

Based on Luke 1:1–80; 3:1–20; 7:18–35 and Mark 6:14–29

## Across:

- B4 Jesus, compared to the prophet John, is \_\_\_\_\_ (two words) ..... Luke 7:26  
 B13 The birth of John was told throughout what country of Judea..... Luke 1:65  
 C1 John preached that Jesus would baptize with this ..... Luke 3:16  
 D12 Elizabeth said God would do this to her reproach (two words)..... Luke 1:25  
 F1 Herod had respect for John because he knew John was this ..... Mark 6:20  
 G5 John's father..... Luke 1:5  
 G15 Zacharias was this when an angel appeared ..... Luke 1:12  
 I4 The angel came to show Zacharias these tidings..... Luke 1:19  
 I11 Because he doubted, Zacharias lost his ability to do this ..... Luke 1:20  
 J8 How Zacharias communicated the name of his son ..... Luke 1:63  
 J17 The angel said John would have the spirit and power of \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Luke 1:17  
 L2 What the people did at Zacharias' elongated stay in the temple ..... Luke 1:21  
 L12 These also wanted John to baptize them ..... Luke 3:12  
 N6 John preached that he was doing this for the way of the Lord..... Luke 3:4  
 N15 Herod offered her anything she wanted..... Mark 6:22  
 P12 John's message was to bring every mountain (of sin) this..... Luke 3:5  
 Q3 Herod had John's head put in this..... Mark 6:28  
 Q15 This class of Jews rejected John's counsel from God (singular) ..... Luke 7:30  
 S2 The angel told Zacharias he would have this..... Luke 1:14  
 S11 John preached to bring these worthy of repentance ..... Luke 3:8

## Down:

- A9 Baby John's emotion on hearing Mary's voice ..... Luke 1:44  
 B4 Elizabeth's cousin knew God had this on her ..... Luke 1:58  
 B13 The Angel said John would turn these ..... Luke 1:17  
 B16 Upon hearing Mary's salutation from the womb, John did \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Luke 1:41  
 B19 John preached to make the rough \_\_\_\_\_ smooth..... Luke 3:5  
 B21 John preached to make this straight..... Luke 3:5  
 D7 What Herodias' daughter did that pleased Herod and his guests ..... Mark 6:22  
 E2 Both John's parents were blameless regarding these ..... Luke 1:6  
 E9 The angel told Zacharias this had been heard ..... Luke 1:13  
 E11 Occupation of John's father..... Luke 1:5  
 F17 John was this of one crying in the wilderness ..... Luke 3:4  
 I4 The angel identified himself with this name ..... Luke 1:19  
 I12 The angel said John would make these ready for the Lord..... Luke 1:17  
 I15 What Herodias would have done to John if she could have..... Mark 6:19  
 I20 John preached to not accuse anyone this way ..... Luke 3:14  
 J8 Where John began his ministry ..... Luke 3:2  
 J10 Zacharias doubted the angel's prophecy because he was this (two words) ..... Luke 1:18  
 L18 What John did to the musings of their hearts..... Luke 3:15, 16  
 O13 After Zacharias named his son, this was loosed..... Luke 1:64  
 P6 The angel told Zacharias his son should have no strong \_\_\_\_\_ ..... Luke 1:15  
 P21 John preached without good works you'd be this and burned up ..... Luke 3:9

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1	2	3		5		7	8	9	10		12		14		16	17	18	19	20	21	22

Answer Key:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
S	N		D	S		F	S	S	S	N	D	A	G	L	S						
R			A	G		I					E										
E			H	A	P	N	W	R	E	C	H	A	R	G	E	R					
P	H		E			L	O	N	D		S										
O	Y		W			T	N	R		L											
N			S	E	W	D	A	R	E	P	R	E									
M			E			L															
L			S	N	S	C	A	N	I	C	A	N	I	C	A	N	I	C	A	N	I
K			L			L															
J			S			L															
I			F			C	A	K	E	S	P	E									
H			D			I															
G			D			L															
F			K			V															
E			O			S															
D			O			Y															
C			R			A															
B			C			W															
A			21			18															

- Q4 Herodias told her daughter to ask for John's ..... Mark 6:24  
 Q11 Zacharias complained who was stricken in years ..... Luke 1:18  
 Q15 Isaiah predicted John would make these straight (singular)..... Luke 3:4

*"Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me, saith the Lord of hosts."* Malachi 3:1.



# *Preparation for Christ's Coming*

**H**e [Christ] is nearer now than when we first believed. The day of the Lord is right at hand, and it is not safe for us to delay [to prepare for] His coming.

Do you think that any of us, when He comes, will be brought before the great Judge and will feel that we have devoted too much time to preparation? Will such thoughts come into our minds? Shall we think that we have been altogether too sympathetic, that we have devoted too much time in winning souls back to Christ, and binding up the brokenhearted? No indeed. Our thoughts will be these as we look back to those who stand before the Judge: "Why didn't I help them at such a time when I ought to?" or, "O, I am glad I did deny myself and help them to stand on the solid rock." These are the very thoughts that will come up to us in the judgment when everyone is judged according to the deeds done in the body.

And as many are weighed in the balance, they will be found wanting. Then they will proclaim their sins upon the housetop. They will not be afraid to have everybody know their sins, if they can only make restitution for them and save one soul. But let us thank God today that we are not yet before the judgment seat of God, but we have an Intercessor, One who has loved us so that He gave His own precious life for us individually, just as though there was not another

soul in the universe. He died for us, and we are of infinite value of Jesus Christ. How can we measure the sacrifice He has made for us? Then we should feel how we have wounded and bruised the Son of God and put Him to an open shame when we deny Him.

It is not that you come out in words and deny Him, but in your actions you deny Christ so that He is ashamed to call you brethren. We want every one of us to be consecrated to God.

Let the plowshare go deep, and uproot all this Phariseism, and let this self-righteousness be torn all to pieces. The very best way to have this done is to fall on the Rock and be broken. Just as soon as you see there is nothing in you that is righteous, just as soon as you have a dread of sin, you will fall on the Rock, and then it is that Christ can take you and mold you and fashion you into a vessel of honor. But just as soon as you allow your thoughts and feelings to be turned against one another, this is unlike Christ, and just so sure it is that you are not vessels unto honor, but dishonor. You don't give God a chance; you are trying to fashion yourself after a mold of your own imagination, but you want to take that out of your mind, and keep Christ before you every day—when you rise up and when you sit down, when you go out and when you come in.

You want to exercise all that Christian politeness and respect because you

are the purchase of the blood of Christ, and He has died upon Calvary's cross that we might live. Christ Himself has bridged the gulf for us. It is our duty to help those who are downcast. Recollect what their privileges are, and don't talk of the difficulties, but go right to them and try to bind up the brokenhearted. These are right in the church all around us. Never have an idea that you know more than your brethren, but just keep humble. It was this spirit of surmising that brought all the weakness into the Jewish nation.

We want to learn in the school of Christ meekness and lowliness of heart, and from whom are we to learn these lessons? Jesus says, "I am meek and lowly of heart." "Learn of Me" (Matthew 11:29). Now, if there is anything in us like self, then Christ cannot dwell there. We want to represent Christ to the world. We must have self hid with Christ in God, and when this is the case we will represent Christ to the world. Oh, there is something wonderful about it—He loves us as He loves His Son (see John 17:23). Just think of it—loves us as He does His Son! This is wonderful, wonderful. In Him we have all heaven presented to us, and the more we see in Jesus the less we see that is good in self. ...

May God help us to put away self and cling to Jesus; then we will spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God.

*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, 102–104. **LM**



# *I Was a Mess*

By Frank Samuels

**M**y name is Frank Samuels. I am 84 years old. Twenty years ago, I was out in the world and was a real mess.

When I was about 20, I joined the military and took part in all of the bad things that a lot of young, single soldiers do when they get away from home for the first time. I was drinking regularly and truly “out in the world.” I’m really ashamed of the things I did then.

After I got out of the military, I married and had a family. Later, I separated from my wife and had a girlfriend. I was drinking and doing all sorts of things that no true Christian should ever do. One night I had a dream that I was climbing up a big mountain. Before I got to the top, I slipped off and started falling. I thought I was going to die, but a voice said to me, “No, you’re not. You’ll be okay.” I landed on what felt like a soft pillow. I know now that it was the Holy Spirit speaking to me.

I ended up breaking up with the woman I was going with and told her that we were through. She didn’t believe me at first, but I knew that I was doing wrong and that I needed to stop.

I was going to rent a place in Manhattan, but something told me not to rent there; so I moved to the Bronx instead. After settling in, I started going to the


senior center nearby. A lady working in the kitchen asked me if I ever went to church. I told her that when I was a kid, my mother always took me to Sunday school and church, but when I was 18, I stopped going and started drinking and doing all sorts of worldly things. As I said, I was a mess.

This lady then told me that Saturday, the seventh day, was the true Sabbath, not Sunday. I was surprised. I had never heard that before. She told me that she was a Seventh-day Adventist. I told her I had never heard of Seventh-day Adventists, so she gave me a little booklet to read. I don’t remember what it was, but over time, she gave me several other little booklets. I read them all and decided that Saturday really is the true Sabbath.

I stopped drinking and all of my sinful behavior. My family told me that my conversion was only temporary and that within a year, I would be back to doing all the bad things I had given up.

Well, it’s been over 20 years, and I’m still keeping the seventh-day Sabbath and trying to live right.

God is good. If He can take someone as steeped in sin as I was and give me a new heart, He can do it with anyone.

*Frank Samuels*  
Bronx, NY 



## *The Fence Story*

A man who prided himself on his morality, and expected to be saved by it, was constantly saying, “I am doing pretty well on the whole. I sometimes get mad and swear, but then I am strictly honest. I work on Sabbath when I am particularly busy, but I give a good deal to the poor, and I never was drunk in my life.”

This man hired a wise Scotsman to build a fence around his lot. He gave him very particular directions. In the evening, when the Scotsman came in from his work, the man said, “Well, Jock, is the fence built, and is it tight and strong?”

“I canna say that it is all tight and strong,” replied Jock, “but it is a good average fence, anyhow. If some parts are a little weak, others are extra strong. I don’t know, but I may have left a gap here and there, a yard wide, or so; but then I made up for it by doubling the number of rails on each side of the gap.

I dare say that the cattle will find it a very good fence, on the whole, and will like it; though I canna just say that it’s perfect in every part.”

“What!” cried the man, not seeing the point. “Do you tell me that you have built a fence around my lot with weak places in it, and gaps in it? Why, you might as well have built no fence at all. If there is one opening, or a place where an opening can be made, the cattle will be sure to find it, and will go through. Don’t you know, man, that a fence must be perfect, or it is worthless?”

“I used to think so,” said the dry Scotsman, “but I hear you talk so much about averaging matters with the Lord it seems to me we might try it with the cattle. If an average fence won’t do for them, I am afraid an average character won’t do for you in the day of judgment.

“When I was on shipboard, and a storm was driving us on the rocks, the

captain cried: ‘Let go the anchor!’ but the mate shouted back: ‘There is a broken link in the cable.’ Did the captain say when he heard that: ‘No matter, it’s only one link. The rest of the chain is good. Ninety-nine of the hundred links are strong. Its average is high. It only lacks one percent of being perfect. Surely the anchor ought to respect so excellent a chain, and not break away from it?’ No, indeed, he shouted, ‘Get another chain!’

“He knew that a chain with one broken link was no chain at all. That he might as well throw the anchor overboard without any cable, as with a defective one. So with the anchor of our souls. If there is the least flaw in the cable, it is not safe to trust it. We had better throw it away and try to get a new one that we know is perfect.”

*Storytime Treasury*, Harvestime Books, ©2008, 442, 443. 



# *Am I Willing or Willful?*

**A**t the end of July 2020, my husband suddenly passed away. In a moment, everything in my life changed. No longer would I be able to physically or financially stay in our home. Things accumulated that had to be dealt with; debt to pay, where to live, packing, cleaning, moving – all alone. But then I discovered I wasn't alone. Family and friends rallied to my side. I will never know how to thank them for their friendship and love during that time.

Best of all, God had not left me alone. He already had a plan for me and immediately began to take care of everything. The sale of the house. Funds to pay the debt, medical expenses and funeral costs were provided. I had longed to return home to Wichita, Kansas, and that had been our retirement intention. It must have also been God's plan, for He provided work and sufficient income that made it possible for me to leave my job and move home. This briefly describes what God has done for me over the last five months.

In spite of God's miraculous providence, there were still times I had the notion that I was totally alone accomplishing these things. Every step of the way God has provided for me. I am so unworthy of all He has done. I realize that He does not intervene in our lives because we are worthy, but because of our great need. We may be capable of doing many things, but still we often struggle to be willing to surrender our lives and let Jesus do the work that He has promised to do in us.


How easy it is to continue your own way while knowing it is contrary to God's will. Yet, He still patiently nudges us to draw us back and fully trust Him.

"Says the true Witness, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock' (Revelation 3:20). ... With every knock unheeded, your determination to open becomes weaker and weaker. If the voice of Jesus is not heeded at once, it becomes confused in the mind with a multitude of other voices, the world's care and business engross the attention, and conviction dies away. The heart

becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of time, and of the great eternity beyond." *The Review and Herald*, November 2, 1886.

Talk about a painful reminder. Later in this same article Ellen White writes how those who profess His name fail to become what He designed them to be. "The Saviour says, 'What more could I have done that I have not done?'" Ibid. Imagine, the God of heaven having to ask that question. Then it reminds us that we have no time to wait for convenience. Now is the time to repent. "Oh, it is peace that you need – Heaven's forgiveness, peace and love in the soul. Money cannot buy it, intellect cannot procure it, wisdom cannot attain to it; but Jesus offers it as a gift. It is yours if you will but reach out your hand and grasp it." Ibid.

Friends, the choice is ours to make. Will we be willing to become what God designed us to be or will we willfully hold on to self and the things of this world? Give it some thought.



*Father: Thank You for Your love and patience toward this sinful world. Cleanse our hard hearts so that we can hear Your voice and be willing to follow You and become vessels of honor for Your sake. Amen. LM*



## Your Letters

"I pray for all of you and for your mission projects all the time. I'm so grateful for the wonderful *LandMarks* and so look forward to it every single month."

—JA, Colorado

"I am thankful for the ministry and prayers of Steps to Life, and how God uses you to bless me and my life! *LandMarks* is so wonderful!"

—AL, Ohio

"Thank you for sending us *LandMarks* magazine. We use them for our Bible study, and we like and enjoy studying straight from the Bible and SOP."

—C&RL, California

"I've tried to help Steps to Life ever since I've learned of it over 20 years ago. I was given *LandMarks* magazines by a friend in the Lord. I've learned many wonderful things, and I have used it in my sermons as an elder. ... I hope for your continued blessing from God to keep the work moving forward until Jesus Comes."

—JH, Wisconsin

### April Sermon of the Month

## When the Rocks Cry Out

By John J. Grosboll

Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem was a foretaste of the Second Coming. His trophies are those who were once blind, lame or riddled with sin.

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

### April 2021

Dear Friend,

What is the strongest witness that you can give for your faith? "It is not only by preaching the truth, not only by distributing literature, that we are to witness for God. Let us remember that a Christlike life is the most powerful argument that can be advanced in favor of Christianity, and that a cheap Christian character works more harm in the world than the character of a worldling." *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 21.

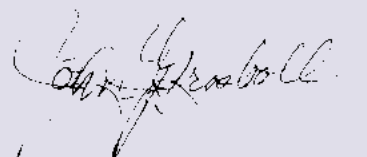
One of the main reasons that so many children in "Christian homes" end up becoming infidels is because what they hear professed does not agree with what they see in their homes. The mind accepts the reality of what is seen by the eye (the example) over what is heard by the ear (the precept). The world would be turned upside down if it witnessed a living demonstration of what Jesus Christ is really like.

"He who becomes a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost." *The Ministry of Healing*, 105. "The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ." *Ibid.*, 142. "Christ is sitting for His portrait in every disciple. Every one God has predestinated to be 'conformed to the image of His Son' (Romans 8:29). In every one Christ's long-suffering love, His holiness, meekness, mercy, and truth, are to be manifested to the world." *The Desire of Ages*, 827.

The people living in your home know whether the religion that you profess is real and has changed your life, as do those people with whom you associate and conduct business.

Remember that if you have relatives and family who are unbelievers, the strongest witness that you can bring to bear upon them is living a Christlike life that they can see. This is one reason that we need to spend time every day studying the life of Christ so that we learn what He is really like and can represent Him to others. Have you read *The Desire of Ages* or *Christ's Object Lessons* or *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* lately? The Waldensian youth used to memorize the books of Matthew and John. The result was a powerful witness to the truth even though they had no access to a printing press, radio or television, or our other modern means of mass communication.

Your brother in Christ,



John J. Grosboll

## 13<sup>th</sup> Sabbath Offering

# *The Press Continues to Roll in Eastern Nigeria*



**W**e have received an update on the publication of the *LandMarks* magazine in Nigeria.

As you can see from the pictures, the production of the magazine continues smoothly and with the help of local volunteers, the magazine is compiled, stapled and ready for distribution.

God has truly blessed in this endeavor.

We continue in the hope that additional funds can be procured

to enable the purchase of additional printing equipment for other locations in Nigeria.

To support this effort for local production of *LandMarks*, please mark your donation *Evangelism. LM*



*from the*  
**Mission Fields**



## *Spirit of Prophecy* *in Latin America*

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By Pastor Domingo Nunez

In March's *LandMarks* issue, we were able to relate to you the story of José Luis Siles' mother's conversion and baptism.

This month, we want to bring again to you the many challenges that José Luis and our Latin American brothers and sisters have in spreading the gospel through Spirit of Prophecy books and literature in South America. This important evangelistic outreach must be accomplished and is being done by volunteers from Bolivia, Peru, Argentina and Colombia. Together they are translating the Spirit of Prophecy books that are not currently available from English to Spanish and this also enables other materials to be printed, such as booklets, tracts and pamphlets, and even a church hymnal.



José Luis' wife Lili, whom you will recall from last month's report, used her knowledge of homemade herbal recipes to help her mother-in-law Carmen when she was sick last year, and Willy Chino have been helping with the printing, collating and binding.

The *Steps to Life* Bible studies have been translated into Spanish as well and printed under the title *Pasos hacia la Vida*. The devotional book *The Upward Look* has also been translated and printed under the title *Alza tus ojos*. The booklet *Los Diez Mandamientos ¿Fueron clavados en la Cruz?* (The Ten Commandments: Were They Nailed to the Cross?), also has been translated, printed and is ready for distribution.

For 2021, by God's grace, the Sabbath School quarterly will be translated and printed for all of Latin America.

Ellen White says: "I have been shown that our publications should be printed

in different languages and sent to every civilized country, at any cost. What is the value of money at this time, in comparison with the value of souls? Every dollar of our means should be considered as the Lord's, not ours; and as a precious trust from God to us; not to be wasted for needless indulgences, but carefully used in the cause of God, in the work of saving men and women from ruin.

"I have been shown that the press is powerful for good or evil. This agency can reach and influence the public mind as no other means can. The press, controlled by men who are sanctified to God, can be a power indeed for good in bringing men to the knowledge of the truth." *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, 214.

Look around your own home at the number of Spirit of Prophecy books you have, as well as other books that have blessed you spiritually and imagine what

it would be like to be desperately seeking the truth, but the only books you can find, you cannot read.

Our Latin American brothers and sisters love the Lord and want to spread the gospel around the Spanish-speaking countries so that as many as will can have the opportunity to know the Lord. They join with us to do this work and to help hasten the Lord's return. We have so much in this country and we often forget that others lack and have a great need for assistance. They are willing to do the work, and now with the equipment partly financed by Steps to Life, they just need continued prayer and financial support so that this work can be accomplished.

As the Lord impresses you, please keep our faithful workers in South America in your prayers. To financially support this project, please mark your donations *Spanish*. **LM**



# Singing Sand

**M**arco Polo thought it was evil spirits when he heard it in China. Residents of Copiapo, Chile, heard it emanating from a sandy hill and called it El Bramador because of its roar and bellow. Scientists today call it “singing sand,” but they all refer to the same thing: sand grains shuffling down the slopes of certain sand dunes producing a deep, groaning hum known as the “Song of Dunes.”

There is a lot of uncertainty surrounding what causes the sands to “sing,” but scientists have determined certain conditions and actions that must exist and/or occur in order for the desert sands to produce their song.

So exactly how does it happen? The sound you hear typically is more of a roar or boom than an actual song and can reach from 105 to 150 decibels of sound. That’s the equivalent of the sound you would experience at a sporting event or from a fighter jet engine. To put that in perspective of noise, a human continuously exposed to these levels of sound could experience ear damage within 15 minutes.

It is known that most of the time, sand produces sound at a frequency near 450 Hz (hertz equals the number of cycles per second). Some scholars have suggested that the thickness of the dry sand layer determines the frequency while others suggest it is the shear rate, the flow of the

top dry sand layer moving at a constant speed over the stationary layer of moist sand below, each grain colliding with and rolling around its neighbors, creating a constant stream of collisions.

The difference in moisture content between the sand layers causes sound waves to bounce between the layers, increasing the resonance and volume of sound. What actually generates the noise is unclear, but one theory is that it is produced by friction between the sand particles. Another is that air is compressed between the particles and yet another suggests it is electrostatics.

Other contributing factors are believed to be the size of the grains of sand, typically 0.1 – 0.5 mm in diameter, which controls the actual sound and determines the pitch of the note, though the “why” is still unknown.

Humidity levels can also have an effect.

Crescent-shaped dunes (barchans) are the main source of sound, such as the singing dunes of the Badain Jaran Desert, which has some of the tallest sand dunes in the world at a height of 1,600 feet, whose song can be deafeningly loud.

Since this singing occurs in areas with little to no human presence, it is believed that the singing is triggered by powerful winds blowing over the sand rather than by any human influence. The wind

shears off the thicker top layer of dry sand from the dunes, like an avalanche. The energy produced between the dry sand layer as it slides down the dune and the wet layer beneath causes this “booming” sound that continues for a time even after the dry sand avalanche has stopped and can reverberate for miles.

Each boom can be a single musical note on the musical scale. The thicker the layer of dry sand, the lower the musical note. A low G-sharp note on the musical scale was found in dunes in Morocco, however Dunes in Oman have produced a nine-note blare.

There are about 35 deserts around the world with dunes that produce the “Song of Dunes.” These include deserts found in the United States, China, Japan, Africa, Qatar and Egypt.

You can also find singing sand on the beach.

“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands” (Isaiah 55:12). **LM**

Sources: National Geographic – *Singing Sand Dunes Explained* by Shannon Fischer, October 13, 2012; World Atlas – *What are Singing Sands?* By Ferdinand Bada, June 29, 2018, in World Facts; and Wikipedia – *Singing Sands*



Q:

*What does it mean  
to worship God  
in Spirit and in  
truth?*

A:

Jesus said, “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23, 24). This is the only type of worship that is acceptable.

Here is declared the same truth that Jesus had revealed to Nicodemus when He said, “Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3, margin).

“Not by seeking a holy mountain or a sacred temple are men brought into communion with heaven. Religion is not to be confined to external forms and ceremonies. The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit’s working is manifest,


and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters.” *The Desire of Ages*, 189.

True worship must be “in spirit,” that is, engaging the whole heart. Nothing less than the whole heart will be acceptable to the Lord. Unless there is a real passion for God, there is no worship in spirit. At the same time, worship must be “in truth,” that is, truth as it is in Jesus. Unless we have knowledge of the God we worship, there is no worship in truth. Both are necessary for God-honoring worship. Spirit without truth leads to a shallow, emotional experience that could be compared to a high. As soon as the emotion is over, the worship ends. Truth without spirit, the Holy Spirit, can result in a dry, form of joyless legalism. The best combination of both aspects of worship results in a joyous appreciation of God informed by Scripture. The more we know about God, the more we appreciate Him. The more we appreciate, the deeper our worship. The deeper our worship, the more God is glorified.

Let us worship our Lord in the way God designed it to be—in Spirit and in Truth. **LM**



# Surprising Benefits of Cold Showers



**A** cold shower is often an annoyance in western societies, rather than an unavoidable necessity. Now, however, many are voluntarily turning their taps as cold as they can in the name of “wellness.” There are a few popular trends out there with no-scientific backing, but cold-water immersion isn’t one of them. Cold showers are proven to have a wealth of evidence-backed benefits.

Nutrition, movement, and quality sleep are the pillars of health. How does the discomfort of an ice-cold shower fit into that?

We are constantly bombarded with messages to take a pill, buy a gadget, or see a specialist to feel better but conventional methods are not working. So, researchers are now looking at natural health methods for chronic diseases. One of the natural health methods being studied is cold-water immersion. In a clinical trial where participants had two to three cold showers for five minutes each session, there was an increase in endorphin levels.

In America, depression affects at least 10% of the population (reported, but there are likely many more). It’s clear that antidepressants aren’t working for everyone; we need to make it clear to more people that these natural remedies will help.

Are you feeling sluggish of a morning? It’s no surprise that a cold shower will wake you up quickly. Your stress hormone, cortisol, should start kicking in as the sun rises and wake you up. If you’re a slow-starter, get your hormones working for you faster. A cold shower will increase your alertness, blood pressure, and respiratory rate. It’ll also increase immune cell production and boost your energy. Exposure to cold water increases glutathione and improves levels of uric acid. When these two are combined, they can relieve stress, which makes you more relaxed.

In a study of over 3,000 people, cold showers of 30-90 seconds resulted in a 29% reduction in sick days. Athletes have been utilizing the benefits of cold exposure for years. Ice baths reduce pain and recovery time for active people. Studies have shown that just five minutes in a cold shower a few times per week will reduce depression, increase focus, and increase your immunity. And it doesn’t take any more time in your busy schedule to get started.

Most of the research undertaken proves that all you need is a few five-minute cold showers per week to reap these benefits. Five minutes is a long time in the cold shower if you’re new to this. Here’s the best way to get started for beginners.

Ease into it. Jumping straight into a cold shower is a shock to your system. Start with a warm temperature, then slowly get colder.

Don’t put your head under the water for too long. If you’ve sipped on your green smoothie too quickly, you will have experienced “brain freeze.” Cold showers can be a shock to your brain also. Duck your head under the water occasionally at a rate that is achievable for you.

And, do not forget to breathe. Most people hold their breath when engaging in a challenging activity. Conscious breathing will give you more oxygen, which your cells need to function. When you breathe into it, you’ll energize your body, and the cold will become easier to manage.

The surprising benefits of cold showers are undeniable. We are almost always in our “comfort zones,” which is not always contributing to a healthier and happier community.

Enjoy the undeniable benefits of cold-water immersion by stepping into the short-term discomfort of a cold shower today.

Excerpts from NaturalHealth365, Lori Clarkson, July 31, 2020. [LM](#)



# *Journey with Jesus*

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By John J. Grosboll

**A**n *oxymoron* is defined as *a self-contradictory statement or saying*. Many of the greatest truths that Jesus taught seem to be self-contradictory, like the beatitude that says, “Happy are those that mourn.” In other words, happy are the sad.

The second beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount says, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matthew 5:4). It sounds just as strange and paradoxical as does the first beatitude. It is seemingly contrary to the accepted views of all mankind in every age of human history. It is not our custom to envy those who weep or to congratulate the broken-hearted. We usually pity them and offer them our sympathy. We write them letters of condolence and we are thankful that we have escaped that terrible situation. But Jesus pronounces a blessing on the mourners. He declares them to be happy and sets them apart as a special, privileged class. Now, before we look at that, we need to understand one thing. This beatitude does not have universal application and is not all inclusive. It does not embrace every person in the world who mourns, regardless of the cause, because there is a mourning that will know no comfort. There are burning tears that will never be wiped away and a bitter anguish that will never be appeased.





“  
*There can be no healing  
until a person recognizes  
that they have been  
wounded.*”

Jesus was very clear about this when He said, “But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 8:12). That there will be “weeping and gnashing of teeth” is also mentioned in Matthew 13:42 and again in verse 50. Over and over again Jesus warned that there was coming a time when many would experience a sorrow for which there would be no healing and no consolation. Jesus warned, “The master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 24:50, 51).

Again, in Matthew 25, the same warning is repeated when He said, “Cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (verse 30). There is coming a time at the end of the world when, sadly, some people are going to say, “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved” (Jeremiah 8:20)! Those who are finally lost will have a sorrow that has no comfort. There will be no alleviating their bitter anguish. There can be no real, lasting comfort for the person who refuses to separate from sin, who refuses all the overtures of the God of heaven for mercy if you will repent. If you grieve away the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, then there’s no way for you to be comforted.

The apostle Paul talks about a sorrow for which there is no comfort. He says, “Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death” (2 Corinthians 7:10).

This sort of sorrow does not bring comfort; it brings death. Today, there are millions of people whose sorrow is borne of remorse, not because of their conduct, not because of their sins, but because of the personal loss that has resulted from their conduct. They do not hate the sin; they love the sin. What

they hate is the result. Jails, prisons and penitentiaries are filled with mourners of this sort, but their mourning does not lead to any blessed results.

Then there is a large class of pessimistic people who mourn. One Christian writer described them as people who glory in gloom and misery. There are those who are veritable gluttons for wretchedness searching for despair as bees search for honey. They are never so happy as when they feel that they have a perfect right to be miserable and they are never so miserable as when they feel duty-bound to be happy.

We cannot study the beatitudes and understand them until we recognize that they are inseparably connected. Each one is an advanced step on the path that leads to the kingdom of heaven, forming links in a chain of spiritual growth. They constitute the steps of a ladder that lead to the kingdom of blessedness. Blessed mourning is that which comes as a result of a person’s recognition of his spiritual poverty. Remember, the first beatitude is, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). Those people who recognize their spiritual poverty and see their sinful condition say like the apostle Paul, “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death” (Romans 7:24)?

Realizing their condition and mourning with true heart sorrow that they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked, and in need of divine help will open the way for them to be comforted. The apostle Paul describes this sorrow that brings comfort and happiness. He says, “Even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing” (2 Corinthians 7:8, 9). “For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things

you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter” (verse 11).

Godly sorrow is sorrow for the sins that have destroyed our peace and which have caused the indescribable sufferings of the One who paid the redemption price. Comfort is needed only where there has been grief. There can be no comfort if there has not first been discomfort. There can be no healing until a person recognizes that they have been wounded. Heart sorrow is the essential spiritual preparation for pardon. And pardon is the prerequisite for comfort and happiness. Whom Christ pardons, He first makes penitent. And penitence is a heart sorrow for sin, a brokenness of spirit because of conscious failure.

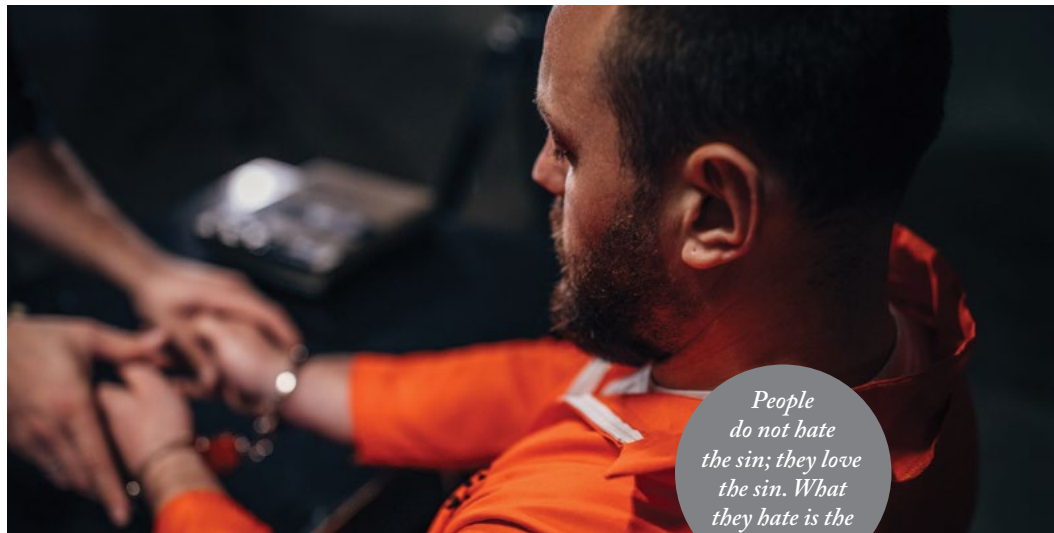
The Bible gives many examples of godly and ungodly sorrow. For instance, the patriarch Job, when he ceased trying to justify himself and began to recognize his sins and to mourn over them, his captivity was turned around and he was blessed above anything he had before experienced.

The same is true in regard to Isaiah the prophet. In his agony of soul over the sins of his life, he speaks of himself as being a man of unclean lips, dwelling in the midst of a people of unclean lips (Isaiah 6:5).

Recognizing this condition, it brought him to the dawn of a new day, the doorway to happiness. He was anointed as a messenger of the Lord.

There also is the example of King Saul who did not repent of his sin of rebellion, but mourned because the sin cost him his throne. He only made a forced confession when there was no other course open to him. But a forced confession does not bring forgiveness. His mourning over his rejection as king brought him no comfort. His was not a sorrow for sin, but like many who have broken the law, he was only sorry for the consequences of his sin.

David, Saul’s successor, also committed sins. Comparing their lives, it appears that David committed sins just



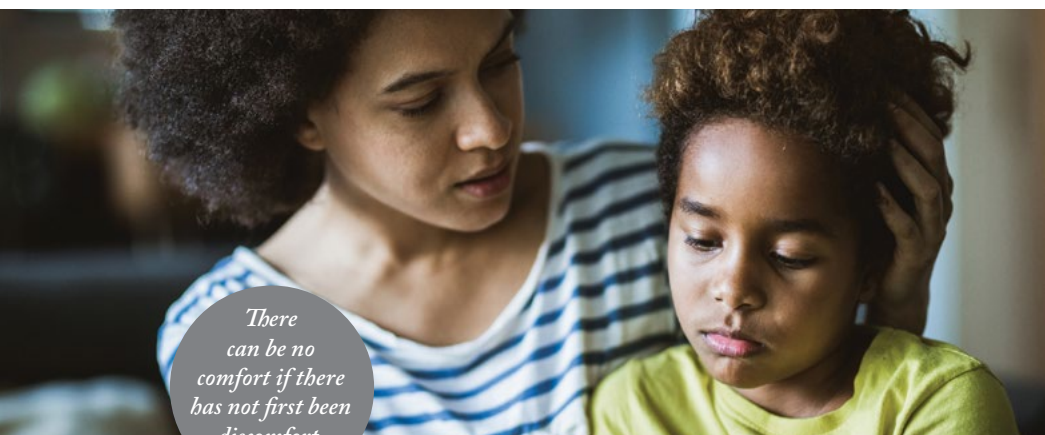
as great as did Saul. The difference was that David was truly sorry, not just for what he had done, but he realized that he was totally wretched and in need of a recreated heart. He knew that without it he could never be saved. David feared that he had committed the unpardonable sin. He pled, “Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness” (Psalm 51:14). “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me” (verses 10, 11). He recognized his condition. He was wretched, miserable and undone, and unless the Lord created within him a new heart, a new spirit, he was lost. His repentance was accepted. The consciousness of the enormity of his sin caused him to suffer very keenly and in brokenness of heart he cried out, “O Lord, give me a new heart.”

Jesus said to Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews, “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (verse 5). In other words, unless you have a new heart, a new spirit, you cannot be saved.

Judas was another mourner. Judas mourned over the great sin of betraying his Lord and Master. His remorse was so terrible that it drove him to murder himself. However, it was not of the godly sort that brings comfort. He was sorry for the consequences of what he had done, but he never repented for the sin itself.

Peter sinned almost as grievously as did Judas. He betrayed Jesus Christ on the same night, but his remorse was great, and his grief led to genuine repentance, repentance not just for the consequences, but for the sin itself. The result was that he was comforted and blessed. Jesus is the only source of true comfort, and if you want to experience that comfort you must go to Him, asking for the gift of repentance and a desire to be born again. True repentance and sorrow for sin can only come as a gift of the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit gives us the gift of repentance (Acts 5).

It is sorrow for our sinful condition that will be comforted. Jesus is the only source of comfort, and therefore all mourning should lead us to Him. In fact, Jesus has given an invitation to people who are mourning because of a bereavement. Maybe you have lost your father or your mother or your wife or



There  
can be no  
comfort if there  
has not first been  
discomfort.

your husband or a child, and you are bereaved and mourning. Jesus invites us to come to Him and receive comfort.

In Isaiah 61 there is a prophecy of the work of the Messiah, the Christ. *Messiah* from the Hebrew, *Christ* from the Greek, both mean the *Anointed One*. Jesus applied this prophecy to Himself. It says, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified” (verses 1–3).

Notice, the work of the Messiah was to bind up the brokenhearted, to comfort all that mourn, to give them that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. He still wants to do this same work today, but this world has a problem. It seems we lack a consciousness of sin which can only be brought about by a vision of the character of Christ. Recognition of sin

is a result of recognition of God and this must be followed by genuine heart sorrow and repentance. This present generation is but little disturbed or concerned over sin. Multitudes of people have so far lost their sense of right and wrong and are virtually amoral or non-moral. Moral and spiritual standards have been trampled underfoot until, to the majority of people, nothing is considered sinful or wrong anymore. Such an attitude always produces a spirit of pride and self-appreciation which makes its possessors feel that they are rich and in need of nothing.

Today’s world is actually similar to the world in which Jesus lived, in that there are few people who feel their poverty of spirit enough to mourn over it. There are many who feel that somehow, they lack something, but a mere recognition of that lack is not enough. The blessing is only promised for the convicted sinner who takes the matter seriously, grieving over the situation until the remedy is applied. His godly sorrow must turn his footsteps toward Him who is anxiously awaiting to supply all of his needs. The knowledge of our need is valueless unless it leads us to the One who can provide the solution. There is comfortless sorrow rampant in the world today, because godly sorrow over sin has almost disappeared from among men, yet comfort in sorrow of any kind and for any cause is awaiting those who renounce

sin. The heavenly blessing embraces all the sorrows that afflict mankind as long as it comes as a result of mourning over sin, which must be experienced first.

The ultimate fulfillment of comfort will come in that blessed realm where sin and all of its results are no more. Jesus came to redeem His people and take them to a better land as described in Isaiah 35, verse 10. It says, “And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

We look forward to that time when there will be no more sorrow. Revelation 21:4 says, “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” For sin, the cause of suffering, will at last be done away (Revelation 20).

The time is coming soon when sin and sinners will be no more and when that time comes, everything will be clean in God’s universe. If you want to see it, you must be cleansed from your sins, not only forgiven, but cleansed from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). For concerning it, “There shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (Revelation 21:27).

Then the saved will experience the ultimate fulfillment of the promise that the mourners will be comforted, for they will be in that better land where peace and joy will reign forever.

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

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April 25 – May 1, 2021

# Developing the Mind

## Key Text

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

**Study Help:** *Education*, 13–19; *Our High Calling*, 119.

## Introduction

“To deal with minds is the nicest work in which men ever engaged.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 269.

## Sunday

### 1 ADVANCEMENT ONLY THROUGH CONFLICT AND FINDING PEACE

1.a. What is the “science of Christianity?” Joel 2:1, *first part*.

**Note:** “No other science is equal to that which develops in the life of the student the character of God. Those who become followers of Christ find that new motives of action are supplied, new thoughts arise, and new actions must result. But they can make advancement only through conflict; for there is an enemy who ever contends against them, presenting temptations to cause the soul to doubt and sin. There are hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil that must be overcome. Appetite and passion must be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. There is no end to the warfare this side of eternity. But while there are constant battles to fight, there are also precious victories to gain; and the triumph over self and sin is of more value than the mind can estimate.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 20.

1.b. How should one present himself to God? 2 Timothy 2:15.

**Note:** “The science of a pure, wholesome, consistent Christian life is obtained by studying the word of the Lord. This is the highest education that any earthly being can obtain.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 11.

“Upon the right improvement of our time depends our success in acquiring knowledge and mental culture. The cultivation of the intellect need not be prevented by poverty, humble origin, or unfavorable surroundings. ... A resolute purpose, persistent industry, and careful economy of time, will enable men to acquire knowledge and mental discipline which will qualify them for almost any position of influence and usefulness.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 343, 344.

## Monday

### 2 FINDING PEACE

2.a. How can a person be delivered from a source of unrest and obtain peace of mind? Romans 5:1; Philippians 4:7.

**Note:** “The religion of Christ, so far from being the cause of insanity, is one of its most effectual remedies; for it is a potent soother of the nerves.” *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 444.

“When temptations assail you, when care, perplexity, and darkness seem to surround your soul, look to the place where you last saw the light. Rest in Christ’s love and under His protecting care. ... Entering into communion with the Saviour, we enter the region of peace.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 250.

2.b. How can one be relieved of the burdens of anxiety and anxious thoughts? Matthew 11:28–30.

**Note:** “When men go forth to their daily toil, as when they engage in prayer; when they lie down at night, and when they rise in the morning; when the rich man feasts in his palace, or when the poor man gathers his children about the scanty board, each is tenderly watched by the heavenly Father. No tears are shed that God does not notice. There is no smile that He does not mark.



"If we would but fully believe this, all undue anxieties would be dismissed. Our lives would not be so filled with disappointment as now; for everything, whether great or small, would be left in the hands of God, who is not perplexed by the multiplicity of cares, or overwhelmed by their weight. We should then enjoy a rest of soul to which many have long been strangers." *Steps to Christ*, 86.

## Tuesday

### 3 SIN AND ITS EFFECTS

3.a. What does sin do to our minds, the home of our characters, and how can it be eliminated from our lives? Psalms 51:1-4; 32:5.

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**Note:** "Let none flatter themselves that sins cherished for a time can easily be given up by and by. This is not so. Every sin cherished weakens the character and strengthens habit; and physical, mental, and moral depravity is the result. You may repent of the wrong you have done, and set your feet in right paths; but the mold of your mind and your familiarity with evil will make it difficult for you to distinguish between right and wrong. Through the wrong habits formed, Satan will assail you again and again." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 281.

"Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ's mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore. He opens to us the riches of the universe, and by Him the power to discern and to appropriate these treasures is imparted." *Education*, 28, 29.

3.b. How does temptation begin? James 1:6, 13, 14.

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**Note:** "The promises of God are not for us to claim rashly, to protect us while we rush on recklessly into danger, violating the laws of nature, or disregarding prudence and the judgment God has given us to use. This would not be genuine faith but presumption." *Our High Calling*, 93.

"The beginning of yielding to temptation is in the sin of permitting the mind to waver, to be inconsistent in your trust in God. The wicked one is ever watching for a chance to misrepresent God, and to attract the mind to that which is forbidden. If he can, he will fasten the mind upon the things of the world. He will endeavor to excite the emotions, to arouse the passions, to fasten the affections on that which is not for your good; but it is for you to hold every emotion and passion under control, in calm subjection to reason and conscience. Then Satan loses his power to control the mind." *Ibid.*, 87.

## Wednesday

### 4 HEALING MINDS AND BODIES

4.a. How does Satan seek to take control of the mind?  
1 Peter 5:8.

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**Note:** "Satan's work is to discourage the soul. Christ's work is to inspire the heart with faith and hope. Satan seeks to unsettle our confidence. He tells us that our hopes are built upon false premises rather than upon the sure, immutable word of Him who cannot lie." *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, 32.

"When the character is lacking in purity, when sin has become a part of the character, it has a bewitching power that is equal to the intoxicating glass of liquor. The power of self-control and reason is overborne by practices that defile the whole being; and if these sinful practices are continued, the brain is enfeebled and diseased, and loses its balance." *Maranatha*, 229.

"We have found in our experience that if Satan cannot keep souls bound in the ice of indifference, he will try to push them into the fire of fanaticism." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 644.

4.b. How are minds strengthened and healed? Matthew 9:2-7, 20-22.

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**Note:** “Talk courage to the people; lift them up to God in prayer. Many who have been overcome by temptation are humiliated by their failures, and they feel that it is in vain for them to approach unto God; but this thought is of the enemy’s suggestion. When they have sinned, and feel that they cannot pray, tell them that it is then the time to pray. Ashamed they may be, and deeply humbled; but as they confess their sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive their sins and cleanse them from all unrighteousness.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 181, 182.

## Thursday

### 5 TRUE DEVELOPMENT

5.a. How can a person be encouraged to gain the strength of an overcomer? Hebrews 11:32–40.

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**Note:** “All minds are not naturally constituted alike. We have varied minds; some are strong upon certain points and very weak upon others. These deficiencies, so apparent, need not and should not exist. If those who possess them would strengthen the weak points in their character by cultivation and exercise they would become strong.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 33.

“All the powers of the mind should be called into use and developed in order for men and women to have well-balanced minds.” *Ibid.*, 152, 153.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can one obtain the best education in the world?
- 2 What should you do when stressed out and anxiety-laden?
- 3 What does sin do to your mind?
- 4 What is the prescription needed to cure a sinful mind?
- 5 How do feelings relate to mental weakness and how might a person gain strength in this area?

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*No other science is equal to that which develops in the life of the student the character of God.*



May 2 – 8, 2021

# Love and Self-respect

## Key Text

“We love Him, because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

**Study Help:** *The Adventist Home*, 50–54; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 200–215.

## Introduction

“The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. ... In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 551.

## Sunday

### 1 LOVE AS A PRINCIPLE OF ACTION

1.a. What is love? 1 John 4:16.

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**Note:** “Love is power. Intellectual and moral strength are involved in this principle, and cannot be separated from it. The power of wealth has a tendency to corrupt and destroy; the power of force is strong to do hurt; but the excellence and value of pure love consist in its efficiency to do good, and to do nothing else than good. Whatsoever is done out of pure love, be it ever so little or contemptible in the sight of men, is wholly fruitful; for God regards more with how much love one worketh than the amount he doeth. Love is of God. The unconverted heart cannot originate nor produce this plant of heavenly growth, which lives and flourishes only where Christ reigns.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 135.

1.b. What does true love lead one to do? Romans 13:10; John 15:9–14.

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**Note:** “Christ’s love is deep and earnest, flowing like an irrepressible stream to all who will accept it. There is no selfishness in His love. If this heaven-born love is an abiding principle in the heart, it will make itself known, not only to those we hold most dear in sacred relationship, but to all with whom we come in contact. It will lead us to bestow little acts of attention, to make concessions, to perform deeds of kindness, to speak tender, true, encouraging words. It will lead us to sympathize with those whose hearts hunger for sympathy.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1140.

“Love is a plant of heavenly origin. It is not unreasonable; it is not blind. It is pure and holy. But the passion of the natural heart is another thing altogether. While pure love will take God into all its plans, and will be in perfect harmony with the Spirit of God, passion will be headstrong, rash, unreasonable, defiant of all restraint, and will make the object of its choice an idol.” *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1888.

## Monday

### 2 LOVE IN MARRIAGE

2.a. Why was marriage largely associated with sin in Noah’s day? Luke 17:26, 27.

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**Note:** “There is in itself no sin in eating and drinking, or in marrying and giving in marriage. It was lawful to marry in the time of Noah, and it is lawful to marry now, if that which is lawful is properly treated, and not carried to sinful excess. ...

“In Noah’s day it was the inordinate, excessive love of that which in itself was lawful, when properly used, that made marriage sinful before God. There are many who are losing their souls in this age of the world, by becoming absorbed in the thoughts of marriage, and in the marriage relation itself. ...

“God has placed men in the world, and it is their privilege to eat, to drink, to trade, to marry, and to be given in marriage; but it is safe to do these things only in the fear of God. We should live in this world with reference to the eternal world.” *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1888.

2.b. What parallel of marriage does Scripture give in illustrating love? Ephesians 5:25, 26.

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*Love  
is power.  
Intellectual  
and moral strength  
are involved in this  
principle, and cannot  
be separated from  
it.*

**Note:** “In all the deportment of one who possesses true love, the grace of God will be shown. Modesty, simplicity, sincerity, morality, and religion will characterize every step toward an alliance in marriage.” *The Review and Herald*, September 25, 1888.

## Tuesday

### 3 TESTING YOUR LOVE

3.a. How is genuine love demonstrated? 1 John 3:16–18.

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**Note:** “The proof of our love is given in a Christlike spirit, a willingness to impart the good things God has given us, a readiness to practice self-denial and self-sacrifice in order to help advance the cause of God and suffering humanity. Never should we pass by the object that calls for our liberality. We reveal that we have passed from death unto life when we act as faithful stewards of God’s grace. God has given us His goods; He has given us His pledged word that if we are faithful in our stewardship, we shall lay up in heaven treasures that are imperishable.” *The Review and Herald*, May 15, 1900.

3.b. Give an example of pure, sanctified love. John 12:3; Luke 7:40–47.

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**Note:** “Talk, pharisaism, and self-praise are abundant; but these will never win souls to Christ. Pure, sanctified love, such love as was expressed in Christ’s lifework, is as a sacred perfume. Like Mary’s broken box of ointment, it fills the whole house with fragrance. Eloquence, knowledge of truth, rare talents, mingled with love, are all precious endowments. But ability alone, the choicest talents alone, cannot take the place of love.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 84.

## Wednesday

### 4 PROMOTING HEALTHY SELF-RESPECT

4.a. In what sense are the servants of God encouraged to be wise? Proverbs 9:12, *first part*. How does home ownership relate to self-respect?

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**Note:** “The sense of being owners of their own homes would inspire them [the poorer classes] with a strong desire for improvement. They would soon acquire skill in planning and devising for themselves; their children would be educated to habits of industry and economy, and the intellect would be greatly strengthened. They would feel that they are men, not slaves, and would be able to regain to a great degree their lost self-respect and moral independence.” *The Adventist Home*, 373.



**4.b. Describe the contrast between self-support and dependence upon charity and the government.**  
**Proverbs 10:16; 21:25.**

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**Note:** “Those who are endeavoring to reform should be provided with employment. None who are able to labor should be taught to expect food and clothing and shelter free of cost. For their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, some way should be devised whereby they may return an equivalent for what they receive. Encourage every effort toward self-support. This will strengthen self-respect and a noble independence. And occupation of mind and body in useful work is essential as a safeguard against temptation.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 177.

“Many who are qualified to do excellent work accomplish little because they attempt little. Thousands pass through life as if they had no great object for which to live, no high standard to reach. One reason for this is the low estimate which they place upon themselves. Christ paid an infinite price for us, and according to the price paid He desires us to value ourselves.” *Ibid.*, 498.

## Thursday

### 5 UNDERSTANDING TRUE SELF-RESPECT

**5.a What does God do when man fully humbles himself? James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6, 7.**

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**Note:** “It should not be difficult to remember that the Lord desires you to lay your troubles and perplexities at His feet, and leave them there. Go to Him, saying, ‘Lord, my burdens are too heavy for me to carry. Wilt Thou bear them for me?’ And He

will answer: ‘I will take them. “With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.” I will take your sins, and will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove.’”

*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 519, 520.

“Let us, under all circumstances, preserve our confidence in Christ. He is to be everything to us—the first, the last, the best in everything. Then let us educate our tongues to speak forth His praise, not only when we feel gladness and joy, but at all times. ...

“Let us not talk of the great power of Satan, but of the great power of God.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 328.

**5.b. How can we have confidence toward God? Romans 8:1; 1 John 3:21.**

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**Note:** “It is not pleasing to God that you should demerit yourself. You should cultivate self-respect by living so that you will be approved by your own conscience, and before men and angels. ... It is your privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame and remorse. [Romans 8:1 quoted.] While we should not think of ourselves more highly than we ought, the word of God does not condemn a proper self-respect. As sons and daughters of God, we should have a conscious dignity of character, in which pride and self-importance have no part.” *The Review and Herald*, March 27, 1888.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe the difference between love and passion. Define true love.
- 2 What is pure, holy love? Contrast God’s ideal for marriage with the concept prevalent in the days of Noah.
- 3 How can love be proven?
- 4 What are some ways to gain self-respect?
- 5 How can self-respect be maintained?

May 9 – 15, 2021

# Mental and Physical Health

## Key Text

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2).

**Study Help:** *The Sanctified Life*, 18–33; *Education*, 195–206.

## Introduction

“Between the mind and the body there is a mysterious and wonderful relation. They react upon each other.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 485.

## Sunday

### 1 HARMONIOUS INTERACTION NECESSARY

1.a. In the creation, what requirements were placed upon man that were not required of other creatures? Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:16, 17.

**Note:** “The harmony of creation depends upon the perfect conformity of all beings, of everything, animate and inanimate, to the law of the Creator. God has ordained laws for the government, not only of living beings, but of all the operations of nature. Everything is under fixed laws, which cannot be disregarded. But while everything in nature is governed by natural laws, man alone, of all that inhabits the earth, is amenable to moral law.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 52.

1.b. How are Christians exhorted to strive for sanctification, both mental and physical? Romans 12:1; Philip-  
pians 2:12, *last part*, 13.

**Note:** “The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character.” *The Review and Herald*, January 25, 1881.

“[It presents] a lesson for all, but especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God, and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life. In the experience of Daniel and his companions we have an instance of the triumph of principle over temptation to indulge the appetite. It shows us that through religious principle young men may triumph over the lusts of the flesh, and remain true to God’s requirements, even though it cost them a great sacrifice.” *Ibid*.

“The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 130.

## Monday

### 2 THE BODY AFFECTS THE MIND

2.a. How is mental effort affected by good physical health? 3 John 2; 1 Corinthians 9:27.

**Note:** “We should seek to preserve the full vigor of all our powers for the accomplishment of the work before us. Whatever detracts from physical vigor weakens mental effort. Hence, every practice unfavorable to the health of the body should be resolutely shunned. ...

“We cannot maintain consecration to God and yet injure our health by the willful indulgence of a wrong habit. Self-denial is one of the conditions, not only of admission into the service of Christ, but of continuance therein. Christ Himself declared, in unmistakable language, the conditions of discipleship: ‘If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me’ (Matthew 16:24).

“Yet, how many who call themselves Christians are unwilling to exercise self-denial, even for Christ’s sake. How often the love for some pernicious indulgence is stronger than the desire for a sound mind in a sound body. Precious hours of probation are spent, God-given means squandered, to please the eye or to gratify the appetite. Custom holds thousands in bondage to the earthly and sensual. Many are willing captives; they desire no better portion.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 380, 381.

2.b. What is the effect of fleshly lusts on the mind?  
1 Peter 2:11.

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**Note:** “Study is not the principal cause of breakdown of mental powers. The main cause is improper diet, irregular meals, a lack of physical exercise, and careless inattention in other respects to the laws of health. When we do all that we can to preserve the health, then we can ask God in faith to bless our efforts.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 299.

“By allowing ourselves to form wrong habits, by keeping late hours, by gratifying appetite at the expense of health, we lay the foundation for feebleness. By neglecting physical exercise, by overworking mind or body, we unbalance the nervous system.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 346.

## Tuesday

### 3 DIET AND THE MIND

3.a. What effects do temperance and discipline have on the mind? 1 Corinthians 9:25, 27.

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**Note:** “True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful. There are few who realize as they should how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. The appetite should ever be in subjection to the moral and intellectual powers. The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 562.

“There are ample reasons why there are so many nervous women in the world, complaining of the dyspepsia, with its train of evils. The cause has been followed by the effect. It is impossible for intemperate persons to be patient. They must first reform bad habits, learn to live healthfully, and then it will not be difficult for them to be patient. Many do not seem to understand the relation the mind sustains to the body. If the system is deranged by improper food, the brain and nerves are affected, and slight things annoy those who are thus afflicted. Little difficulties are to them troubles mountain high.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 434.

3.b. How can a person’s dietary practices affect and influence the faith of others? Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 8:13; Daniel chapter 1.

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**Note:** “We are composed of what we eat, and eating much flesh will diminish intellectual activity. Students would accomplish much more in their studies if they never tasted meat. When the animal part of the human agent is strengthened by meat eating, the intellectual powers diminish proportionately. A religious life can be more successfully gained and maintained if meat is discarded.” *Medical Ministry*, 277, 278.

“I frequently sit down to the tables of the brethren and sisters, and see that they use a great amount of milk and sugar. These clog the system, irritate the digestive organs, and affect the brain. Anything that hinders the active motion of the living machinery, affects the brain very directly. And from the light given me, sugar, when largely used, is more injurious than meat. These changes should be made cautiously, and the subject should be treated in a manner not calculated to disgust and prejudice those whom we would teach and help.” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 328.

## Wednesday

### 4 THE BEST MEDICINE

4.a. What forces does happiness release? Proverbs 15:15, *last part*; 16:24, *first part*.

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**Note:** “The pleasure of doing good animates the mind and vibrates through the whole body. While the faces of benevolent men are lighted up with cheerfulness, and their countenances express the moral elevation of the mind, those of selfish, stingy men are dejected, cast down, and gloomy. Their moral defects are seen in their countenances.” *Testimonies*, vol. 2, 534.



4.b. What are the best practices/habits for diseased bodies and minds? Proverbs 3:1–8.

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**Note:** “The consciousness of rightdoing is the best medicine for diseased bodies and minds. The special blessing of God resting upon the receiver is health and strength. A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 502.

## Thursday

### 5 MIND AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH

5.a. What effect will following Jesus have on the mind? Malachi 4:2; John 14:27.

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**Note:** “When the gospel is received in its purity and power, it is a cure for the maladies that originated in sin. ... Not all that this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The life of God in the soul is man’s only hope.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 115.

5.b. How are reason and grace bound together? Romans 6:1,2; Isaiah 1:18, 19.

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**Note:** “The body is a most important medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here often means the surrender of the whole being to evil. The tendencies of the physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death. The body is to be brought into subjection to the higher powers of the being. The passions are to be controlled by the will, which is itself to be under the control of God. The kingly power of reason, sanctified by divine grace, is to bear sway in the life.” *Prophets and Kings*, 488, 489.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Discuss co-dependence of the physical and mental powers.
- 2 How does temperance relate to physical and mental strength?
- 3 How does what a person eats affect his intellect?
- 4 What is the best medicine for sick bodies and minds?
- 5 What is the cure for spiritual disease originating from the commission of sin? How does this affect spiritual health?



May 16 – 22, 2021

# Emotions

## Key Text

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).

**Study Help:** *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 755–762; *The Review and Herald*, June 2, 1910.

## Introduction

“If you feel yourself to be the greatest sinner, Christ is just what you need, the greatest Saviour.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 452.

## Sunday

### 1 GOD SEES ALL

1.a. What seven things are especially offensive to God?  
Proverbs 6:16–19.

**Note:** “God does not regard all sins as of equal magnitude; there are degrees of guilt in His estimation, as well as in that of man; but however trifling this or that wrong act may seem in the eyes of men, no sin is small in the sight of God. Man’s judgment is partial, imperfect; but God estimates all things as they really are. The drunkard is despised and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven; while pride, selfishness, and covetousness too often go unrebuked. But these are sins that are especially offensive to God; for they are contrary to the benevolence of His character, to that unselfish love which is the very atmosphere of the unfallen universe. He who falls into some of the grosser sins may feel a sense of his shame and poverty and his need of the grace of Christ; but pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give.” *Steps to Christ*, 30.

1.b. What is promised to those who confess their sins?  
Proverbs 14:16; 1 John 1:9.

**Note:** “No one is ever made better by denunciation and recrimination. To tell a tempted soul of his guilt in no way inspires him with a determination to do better. Point the erring, discouraged one to Him who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. Show him what he may become. Tell him that there is in him nothing that recommends him to God, but that Christ died for him that he might be accepted in the Beloved. Inspire him with hope, showing him that in Christ’s strength he can do better. Hold up before him the possibilities that are his. Point him to the heights to which he may attain. Help him to take hold upon the mercy of the Lord, to trust in His forgiving power. Jesus is waiting to clasp him by the hand, waiting to give him power to live a noble, virtuous life.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 453.

## Monday

### 2 PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF EMOTIONS

2.a. Contrast the effects of emotions that tend to break down the life forces with those that build them up.  
Proverbs 17:22.

**Note:** “Grief, anxiety, discontent, remorse, guilt, distrust, all tend to break down the life-forces and to invite decay and death. ... Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 241.

“Sadness deadens the circulation in the blood vessels and nerves and also retards the action of the liver. It hinders the process of digestion and of nutrition, and has a tendency to dry up the marrow [interior substance] of the whole system.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 458.

2.b. How are we encouraged to obtain peace? Isaiah 27:5; 26:3.

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**Note:** “We are not to let the future, with its hard problems, its unsatisfying prospects, make our hearts faint, our knees tremble, our hands hang down. [Isaiah 27:5 quoted.] Those who surrender their lives to His guidance and to His service will never be placed in a position for which He has not made provision. Whatever our situation, if we are doers of His word, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexity, we have a sure Counselor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathizing Friend.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 248, 249.

## Tuesday

### 3 LIFE'S BURDENS

3.a. What is the effect of anxiety on the mind? Proverbs 12:25. What is the recommended remedy? Philippians 4:6, 7.

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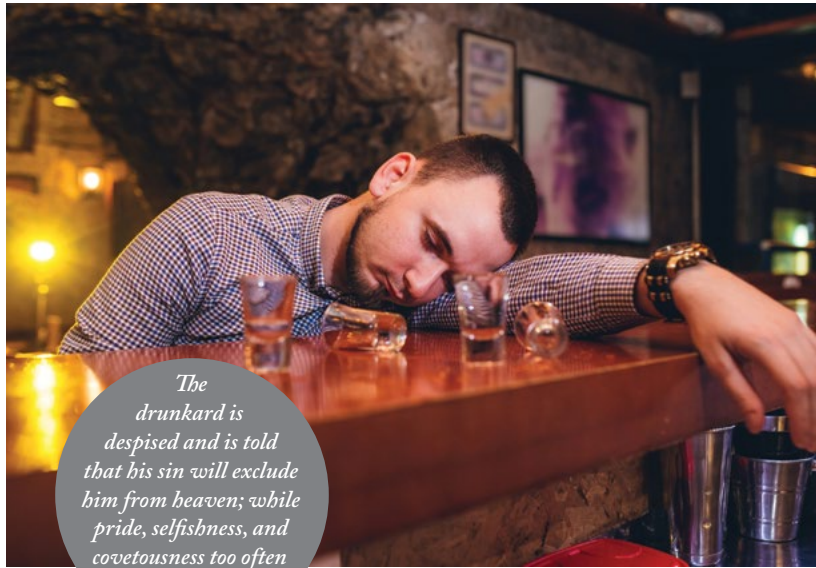


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**Note:** “We are in a world of suffering. Difficulty, trial, and sorrow await us all along the way to the heavenly home. But there are many who make life's burdens doubly heavy by continually anticipating trouble. If they meet with adversity or disappointment, they think that everything is going to ruin, that theirs is the hardest lot of all, that they are surely coming to want. Thus they bring wretchedness upon themselves and cast a shadow upon all around them. Life itself becomes a burden to them. But it need not be thus. It will cost a determined effort to change the current of their thought. But the change can be made. Their happiness, both for this life and for the life to come, depends upon their fixing their minds upon cheerful things. Let them look away from the dark picture, which is imaginary, to the benefits which God has strewn in their pathway, and beyond these to the unseen and eternal.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 247, 248.



*The drunkard is despised and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven; while pride, selfishness, and covetousness too often go unrebuked.*

3.b. Compare and contrast the worst sources of comfort with the best ones. Job 16:2–4; Psalms 13:5, 6; 21:1; 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

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**Note:** “Those who have borne the greatest sorrows are frequently the ones who carry the greatest comfort to others, bringing sunshine wherever they go. Such ones have been chastened and sweetened by their afflictions; they did not lose confidence in God when trouble assailed them, but clung closer to His protecting love. Such ones are a living proof of the tender care of God, who makes the darkness as well as the light, and chastens us for our good. Christ is the light of the world; in Him is no darkness. Precious light! Let us live in that light! Bid adieu to sadness and repining. Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 274.

## Wednesday

### 4 HUMAN EXPERIENCE

4.a. Discuss the human experience of separation from God and how Christ experienced this in our behalf in the Garden of Gethsemane. Luke 22:44.

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**Note:** “It was the anguish of separation from His Father’s favor that made Christ’s sufferings so acute. ... His terrible anguish, caused by the thought that in this hour of need God had forsaken Him, portrays the anguish that the sinner will feel when, too late, he realizes that God’s Spirit is withdrawn from him.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 464, 465.

4.b. How can we obtain healing from the anxiety so often associated with physical illness? Psalms 33:18, 22; 34:17–22.

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**Note:** “When wrongs have been righted, we may present the needs of the sick to the Lord in calm faith, as His Spirit may indicate. He knows each individual by name, and cares for each as if there were not another upon the earth for whom He gave His beloved Son. Because God’s love is so great and so unfailing, the sick should be encouraged to trust in Him and be cheerful. To be anxious about themselves tends to cause weakness and disease. If they will rise above depression and gloom, their prospect of recovery will be better.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 229.

## Thursday

### 5 CONCERN OVER THE FUTURE

5.a. What is to be our view of the near and distant future? Matthew 6:25–33.

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**Note:** “Though their present needs are supplied, many are unwilling to trust God for the future, and they are in constant anxiety lest poverty shall come upon them, and their children shall be left to suffer. Some are always anticipating evil or magnifying the difficulties that really exist, so that their eyes are blinded to the many blessings which demand their gratitude. The obstacles they encounter, instead of leading them to seek help from God, the only Source of strength, separate them from Him, because they awaken unrest and repining.

“Do we well to be thus unbelieving? Why should we be ungrateful and distrustful? Jesus is our friend; all heaven is interested in our welfare; and our anxiety and fear grieve the Holy Spirit of God. We should not indulge in a solicitude that only frets and wears us, but does not help us to bear trials. No place should be given to that distrust of God which leads us to make a preparation against future want the chief pursuit of life, as though our happiness consisted in these earthly things.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 293, 294.

5.b. What is the best preparation for tomorrow’s trials? Matthew 6:34.

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**Note:** “The faithful discharge of today’s duties is the best preparation for tomorrow’s trials. Do not gather together all tomorrow’s liabilities and cares and add them to the burden of today.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 481.

“One day alone is ours, and during this day we are to live for God. For this one day we are to place in the hand of Christ, in solemn service, all our purposes and plans, casting all our care upon Him, for He careth for us.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 101.

“Let us not make ourselves miserable over tomorrow’s burdens. Bravely and cheerfully carry the burdens of today. Today’s trust and faith we must have. But we are not asked to live more than a day at a time. He who gives strength for today will give strength for tomorrow.” *In Heavenly Places*, 269.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What things are especially offensive to God? What is the remedy?
- 2 How do negative feelings and emotions break down the life forces?
- 3 How is life made more difficult by the choices we make? Who are often the best ones to comfort others?
- 4 Discuss the common situations which trigger human anguish and how Christ experienced this in our behalf in Gethsemane. How are we to obtain relief from such anguish?
- 5 How ought we to view the future, and what is the best preparation for tomorrow?

May 23 – 29, 2021

# Overcoming Character Flaws

## Key Text

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57).

**Study Help:** *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 516–530; *The Ministry of Healing*, 483–496.

## Introduction

“Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming; for God does nothing for man without his cooperation.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 381.

## Sunday

### 1 ANGER

1.a. Explain the cause and effect of harsh, impatient speech. Romans 6:16; Proverbs 15:1, *last part*; 28, *last part*.

**Note:** “What harm is wrought in the family circle by the utterance of impatient words; for the impatient utterance of one leads another to retort in the same spirit and manner. Then come words of retaliation, words of self-justification, and it is by such words that a heavy, galling yoke is manufactured for your neck; for all these bitter words will come back in a baleful harvest to your soul.” *The Review and Herald*, May 19, 1891.

“Among the members of many families there is practiced the habit of saying loose, careless things; and the habit of tantalizing, of speaking harsh words, becomes stronger and stronger as it is indulged, and thus many objectionable words are spoken that are after Satan’s order and not after the order of God. ... Burning words of passion should never be spoken, for in the sight of God and holy angels they are a species of swearing.” *The Adventist Home*, 439.

1.b. Under what circumstances is anger justifiable? Exodus 32:19, 20; Luke 19:45, 46. In contrast, what should we bear in mind when tempted to retaliate against our enemies in our own defense? Proverbs 15:1, *first part*; Ecclesiastes 7:9.

**Note:** “It is true there is an indignation that is justifiable, even in the followers of Christ. When they see that God is dishonored, and His service brought into disrepute, when they see the innocent oppressed, a righteous indignation stirs the soul. Such anger, born of sensitive morals, is not a sin. But those who at any supposed provocation feel at liberty to indulge anger or resentment are opening the heart to Satan. Bitterness and animosity must be banished from the soul if we would be in harmony with heaven.” *The Desire of Ages*, 310.

“Far better would it be for us to suffer under false accusation than to inflict upon ourselves the torture of retaliation upon our enemies. The spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan, and can bring only evil to him who cherishes it. Lowliness of heart, that meekness which is the fruit of abiding in Christ, is the true secret of blessing.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 17.

## Monday

### 2 RESISTING ANGRY FEELINGS

2.a. How has the sin of angry resentment continually been affecting the life and countenance of Satan? Isaiah 14:12–20. What warning can we derive from this? Hebrews 12:15.

**Note:** “I was shown Satan as he once was, a happy, exalted angel. Then I was shown him as he now is. He still bears a kingly form. His features are still noble, for he is an angel fallen. But the expression of his countenance is full of anxiety, care, unhappiness, malice, hate, mischief, deceit, and every evil. ... I saw that he had so long bent himself to evil that every good quality was debased, and every evil trait was developed.” *Early Writings*, 152.



**2.b. How can we effectively resist angry feelings? Ephesians 4:31; Proverbs 19:11; Ecclesiastes 11:10.**

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**Note:** “There is only one remedy—positive self-control under all circumstances. The effort to get into a favorable place, where self will not be annoyed, may succeed for a time; but Satan knows where to find these poor souls, and will assail them in their weak points again and again. They will be continually troubled so long as they think so much of self. ... But there is hope for them. Let this life, so stormy with conflicts and worries, be brought into connection with Christ, and then self will no longer clamor for the supremacy. ... They should humble themselves, saying frankly, ‘I have done wrong. Will you forgive me? For God has said we must not let the sun go down upon our wrath.’ This is the only safe path toward overcoming. Many ... nurse their wrath, and are filled with revengeful, hateful feelings. ... Resist these wrong feelings, and you will experience a great change in your association with your fellowmen.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 142.

## Tuesday

### 3 HATRED

**3.a. In what various ways can the sixth commandment be violated? Exodus 20:13; 1 John 3:15.**

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**Note:** “All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life; the spirit of hatred and revenge, or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us even to wish them harm (for ‘whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer’ (1 John 3:15) ... are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 308.

**3.b. Why did the world hate Christ? John 7:7; 3:19. What can be learned from this?**

**Note:** “Christ took humanity and bore the hatred of the world that He might show men and women that they could live without sin, that their words, their actions, their spirit, might be sanctified to God. We can be perfect Christians if we will manifest this power in our lives. When the light of heaven rests upon us continually, we shall represent Christ. It was the righteousness revealed in His life that distinguished Christ from the world and called forth its hatred.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 527, 528.

“Christ declared that those who manifest the same attributes would be likewise hated. As we near the end of time this hatred for the followers of Christ will be more and more manifest.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 527.

## Wednesday

### 4 FAITH IS NOT PRESUMPTION

**4.a. Describe the results of faith and how it may be cultivated. 1 John 5:4; 1 Corinthians 15:57; Romans 10:17. What counsel is given to those struggling with their faith?**

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**Note:** “The word of the Lord, spoken through His servants, is received by many with questionings and fears. And many will defer their obedience to the warning and reproofs given, waiting till every shadow of uncertainty is removed from their minds. The unbelief that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to the evidence that God is pleased to give. He requires of His people faith that rests upon the weight of evidence, not upon perfect knowledge. Those followers of Christ who accept the light that God sends them must obey the voice of God speaking to them when there are many other voices crying out against it.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 258.

**4.b. Contrast genuine faith with presumption. Hebrews 11:1; Ephesians 2:8; Matthew 4:5–7.**

**Note:** “Faith is in no sense allied to presumption. Only he who has true faith is secure against presumption. For presumption is Satan’s counterfeit of faith. Faith claims God’s promises, and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression. Faith would have led our first parents to trust the love of God, and to obey His commands. Presumption led them to transgress His law, believing that His great love would save them from the consequence of their sin. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions on which mercy is to be granted. Genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.” *The Desire of Ages*, 126.

## Thursday

### 5 CHARACTER FORMATION

5.a. How is “a noble, all-round character” formed?

1 Peter 2:2.

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**Note:** “Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 331.

“All these successive steps are not to be kept before the mind’s eye, and counted as you start; but fixing the eye upon Jesus, with an eye single to the glory of God, you will make advancement.” *My Life Today*, 95.

5.b. To whom should we carry all of our doubts and trials? Psalm 62:8.

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*Impatient utterance of one leads another to retort in the same spirit and manner.*

**Note:** “We are not to talk our doubts and trials, because they grow bigger every time we talk them. Every time we talk them, Satan has gained the victory; but when we say, ‘I will commit the keeping of my soul unto Him, as unto a faithful witness,’ then we testify that we have given ourselves to Jesus Christ without any reservation, and then God gives us light and we rejoice in Him.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, 578, 579.

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Although anger is normally felt by the carnal heart to be perfectly justifiable, when only is it really valid in the sight of God?
- 2 What are the effects of anger and how can it be avoided?
- 3 Name some ways in which the sixth commandment is often violated.
- 4 How can we discern between faith and presumption?
- 5 What are some essentials in building a Christlike character?

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# Choose Your Olive Wisely

**O**lives and olive oil were not only an important component of the ancient Mediterranean diet, but also one of the most successful industries in antiquity. The olive also came to have a wider cultural significance, most famously as a branch of peace and as the victor's crown in the ancient Olympic Games.

Although oil was a common product, it was not necessarily a cheap one and there were different grades of quality.

"Traditional fermentation is a slow process caused by the action of yeast and bacteria, and it produces a food that is brimming with healthy compounds and active cultures that are good for you. But in today's 'faster is better' world, olives

are much more likely to be treated with lye to remove the bitterness, then packed in salt and canned. 'Processed' olives are those that have been through a lye bath; the more 'old-fashioned' (and way better) method is to cure them in oil, brine, water, or salt. Those are known as 'oil-cured,' 'brine-cured,' 'water-cured,' or 'dry-salted' olives. ...

"Olives and their oils contain a host of beneficial plant compounds, including tocopherols, flavonoids, anthocyanins, sterols, and polyphenols. Polyphenols are probably what give olives their taste; the polyphenols from olives have anti-inflammatory activity, improve immune function, help prevent damage to DNA, and protect the cardiovascular system. ...

"The fat in olives (and olive oil) is largely the mono-unsaturated fat oleic acid, which has been associated with higher levels of protective HDL ("good") cholesterol. A number of studies have shown that people who get plenty of mono-unsaturated fat are less likely to die of heart disease." *The 150 Healthiest Foods on Earth*, Jonny Bowden, Ph.D., C.N.S., 232.

**Fruit**

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## GREENS AND OLIVES

### Ingredients

4 garlic cloves, sliced or chopped  
8-10 cups torn/chopped mixed greens such as chard, kale, turnip greens, etc.  
½ cup or more olives, cut in half  
2 Tbsp. fresh squeezed lemon juice, or more  
¼ tsp. red pepper flakes, optional  
salt, to taste

### Process

Heat 1 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring often, until beginning to brown, about 2 minutes. Add pepper flakes, if using. Cook and stir another minute. Add greens a handful at a time, tossing until wilted between additions; season with salt and cook until all greens are wilted and softened, about 3 or more minutes longer. Add olives and lemon juice and toss to combine; season with more lemon juice or salt, if desired.







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## *Benefits of Olives*

- *Improve circulation*
- *Anti-inflammatory benefits*
- *Beneficial for your bones*
- *Improve brain health*
- *Help you stay satisfied*
- *Reduce risk of some cancers*
- *Improve blood sugar*
- *Help you absorb other nutrients better*

[www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/diet-nutrition/a47350/health-benefits-of-olives/](http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/health/diet-nutrition/a47350/health-benefits-of-olives/)

