

The Newsletter of Steps to Life Ministry

IN HIS STEPS

July - August 2021 | Volume 21 • Number 4



Son, go work today in my vineyard... *Matthew 21:28*

The Nicolaitan Condition

Saved *in* sin? Or saved *from* sin?

After the Jesus was taken to heaven, we read in the Scriptures that in the days of the early Christian church, the apostles and the Christian believers were filled with earnestness and enthusiasm for the Gospel. The zeal manifested by them has been recorded by the pen of inspiration for the encouragement of believers in all ages, including those living in the last days before Jesus returns for His faithful followers. Sadly, though, the Scriptures also inform us that after a time the zeal of the believers began to wane. Coldness crept into the church, and one by one the old standard-bearers fell.

“It was at this critical time in the history of the church that John was sentenced to banishment. Never had his voice been needed by the church as now. Nearly all his former associates in the ministry had suffered martyrdom.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 581.

It was Christ who bade the apostle to record that which was to be opened before him. “What thou seest, write in a book,” He commanded, “and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea” (Revelation 1:11).

“The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 585.

Christ wants us to understand more fully the conditions that prevailed in each period, as recorded in Scripture.



It was the loss of that first love that caused Christ to threaten the church at Ephesus with the removal of their candlestick.



The pleasing sentiments of higher criticism, evolution, spiritualism, and pantheism lead us away from our Creator.

While it would take much more space to relate the details of the important messages and warnings that Jesus gave to each of the seven churches, it is the symbolic, last day church, the Laodicean church, that we are admonished to study carefully. The message is given not only for the idlers in the Lord's vineyard but also to those who take pride in their knowledge of the word of God, while its sanctifying power has not been felt in their lives.

The condition of half-hearted indifference is what was written against Laodicea, but the mistakes and spiritual sins of the other churches also seem to have spilled over to the believers in God's last day church. Would you agree that the condition of cold indifference is equal to Ephesus' losing that first love, of failing to "be on fire" for the Lord? When this condition came in, Ephesus was unable to bring honor to the name of the Redeemer.

"God will accept nothing less than the whole heart. Happy are they who, from the commencement of their religious life, have been true to their first love, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." *Review and Herald*, June 7, 1887.

It was the loss of that first love that caused Christ to threaten the church at Ephesus with the removal of their candlestick unless they repented.

The church of Pergamum adopted the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, an abomination that the Lord specified "which thing I hate." The basic description of this doctrine is "antinomianism."

In theology, antinomianism is the belief that there are no moral laws that God expects Christians to obey. This false teaching states that Christian believers are not required to observe the Old Testament Law because when Jesus Christ died on the cross, He fulfilled the Law. But is that what the Word of God says? The Gospel is a message of power to save *from* sin, not *in* sin. If the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit does not purify our hearts and minds, we will not be fitted to live among holy beings or in the presence of a holy God. Remember that the Lord said He hates the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.

Paul's letter to Titus describes what the Nicolaitans denied by their false teaching. By turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, they denied that Jesus "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people" (Titus 2:14). "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Ibid., vs. 11, 12).

The apostle Paul saw this error in his day.

"Surrounded by the practices and influences of heathenism, the Colossian believers were in danger of being drawn away from the simplicity of the gospel, and Paul, in warning them against this, pointed them to Christ as the only safe guide. 'I would that ye knew,' he wrote, 'what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, ...

"Christ had foretold that deceivers would arise, through whose influence 'iniquity' should 'abound,' and 'the love of many' should 'wax cold' (Matthew 24:12). He had warned the disciples that the church would be in more danger from this evil than from the persecution of her enemies.

"The warnings of the word of God regarding the perils surrounding the Christian church belong to us today. As in the days of the apostles men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of higher criticism, evolution, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths." *Acts of the Apostles*, 473, 474.

"The doctrine is now largely taught that the gospel of Christ has made the law of God of no effect; that by 'believing' we are released from the necessity of being doers of the Word. But this is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Christ so unsparingly condemned." *Signs of the Times*, February 25, 1897.

"It is our work to know our special failings and sins, which cause darkness and spiritual feebleness and quenched our first love. Is it worldliness? Is it selfishness? Is it the love of self-esteem? Is it striving to be first?

Is it the sin of sensuality that is intensely active? Is it the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness? Is it the misuse and abuse of great light and opportunities and privileges, making boasted claims to wisdom and religious knowledge, while the life and character are inconsistent and immoral? Whatever it is that has been petted and cultivated until it has become strong and overmastering, make determined efforts to overcome, else you will be lost. It is these cherished sins, abhorrent to God, that make enfeebled moral courage, and leave you to choose to walk apart from God, while you retain a miserable, heartless, outward form. Once the soul was all aglow with love for Jesus; but all this is changed.

“I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.’ This labor of purifying the church is a painful work, but one that must not be neglected, if the church would have the commendation of God. But repent, because thou hast left thy first love. Here is plainly presented before us our work as members of the church of Christ. If we are faithless, we shall lose the crown of life and another will take it; for in the dropping out of the faithless the places are supplied by the faithful. If we refuse to let our light shine for the Master, if we do not do the works of God, others will do that very work which we might have done and could have done, but refused to do. When we cease to fulfill our mission, when the candlestick refuses to reflect light, and the great truths committed to us individually in trust for the world, are not given to them, then the candlestick will be removed.” *The Review and Herald*, June 7, 1887.



Article by
John Grosboll
Director of Steps to Life

Co-authored by
Hilde Nunez
Contributing Editor

Road Warrior

On the Road for Christ



Pastor Domingo speaks to a group of believers during a recent visit to Panama.

Pastor Domingo Nunez, the Director of Outreach for Steps to Life, is certainly living up to his job title. His recent visits include Panama, Nigeria, Mexico, Bolivia, and Ghana. In each visit, he has worked to assist the locals to become more organized and efficient in their efforts and encourages them to work together toward their common goal of spreading the three angels’ messages.

His travel has become increasingly complicated due to the restrictions imposed by both the airlines and the destination countries.

To be eligible to board an overseas flight, Pr. Domingo is required to have had a “clean” Covid test within the previous 72 hours. Then to enter the destination country, he is

required to have another test administered in the airport upon arrival. Unlike in the U.S. where the tests are free, tests in other countries are extremely expensive—and you are not permitted to leave the airport until you have had one—with negative results!

Thankfully, his destination tests have always been negative, but if one administered at his destination should come back positive, he would be required to quarantine for two weeks there at ministry expense.

Please keep Pr. Domingo in your prayers as he strives to assist fellow saints worldwide in working efficiently, in an organized manner, so that we can soon see our Lord return in the clouds of glory.

Whenever i am afraid,
i **trust** in You.

Psalm 56:3

Mission Project Updates



Orphanages

Highway Orphanage, Kenya



Bill and Becky Humeniuk continue their work at the Highway Orphanage in Etago, Kenya. Recently, your support enabled them to provide new shoes for the boys there and the purchase of needles and yarn so that the girls could learn to

knit and crochet. Their efforts will provide much-needed items of apparel for the girls and a source of income from the sale of their projects.

To support the Highway Orphanage and other orphans in Africa, mark your donations *Orphans*.

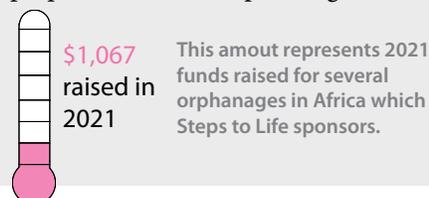


Tabloid Project

Seth Ferrell reports that Cornerstone has received enough funding for another printing of tabloids. He expresses his heartfelt gratitude to all who have helped them achieve this worthy goal.

I want to thank each of you for your continued support of Cornerstone with your prayers and pocketbooks. We now have \$220,000 in the bank account. As you are aware, printing and shipping costs have gone up since the last printing. Please continue to pray that we will be blessed of the Lord so we will be able to get good

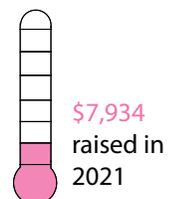
deals on printing and shipping costs, and we won't have to spend too much on customs. I am in the process of emailing and contacting people to prepare for the next printing.



Bibles and More

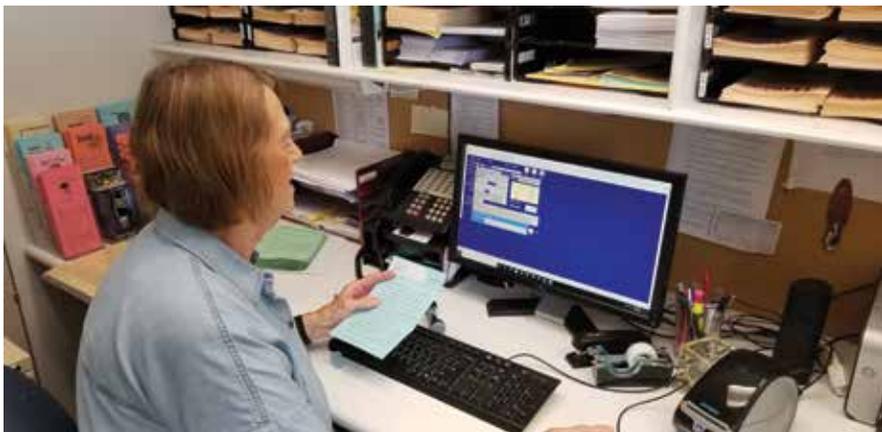
Pastor Domingo Nunez continues his planning efforts to produce comprehensive study Bibles that will contain everything that anyone seeking to know and follow the truth will need for a comprehensive understanding of the plan of salvation. His plans include development of three different Bibles: KJV, NKJV, and Spanish. The Bibles will contain the E. G. White comments from volume 7A of the SDA Bible commentaries, the Steps to Life three-step Bible study guides that were developed by Marshall Grosboll, the *Know Your Bible* studies, and the prophecy series studies.

To support this long-term effort, please mark your donation *Bibles*.



Bible Correspondence School

An Encouraging Response



Carol Walston enters a new student's information into the BCS database.

The incarcerated are some of the most common students in our Bible correspondence school. While there are indeed “jailhouse conversions,” the kind that are “converted” when behind bars but who abandon all spiritual pursuits once released, occasionally one comes along who takes their search for the narrow way seriously. Following is a letter we received recently from one in the latter class.

I was raised Holiness (Pentecostal)...

It really bothers me that a lot of radio & some Bible Study preachers reveal God's Word in a light that “Once you're saved, no matter what you do...you'll never lose salvation”!

That's pretty much teaching “receive Christ, then don't worry about doing His will. You'll still go to heaven.”

I was told by a jailhouse chaplain years ago that the Pastor Joel Osteen, who has the largest congregation in

the USA, said, when asked by Larry King, “Do you believe that Jesus is the only way to make it to heaven?” replied, “Well, I don't know about that.” Your study helps a person find the truth for themselves so they aren't led astray by false teachers!

God Bless!

Thank you!!

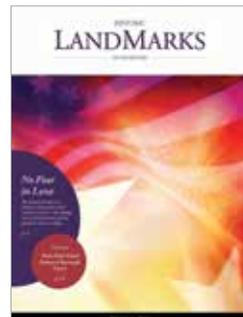
Blake S.
Florida

Please keep Brother Blake and others similarly situated in your prayers.

To support our Bible correspondence school personnel in their efforts to teach the truth of the three angels' messages, please mark your donations BCS.

HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
—OF ADVENTISM—

in July



If you're a *LandMarks* subscriber, most likely you already have your 2021 July issue in your hands. If you're not a subscriber,

you can access the magazine online at www.stepstolife.org.

It seems that love is disappearing from our world. Daily we hear of hostilities. Even worse, the denial of the love of God has resulted in discouragement, despair and depression. Denying the love of God has led people to fear the future and as a result there is great discouragement and despair in our society. The article “No Fear in Love” offers an encouragement and proof that love still exists.

The best encouragement is found in stories from our fellow believers. We know that God worked miracles back in Biblical times, but these stories seem distant to the contemporary reader. We strive to bring you stories of God's interference in our time via testimonials in *LandMarks*. “From High School Failure to Successful Career” is a testimony of struggle, tests, and endurance that gets rewarded with a successful career.

You can receive a complimentary subscription of this spiritually uplifting magazine.

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Ministerial and Medical Missionary Training



It all started in 2006 during the visit of Sisters Janet Headrick and Sandra Mulchin to Nigeria for a work assessment. There was the need to not only have persons who were qualified to baptize the new converts, but also help them settle in their new found faith. Sister Janet suggested that Daniel Terence, who had earlier received the home church resource materials from Steps to Life and was giving out Steps to Life Bible studies, should coordinate a ministerial training program for fellow believers.

The ministerial training began with Daniel Terence taking the lessons first, before administering them to the other brethren. The first batch of students to begin were 12. These persons also formed the first batch of Bible workers who were assisted by Steps to Life. The training commenced in March, 2007 in Makurdi where workers met on a monthly basis, reviewed lessons that had been distributed in the previous meeting and revived further lessons for a home study course while engaged in gospel work.

The revisit of Janet Headrick in 2008 to Nigeria led to the commencement of the ministerial training program in eastern Nigeria. Brother Daniel Terence assisted in coordinating the training. Daniel, often accompanied by Bro. Joshua, visited with the brethren on the third

Sunday of every month to conduct the training program in Aba.

Another unit of the training program was also organized in southwestern Nigeria at the Manna Villa lifestyle center in Iperu Ogun State. This is a ministry organized by Sister Atolagbe Marian. Pastors, elders from the conference, and students from Babcock university were in attendance. Thus, both north-central, the southeastern and southwestern parts of Nigeria have training programs ongoing. Our heavenly Father be praised.

In north-central Nigeria, the ministerial training program continued and all the Bible workers have completed the program. All local church leaders are encouraged to be in attendance.

Medical missionary training is addressed following the ministerial training session. Topics among God's remedies that are studied include physiology, the eight laws of health, and hydrotherapy, along with the need for all church members to get involved in medical missionary work.

The goal of medical missionary training is to ensure that all church members become medical missionaries. Presently there are over 20 students in training.

An all-night prayer session is observed between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 4:00 AM. The next day a workers'

meeting holds from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM, depending on the agenda of the day. All first elders and church secretaries attend a quarterly general meeting to review details of outreach efforts, financial reports, including problems and challenges and possible solutions. Similarly, the workers in their meetings the next day review work progress, challenges, plan outreach efforts and methods of implementation, financial matters and disbursements to the local and Nigeria division boards respectively. The guidelines and protocols we received from Pastor Nunez in September, 2020, have made it easier for the evaluation and implementation of work ethics and plans under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The training programs, both ministerial and medical, have really equipped and prepared us at Daily Manna Church of Free Seventh Day Adventists to continue to carry on the gospel work in spite of all challenges. All praise to our heavenly Father for the support, both financial and moral standing, from our friends at Steps to Life.

On our part we remain focused and committed to the great gospel commission, especially as the events of the present day are indicating the need for all church members to arise and let their light shine. There is time no longer.

To assist us in our training efforts, we would like to appeal for a projector. A replacement is needed because the one we presently use is more than 18 years old and the projections are hardly visible. May the Lord bless you so very much for that. The projector is an integral part of our outreach efforts as we use it for projecting PowerPoint, and other media during evangelistic efforts.

May the Lord bless you all.

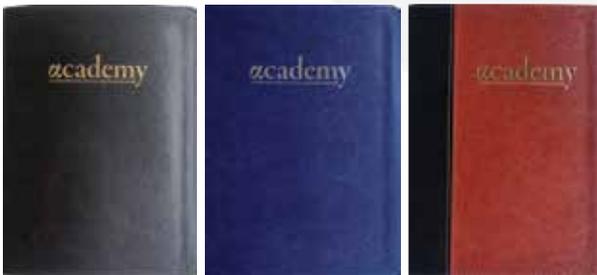
Daniel Terence Teryila
Daily Manna Church, Nigeria

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