

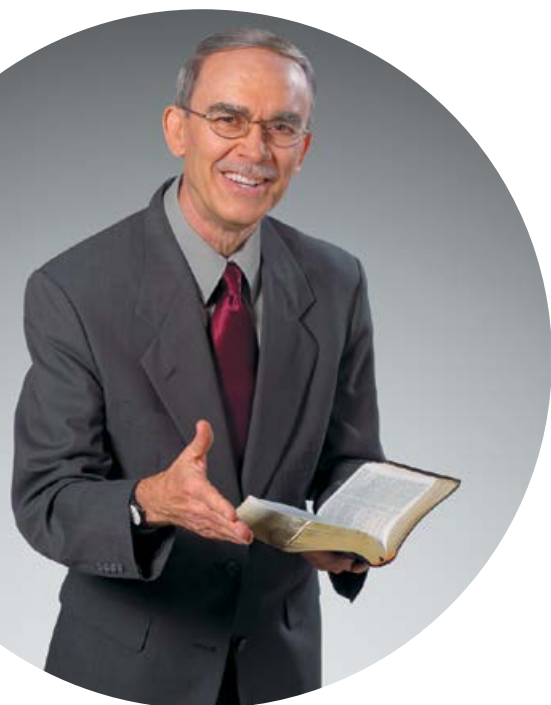
HISTORIC
LANDMARKS
OF ADVENTISM



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From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Look to Me and Be Saved

Even before Christ came to our world incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth, the Redeemer of this fallen world, it was God's plan for His chosen people, the children of Israel, to take the message of salvation to all the world. The prophet wrote, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people" (Isaiah 56:7).

But we have an even more wonderful message than could be proclaimed in Old Testament times. We are to tell the world that our crucified and risen Saviour is now an all-powerful mediator seated upon a mediatorial throne in heaven, still giving audience to the people of this world.

The devil knows the almighty power that is in the message we bear to an apostate world. "Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. ... Those who would share the benefits of the Saviour's mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God. The precious hours, instead of being given to pleasure, to display, or to

gain seeking, should be devoted to an earnest, prayerful study of the word of truth." *The Great Controversy*, 488.

"Christ said. 'Go, teach, bring into discipleship, all nations. Give them the knowledge of the truth of My gospel, which is founded on truth. Lead them to understand that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are heaven's loving, powerful agencies for the accomplishment of the work of representing God in the world. Lo, I am with you in this work ... I will be with you and all who succeed you, till the end of time, in the work of preaching the gospel.'" *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, 15.

This explains why God's people must be organized in order for God's work to be done and finished in this world. "God has given the most sacred, solemn message of warning to His appointed agencies. ... [They were to be] separate from the idolatrous nations that were deep in apostasy and idolatry, and present a character for excellence and entire obedience, teaching the highest standard of spirituality, far, far above all worldly policy and all idolatry." *Ibid.*, 188. **LM**

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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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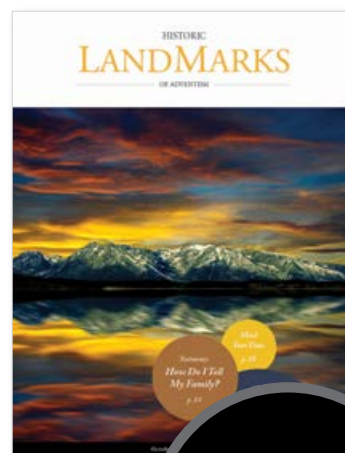
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The Unrecognized Christian

By John J. Grosboll

The most important thing for a Christian is to be recognized by the Lord when He returns. In Matthew 25:12, 13, we read that there will be many people who call themselves Christians, but they will be unrecognized by the Lord when He returns. This is one of the most terrible things that could happen to an individual. If you are a Christian, you expect and say that the Lord is coming to save you and to take you out of this evil world. He will take you to a place where there will be no more suffering, death nor sorrow, and all the problems we have to deal with will be gone. But, what if He returns and does not recognize you? Jesus says this will happen to some people and what the Lord says always turns out to be true.

A literal translation of Matthew 7:21, 22 says: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name we performed many powerful works [or miracles]?’ ...”

My brother Marshall believed Jesus gave this prophecy especially to Christians living in the last days, those people who called Him Lord, but argued with Him regarding their fitness for heaven. But Jesus says to them, “No, not at any time did I know you. You were filled with a spirit, but it was the wrong spirit. You did supernatural things, but you

practiced lawlessness.” The same word is used in the literal translation of 1 John 3:4: “He that commits sin transgresses also the law, and sin is the transgression of the law.”

Transgression and lawlessness are the same. Both mean the breaking of God’s law. Every human being needs to understand this because in the final judgment the Lord will ask only one question: Did you keep My law?

When we explain this to our Protestant and Roman Catholic friends, they call us legalists and say that we believe we are saved by keeping the law. But we believe we receive no merit by keeping the law. Instead, we are saved by grace alone through faith. Jesus told Nicodemus, “Except a person is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into

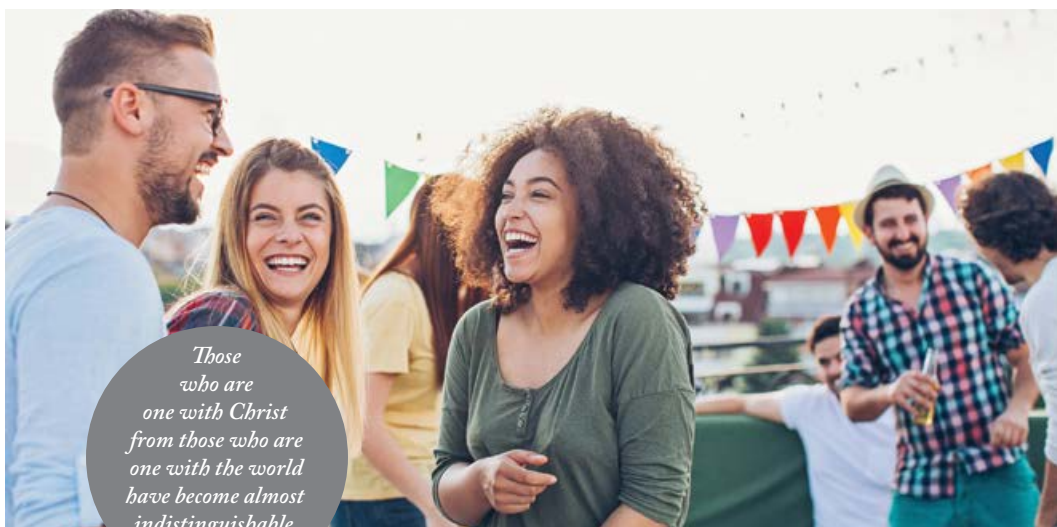
the kingdom of God” (John 3:5, literal translation).

The Desire of Ages, 19, says, “Our little world is the lesson book of the universe.” How can we know if someone has been born of the Spirit or not? Paul says, “The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusts against the flesh” (Galatians 5:17, *first part*). These are contrary to one another. He also says, “If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are these ...” (verses 18, 19, *first part*) and then he lists approximately 17 things (verses 18, 19–21, *first part*). “... I also told you in time past that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (verse 21, *last part*). Those who do these things are breaking the law, but those who are born of the Spirit are not.

Paul explains the same thing in more detail in Romans 8. He shows that through the Holy Spirit you will receive power to put to death the works of the flesh. He says the person that is unconverted (carnal) is not subject to the law of God and cannot be (verse 7). But then he says, “If you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (verse 13). So through the power of the Spirit the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who believe (verse 4). Only those who receive the Holy Spirit will be given the power to obey.

Maybe you are discouraged because there is some sin in your life that you have tried to overcome, but can’t seem to gain the victory over. The only way you will overcome that besetting sin is through the power of the Holy Spirit working in you. The Lord has promised to give you the Holy Spirit to work a miracle to enable you to overcome if you will only ask.

We read in *The Review and Herald*, June 21, 1898: “Christ’s subjects are those who keep His commandments. These only are counted as His subjects. If, after the light has come, the disobedi-



Those who are one with Christ from those who are one with the world have become almost indistinguishable.

ent continue in transgression, they are subjects of the kingdom of the prince of this world.

“But the heavenly principles that distinguish those who are one with Christ from those who are one with the world have become almost indistinguishable. The professed people of Christ are no longer a separate and peculiar people. The line of demarcation is indistinct. People are subordinating themselves to the world, to its practices, its customs, its selfishness. The church has gone over to the world in transgression of the law, when the world should have come over to the church in obedience to the law. Daily the church is becoming converted to the world. Professing Christians are slaves of mammon [Greek: *real estate, property, gold, silver, material possessions*]. Their indulgence of appetite and extravagant expenditure of money for selfish gratification, greatly dishonor God.

“Contrary to worldly kingdoms, Christ does not find His subjects—He makes them. Those who stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel are the subjects of a kingdom not recognized by worldly kingdoms, whose subjects have wandered from their allegiance to God, from their obedience to the law of His kingdom. These are accounted as dead in tres-

passes and sins. They are destitute of the Spirit of God, which worketh in the children of obedience.” So, this is the most important question a person must ask themselves: Will the Lord recognize me as a Christian, as one of His children when He returns? In the final analysis that is all that matters. No matter how you are recognized in this world, if Jesus does not recognize you, it will be the most terrible thing to ever happen to you. “Christ’s subjects are those who keep His commandments. These *only* are counted as His subjects.” Ibid.

Jesus was not recognized by the world as the Redeemer; He wasn’t even recognized by the church or by His own family, and if you are really a Christian, you also will be unrecognized by the world.

The Signs of the Times, July 11, 1895, says: “The world knows not the followers of Christ. They do not recognize their holy origin, and they will not be in harmony with them any more than they were in harmony with Jesus, their Lord.” Then Ellen White lists five reasons why the world did not recognize Jesus:

1. His righteous zeal for the honor of God,
2. He unsparingly denounced sin,
3. He unmasked the hypocrisy and pretense to piety,

4. The loveliness of His own unblemished character, and
5. He contended against lust and hypocrisy.

If we are truly Christians, these characteristics will be manifest in our lives and the result will be: “Those who become the sons of God cannot avoid coming into conflict with the hosts of apostasy. ‘The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not’ (1 John 3:1, *last part*).” Ibid.

We already know that a true Christian will not be recognized by the world, but what is harder still is when a Christian is not recognized by his own church. In the early part of the fourth century the leaders of the church of Rome and other bishops made an arrangement with the Roman Empire, and in A.D. 313 an edict was passed ending the persecution of the Christians so that Christianity could become the state religion of the pagan Roman Empire. It adopted the name the Holy Roman Empire and they called themselves “Catholic” from the Greek meaning *according to the whole*.

A group of Christians known as the Donatists were much closer to apostolic Christianity than the Catholic church of the fourth century. The Catholic church went to the Roman government and the Donatists were told that because only Catholics were Christian, they could not call themselves Christians. The Donatists, mainly in North Africa, were unrecognized as Christians. They believed it was wrong to enforce the Christian religion by the will of the state, that the state did not have the right to tell them what they should believe. Consequently, the Donatists were disfellowshipped.

I was reminded years ago of the Donatist controversy when we here at Steps to Life were told we could not call ourselves Seventh-day Adventists. For 1,700 years, many forceful ways have been developed to disfellowship people. The most forceful way was to burn them at the stake. The Roman

Catholic church did this during the Dark Ages and called it an “act of faith.” One such individual being led to the place of execution was told, “We are going to cut you off [disfellowship] from the church militant.” This person replied, “But not from the church triumphant.”

The Signs of the Times, December 4, 1893: “Many have been cast out of the church whose names were registered upon the Book of Life. Wolves in sheep’s clothing [John 9] were ready to cast out of the fold and devour one who was entitled to the Lord’s pasture; but Jesus, the True Shepherd, sought him, and gave him a place within the fold [the church].”

John 9 explains the process of disfellowshipping. In the story of the man, blind from birth and healed by Jesus, we see that if a person confessed that Jesus was the Christ, they would be cut off from the church. This was such a frightful consequence that this man’s parents lied for fear of being disfellowshipped. But the man said, “Lord, I believe!” and they “cast him out” (John 9:34).

There are Christians who clearly follow the will of God and obey His commandments, who, by so doing, will have their names inscribed in the Lamb’s Book of Life, yet, they are disfellowshipped by the church. Why? Because the professed people of God do not recognize the voice of the Holy Spirit and listen instead to another voice. The Holy Spirit will never lead a church to disfellowship someone whose name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, but it happens many times. As we approach the end of the world, almost everyone will feel that they are filled with the Holy Spirit, but for some it will be the wrong spirit. So it is very important to be able to distinguish the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit from every other voice.

“Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain.” *The Faith I Live By*, 333. If we are not living up to the light that we have, when the latter rain [of the Holy Spirit] falls, we will not recognize it. So we

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The most important thing for a Christian is to be recognized by the Lord when He returns.

must ask ourselves, are we living up to all the light that we have?

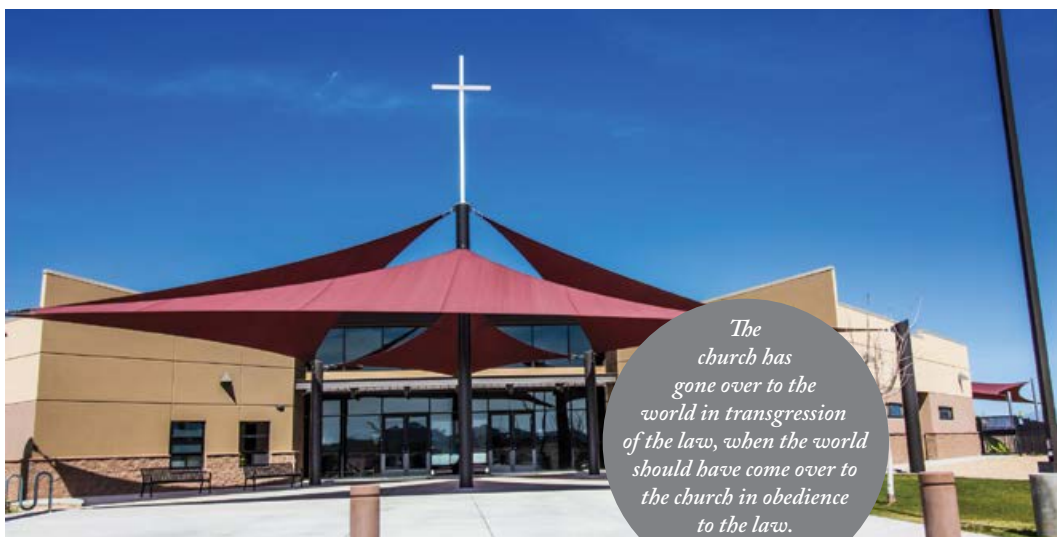
“We should improve every opportunity of placing ourselves in the channel of blessing. ... The convocations of the church, as in camp meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God’s appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain.” Ibid., 246. Christ has said, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst” (Matthew 18:20).

“At every meeting we attend our prayers should ascend, that at this very time God will impart warmth and moisture to our souls.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 509. Are you taking advantage of the spiritual opportunities that you have? The convocations of the church, like camp meetings and the regular church services, are God’s appointed means where He plans to pour out His Holy Spirit. Take advantage of the opportunity to attend these meetings so, when the Holy Spirit is poured out, you will be there to receive the blessing.

“Unless those who can help in _____ are aroused [awaken] to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. ... the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning.” Ibid., 300.

We are asleep and must pray for an open mind and receptive heart, willing that whatever God’s chosen way is for our lives, even if it is contrary to our human planning, we will choose it and not our own way.

If you want to recognize the voice of the Holy Spirit, you need to be studying your Bible. Second Peter 1:19–21



says that holy men of God spoke as they were moved [carried] by the Holy Spirit. The Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit. “This Holy Book has withstood the assaults of Satan, who has united with evil men to make everything of divine character shrouded in clouds and darkness. But the Lord has preserved this Holy Book by His own miraculous power in its present shape—a chart or guidebook to the human family to show them the way to heaven. ... the guidebook to the inhabitants of a fallen world, bequeathed to them, that by studying and obeying the directions, not one soul would lose its way.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 190.

In this day and age, people in all walks of life are busy and we must make a choice, by the grace of God, in spite of all the things that are in our lives, to study God’s word and pray. We cannot rely on the people who preach to us to teach us all we need to know. We need to be studying the Bible on our own.

“We cannot render to God supreme love and honor if we do not recognize the Holy Spirit which the Lord sends.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, 38. If I do not recognize the Holy Spirit, I cannot be a Christian; I cannot render to the Lord supreme love and honor. “The Holy Spirit represents Jesus Christ. He

is our refuge unto whom we can run and be safe. ...

When truth takes possession of the heart, the Christian will be brought into conflict, and in this conflict he will need the whole armor of God; for he has to fight the good fight of faith. There are opposing elements in his own household, even in his own heart, and nothing but the free Spirit of God can ensure for him the victory.” Ibid.

Even if you are not recognized by anyone in this world, you must make a covenant with the Lord to receive the Holy Spirit in your life so that Jesus will recognize you as His when He comes.

God reads the heart. He knows what is in your mind. He knows when you make a decision. Now is a wonderful opportunity, while the Holy Spirit is speaking to you, to tell the Lord you want to be born of the Holy Spirit every day, to have victory in your life through His power, so that Jesus will not look on you at the end and say, “I don’t recognize you.”

[All emphasis supplied.] **LM**

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Acceptable in the Sight of God

By Michael C. Wells

*“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and
men, the Man Christ Jesus.”*

1 Timothy 2:5

There are more than two billion people in the world who claim the name of Jesus as their Saviour, calling themselves Christians. Yet Jesus said that few will be found worthy to go to heaven when He comes back. That is a sad thing to think about. Out of two billion professed Christians, a small amount, only a remnant, will truly, completely follow Him.



Jesus warned Jerusalem and the people of that day that sudden destruction was coming to the city and they would need to flee when they saw the signs. To His disciples He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing” (Matthew 23:37)!

Jesus knew that very few would be saved from destruction just years later when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies. But for all His true believers and followers, He gave this warning in Matthew 24:13-16: “... Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

In 70 AD, the Christians who remembered the warning, fled the city when the opportunity was presented, thus escaping the devastation that occurred in Jerusalem. The temple was totally destroyed, with not one stone left on top of another and only a remnant of people were saved. “And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward” (Isaiah 37:31).

Throughout the history of the world, we have been given warnings of coming destructions, yet we have not understood. The lack of understanding is because we have not truly studied and asked the Lord to help us know His truth. Jesus is our God and Mediator as it says in 1 Timothy 2:5, and He is also our Teacher. He desires every man, woman, and child to be saved. “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3, 4).

The problem God has is convincing His people who claim Him as their Saviour, to “come to the knowledge of



the truth.” Jesus has given us an ample amount of evidence of His truth, yet His professed followers do not believe it, and if we do not believe His truth, how can we be saved? Jesus does not want us to be deceived by false teachers or false prophets. He wants us to study for ourselves and find His truth in the word of God. Jesus said to His disciples in John 8:31, 32, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

We must abide or live by the word of God if we are to know and understand the truth. Those who do only a casual reading or none at all, will lose heaven. They will be deceived into believing things that are not true. Peter talks a lot about this in his epistles. He warns us of the deception that was coming even in his time. Now it has been almost 2,000 years later and false teachings are throughout Christendom. Speaking of these teachers, he writes in 2 Peter 2:18, 19: “For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves

are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.”

When we talk about false teachers, we are talking about ministers, pastors, priests, Bible workers, or anyone who states something that is not according to the word of God. And the only way we can know if it is true or not is to study the Bible for ourselves and not rely on the interpretation of others. We should do a thorough study of any subject that we hear people talking about. The truth will only set us free if we are studying the truth for ourselves.

Who will be saved? That is a question that has been asked by each person who desires to go to heaven. Jesus told us through His revelation to John that there was a certain criterion to being saved. It was not instantaneous, but rather a commitment. Jesus said, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7). “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death” (Revelation 2:11). “He who

“
*This is My
 commandment, that you
 love one another as I have
 loved you.*

John 15:12

overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels” (Revelation 3:5).

These are but three of the seven times Jesus encouraged us to follow His example and overcome. What must we overcome?

Sin! We are all condemned under the sentence of death because of our sins. In fact, Paul reminds us that every man has sinned, and the punishment for that sin is death. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

We are all born with a sinful nature. No one can overcome that sinful nature except through Jesus

Christ. In order to overcome sin, we must submit to Christ in all things. We must give up the things of this world. This world and the things in it have been contaminated by Satan, and he is now the owner of the worldly attractions, the big cities, the excitements that all lead to sin.

Jesus has come to take us out of that type of living. He says, “Come to Me, all you who ... are heavy laden [with sin] and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). He will help us overcome every temptation that Satan puts forth to make us fall into sin, but we must ask for that help. Jesus will never force us to do anything that we do not want to do.

However, He will not allow anyone into heaven who has not overcome sin in his life. That is why He sends us the Holy Spirit to help protect and mold our character to learn to hate sin and its consequences. Jesus gave us His gift of grace so that we could be free from the condemnation of sin. Once we accept Jesus as our Saviour, we must overcome sin through His power. “But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life” (Romans 6:22).

When we submit our will to the will of Jesus, He frees us from being slaves of sinful acts and gives us the power to resist sin. But be not deceived, if we do not overcome sin, we will be lost. Even though Jesus gave us the gift of His life, which paid for the sins of the world, if we continue in sin, then we have not truly accepted His gracious gift. It would be like saying, “I don’t want it” and throwing it back in His face.

Truth seems to be a fleeting thing these days. Everyone has their own definition of truth. Most “truth” that you see in the newspapers or on television, and especially on the Internet, is “truth with a twist,” spun to promote Satan’s agenda.

Jesus, however, can be trusted to give the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He has only one agenda and that is to save mankind from Satan’s rule. Jesus states His truth clearly and without compromise. The truth of Jesus is not of this world, and His truth has nothing to do with any worldly agenda. His truth is centered on how to live a life that will be accepted in heaven. So how do we become acceptable in God’s sight?

“Our Saviour, during all His sojourn on earth, shared the lot of the poor and lowly. Self-denial and sacrifice characterized His life. All the favors and blessings we enjoy are alone from Him. We are stewards of His grace and of His temporal gifts. The smallest talent and the humblest service may be offered to Jesus as a consecrated gift, and with the fragrance of His own merits He will present it to the Father. If the best we have is presented with a sincere heart, in love to God, from a longing desire to do service to Jesus, the gift is wholly acceptable.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, 280.

We must first accept Christ as our Saviour and Mediator and turn away from our sins. We can only do this through love for Him. We love Him because He first loved us, and through that love we submit our will to Him. Next, we must learn what it means to love. Love for God is obeying all that He asks of us. Understanding His truth starts with keeping God’s commandments. Jesus says, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

If we are going to keep the commandments of God, then we must love each other. The apostle John writes, “And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us the commandment” (1 John 3:23). Jesus gave the same commandment in John 15:12: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

Some believe this means just to love your friends, and possibly some of your church members. But Jesus made it clear we are to love everyone as He loves them. He went around doing good to people who never accepted Him as their Saviour. He fed them with fishes and bread, He told us that if a man requires our cloak, we are also to give him our shirt (Luke 6:29). He said when we feed or clothe the poor, visit those in prison, giving them the words of Life, it is the same as if we were doing it to Him (Matthew 25:34–45). Paul said to live a peaceful life and obey the government and laws of the land. “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves” (Romans 13:1, 2).

Obviously, if the governments of the world require us to break God’s law, then we have to make the choice to follow God rather than man. Peter and John had to make that choice when they were told not to preach in the name of Jesus. They followed Jesus and gave the gospel to the world anyway, even under torture. (Read Acts 4 and 5.) It is notable that they disobeyed to preach the word of God. God says to obey those He has set up over the nations unless to do so breaks one of His ten commandments. His commandments are clear and to the point. He does not ask us to add to them or take



When we talk about false teachers, we are talking about ministers, pastors, Bible workers...

away from them to support our own ideas. In fact, He offers a curse on those who do. “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32).

If we are to know His truth, we will be seeking to understand what is written in His word. We will not be deceived by idol worship because the Bible plainly says not to worship or even bow down in front of any object (Exodus 20:4, 5). We will know that dead loved ones cannot visit us, and they are not in heaven today, because the Bible clearly says that they are in the grave and have no consciousness (Ecclesiastes 9:5). As we study, we will see that God has a better plan for our lives. He does not torture non-believers in a fiery place to burn forever, but will utterly destroy all who will not follow Him (Malachi 4:1). We will know that the Bible shows that the Sabbath is a special time that God has made to spend with each of us and will keep it even when the new earth is created (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

To be acceptable to God, we have a work to do. Our work will be more precious than gold and silver. We will

become transformed into a different type of person. Paul writes, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). This “living sacrifice” is a daily submission to God for holiness and service to others. Our thoughts should be contemplating Jesus all day long. We should not let the things of this world influence our thoughts, but our thoughts must dwell continually on doing the work of God.

“To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice” (Proverbs 21:3). This is the definition of a full submission to Jesus. Paul sums up what it means to be accepted by God in Ephesians 5:8–10: “... (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.” I pray we are all striving to find out what is acceptable to Jesus and our Father in heaven so that we can spend eternity with Them and the unfallen worlds. **LM**

Michael C. Wells is director of Anointing Oil Ministries.



Mind Your Time

By Judy Rebarchek

In the book *Christ's Object Lessons* we find the chapter titled "Talents" beginning on page 325. In this chapter Ellen White discusses several talents given to God's people.

"The talents that Christ entrusts to His church represent especially the gifts and blessings imparted by the Holy Spirit." Op. Cit., 327.

In addition to the gifts given by the Holy Spirit, there are other talents Mrs. White refers to as "gifts and endowments, whether original or acquired, natural or spiritual." Op. Cit., 328. These include:

- development of your mental faculties
- self-control
- speech – this involves more than an ability to speak in public, but how we speak in general
- influence – how we live, as well as how we speak
- health
- strength
- money
- kindly impulses and affections; and
- time

The focus of this article is the talent of time. How many of us have actually thought of time as being a talent? If you've not read this chapter in *Christ's Object Lessons* before, it is likely you haven't thought of it in that way.

Our time on this earth is limited. It is a probationary time to be used specifically for character development. Ellen White tells us, "A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. And in heaven we are continually to improve. How important, then, is the development of character in this life."

"The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you."

"As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings." Op. Cit., 332, 333.

Doesn't that make how we spend our time extremely important? And could it be said that how we spend our time can be an indicator of what our relationship is with Jesus Christ? Time spent is time gone. There is no other



talent of which God requires a more "strict account."

If we are not spending our time in the business of becoming more and more like Christ every day, then we are wasting that time. And as we draw nearer and nearer to His second coming, that simply means less time to get ready, maybe even not enough time. So, on what are we spending our time?

The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that what we look at, spend our time on, is what we will become. Mrs. White says it this way: "As the mind dwells upon Christ, the character is molded after the divine similitude. The thoughts are pervaded with a sense of His goodness, His love. We contemplate His character, and thus He is in all our thoughts. His love encloses us. If we gaze even a moment upon the sun in its meridian glory, when we turn away our eyes, the image of the sun will appear in everything upon which we look. Thus it is when we behold Jesus; everything we look upon reflects His image, the Sun of Righteousness. We cannot see anything else, or talk of anything else. His image is imprinted upon the eye of the soul, and affects every portion of our daily life, softening and subduing our whole nature. By beholding, we are

conformed to the divine similitude, even the likeness of Christ. To all with whom we associate we reflect the bright and cheerful beams of His righteousness. We have become transformed in character; for heart, soul, mind, are irradiated by the reflection of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. ...

"Jesus Christ is everything to us—the first, the last, the best in everything. Jesus Christ, His Spirit, His character, colors everything; it is the warp and the woof, the very texture of our entire being. The words of Christ are spirit and life. We cannot, then, center our thoughts upon self; it is no more we that live, but Christ that liveth in us, and He is the hope of glory. Self is dead, but Christ is a living Saviour." *The Faith I Live By*, 150.

So, if this is not the way I am living my life, if Jesus is not everything to me, then shouldn't I wonder if I am spending my time on the wrong things? We are told that we are what we eat. The Bible says we are that to which we surrender. "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness" (Romans 6:16)?

This world offers so many things—things that many of us have spent a lifetime doing, believing that those things weren't that bad, and maybe they aren't, in and of themselves. But were we, are we, doing them at the expense of spending the time in God's word, in prayer, in witnessing, in caring for our fellow man? How much time have we spent and will never have back? "... time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can redeem the time is by making the most of that which remains." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 342.

How much time do we spend on social media or watching TV, reading materials or books or listening to music that do nothing to uplift our souls to God, playing games, time spent on the computer, even at work or exercising (which is important to be healthy, but can also become an idol)? Brothers and Sisters, are we spending the time getting ready for heaven as if that's the only thing we want or are we doing what we want and if there is any time left, we give it to God? We go to church, maybe prayer meeting, too. Maybe we have a quick few minutes in the morning to read a short devotional and say a few words of thanks for God's protection during the night and then it's off to work. And at the end of the day, we might read a little or pray a little if we can stay awake long enough. Isn't it time to do some self-examination of our lives? We should listen to what we say, look carefully at what we do and even what we don't do. We must

consider what really matters to us in light of eternity.

If we want to be like Jesus, how can we be if we don't spend any time getting to know Him? Mrs. White says that we should spend, every day, a thoughtful hour studying the life of Christ. Do I? Do you? Do the things we choose to spend our time doing keep us from spending time with Him? It's an important question because even many of the good things that we do, the way we do them, can keep us from strengthening our personal relationship with Jesus.

Can you comprehend that? Unless we have a personal relationship with Jesus first, nothing we do, even if it's good, will be of value. Without Jesus, we can do nothing, we are nothing. John 15:4–6 says, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned."

I have said this many times: Jesus' coming is no longer near. It is here. Many of us have spent our whole lives doing what we wanted to do and, consequently, have done very little to be ready for that day. We have spent our lives soothing ourselves with the idea that Jesus has been coming for centuries. He may not come in my lifetime either. But what we fail to remember is that our days are numbered. It is true that any one of us may die before Christ comes,

but only God knows when that day is. Doesn't it behoove us then to get ready and be ready every day, lest that day come and when weighed in the balance, we are found wanting, with our name blotted out of the Book of Life?

We must understand that "the value of time is beyond computation." As with our whole life, our time belongs to God. Our life, our time, our possessions, everything that deals with man belongs to God, loaned to man with the expectation of development and improvement. Jesus said, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you" (John 15:16).

"Every moment is freighted with eternal consequences. ...

"Life is too solemn to be absorbed in temporal and earthly matters, in a treadmill of care and anxiety for the things that are but an atom in comparison with the things of eternal interest. Yet God has called us to serve Him in the temporal affairs of life. Diligence in this work is as much a part of true religion as is devotion. ... Every man and woman who is truly converted will be a diligent worker" *Christ's Object Lessons*, 343.

Earth's probation is almost over. Our probationary time on this earth could end at any moment. God is withdrawing His sustaining hand. Now is the time to turn away from the things of this world. Now is the time to surrender to God and plead for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The time we have spent is gone. All we have is now.

"And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed" (Romans 13:11).

[All emphasis supplied] **LM**

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“
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according to the divine
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The Best and Worst Example

By Judy Rebarchek

I've heard it said that a Christian is the best *and* worst example of Christianity. The best when he or she does the will of God, obeys His commandments and loves his or her neighbor. The worst when he or she claims to be a Christian, but does not live or act according to Christian principles.

It seems a lot of people wear a Christian coat, but have had no change of heart or mind. Instead of following God's way to be a Christian, they make up their own way, taking that coat off and putting it back on as it suits them.

Mahatma Gandhi had this to say about Christians:

"I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."

"Jesus is ideal and wonderful, but you Christians—you are not like Him."

This opens the door for Satan's critical accusation, "Such are Christ's people."

"Christ is grieved today at the manifestation of unchristlike spirit and unchristlike actions among His professed followers. Many who bear His name are bringing reproach upon His cause by their unchristian words and deportment." *The Review and Herald*, September 30, 1909.

"Let everyone attend most critically to himself. 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.' Body and mind must be carefully and strictly dealt with, that unchristlike traits of character and tendencies to wrong may not bear sway. ... Every departure from righteousness becomes a force that works against the Lord Jesus." *The Southern Watchman*, January 19, 1904.

"Many professing Christians are so engrossed with earthly cares that they have no time for the cultivation of piety. ... Unsanctified inclinations and desires must be cut away as a hindrance to growth in grace." *Pacific Union Recorder*, December 22, 1904.

Being like Christ, being a Christian, means that a person has had a complete change of heart, a heart that specifically and consistently chooses to do the will of God every moment of the day.

"To everyone who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results." *Christian Service*, 257.

"Our only safety is in living in hourly communion with the high and holy principles of the Word. As we read and study the Scriptures, Christ will commune with us. ...

"The Word of the eternal God is our guide. Through this Word we are made wise unto salvation. Its principles are to be ever in our hearts and on our lips. 'It is written' is to be our anchor. Those who make the Word of God the man of their counsel realize the weakness of the human heart and the power of divine grace to subdue every unsanctified, unholy impulse. They are almost constantly in prayer, and they have the guardianship of the holy angels. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of God lifts up a standard for them. There is harmony in the heart; for the principles of heaven bear sway." *Pacific Union Recorder*, December 22, 1904.

We must never give the devil the opportunity to say of us, "Such are Christ's people." Daily we need to ask the Lord to live in our hearts, to make us more than just a coat-wearer, claiming Christianity, but not living the life of a Christian. We must become more and more like Him every day until that glorious morning when we will look upon His face and declare in one loud and joyous voice, "Behold, this is our God, we have waited for Him and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him. We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isaiah 25:9). **LM**



How Do I Tell My Family?

By Judy Rebarchek

I have a confession to make. I don't know how to witness to my family and friends.

I was raised a Seventh-day Adventist. I've studied the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. I've had the privilege of personally knowing some of the leading ministers in our faith.

But when it comes to sharing this knowledge and what I know to be right with my family and friends, I don't know how. Why? Because I don't know enough? No. Because I don't want to offend anyone? Well, yes, maybe. But I think there is another deeper reason, a more personal one.

How can I tell anyone about the transforming, saving power of God that can change their life when I don't think it has changed mine? Not because God doesn't want to change me or doesn't have the power to change me, but because I have not surrendered myself to His grace and power to effect that change in me. There, I said it.

Paul says in Romans 7:14, 15, 18, 19, "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but

what I hate, that I do. ... For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice." And I cry out with Paul in verse 24, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

A short time before I moved from Nebraska to Kansas, I was given the opportunity to talk with a young man that my husband and I had befriended. It was the first time in the four years we had known each other that he had expressed an interest in religion. I told him that it wasn't religion that mattered, but having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I pointed to my Bible and told him that if he wanted to know about God, if he wanted to know how to have a personal relationship with Him, that was where he would find out how.

You're probably giving me a thumbs up. Good job, right? I believe I told him the right things, but the difficulty for me is the knowledge that while I know what to say, I don't myself always do what I tell others to do. And it is this fact that keeps me from stepping forward and proclaiming the power of God.

I know what God can do because the Bible tells me. It is undeniable that God has done many things for me my whole life, particularly after my husband's death, but I still find it so hard to give up the worldly things that have been so much a part of my life for so long; and these things interfere with my desire to study more and to spend time in prayer. How often do we say, "I just don't have the time," but in reality, we fill our lives with things that do us no good and keep out the One who wants to share our lives; the only One who can help.

I need a change, a complete change in my life; one that comes only by prayer and study of God's word, and this is what I find so hard to do. It's what I want to do, but I don't.

"The work of gaining salvation is one of co-partnership, a joint operation. There is to be cooperation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. **Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome** that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But **he is wholly dependent upon God for success.** Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. **God works and**

man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness.

"God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man. Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are 'willing to be made willing,' the Saviour will accomplish this for us, '... bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ' (2 Corinthians 10:5)." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 482.

Friends, this is what I need. Maybe it's what you need, too. If we are to be effective witnesses for God, then we must surrender to His Spirit. He will not change us if we are not willing to allow the changing.

"He who would build up a strong, symmetrical character, he who would be a well-balanced Christian, **must give all and do all for Christ**; for the Re-

deemer will not accept divided service. Daily he must learn the meaning of self-surrender. He must study the word of God, learning its meaning and obeying its precepts. Thus he may reach the standard of Christian excellence. Day by day God works with him, perfecting the character that is to stand in the time of final test. And day by day the believer is working out before men and angels a sublime experiment, showing what the gospel can do for fallen human beings."

Ibid., 483.

The end is no longer near. Jesus. Is. Coming! There is a world to warn. Family and friends need to be given the opportunity to choose for themselves as the Holy Spirit works in their lives. They must be given the truth with compassion and loving kindness; offending them should not be a concern if in the end, they accept Christ.

But while we are witnessing, we cannot neglect the work needed in our own lives so we are not left behind at Jesus' appearing. If you aren't right with God, now is the time because time is almost up.

Let this be our daily prayer: "I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13, 14).

[All emphasis supplied.] **LM**

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“
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about the transforming,
saving power of God that
can change their lives
when I don't think it has
changed mine?*”

Philippians

Clues – KJV

Across

B7	Everyone here should bow at the name of Jesus	2:10
B13	How many things can we do through Christ's strength?	4:13
C2	This is how we make our requests known to God.....	4:6
C16	Paul considered himself this of Jesus Christ (singular)	1:1
E11	We must be this even while living in this evil world	2:15
F4	Jesus is faithful to continue this work in us.....	1:6
H4	Paul wants us all to be this, of one accord	2:2
H15	Paul's salvation was his _____ expectation.....	1:20
J12	Paul wanted to not have run or labored _____ (two words)	2:16
K2	Our minds should be occupied with things that are this	4:8
K10	Christ will change our _____ body.....	3:21
K17	The worst possible form of death Jesus took for us	2:8
M7	All who confess that Jesus is Lord bring this to the Father	2:11
M19	This, of Jesus Christ, should be in us.....	2:5
N1	Paul's friends in Philippi brought him this emotion	4:1
O7	We should esteem others _____ than ourselves.....	2:3
O14	We should strive for the righteousness of God by this.....	3:9
P1	The Philippians experienced grace when Paul was a prisoner in _____ of the gospel.....	1:7
P20	Though He became a man, Jesus was equal with _____	2:6
Q7	We should be filled with the _____ of righteousness (singular).....	1:11
Q13	We should worry over this	4:6
S2	Everything we do should be without this	2:14
S15	Many who "walk the walk" are actually _____ of Christ.....	3:18

Down

A4	Paul's persecution of the church showed his _____	3:6
A7	What Timothy did with Paul in the gospel	2:22
A9	Some do this for good reasons and some for bad.....	1:15
A21	Paul's attitude: being a prisoner has made the gospel _____ in all Caesar's palace.....	1:13
B11	Jesus willingly did this to Himself	2:8
B13	Paul wanted his life to reveal nothing for which to be _____	1:20
B17	Paul thanked God on every _____ of his Philippian friends	1:3
C2	Our minds should be occupied with things that are _____	4:8
D15	Jesus voluntarily allowed Himself to be made in the likeness of _____	2:7
E5	God works in us both _____ and _____ His will for us (four words).....	2:13
G19	Paul was confident God would continue to _____ the work of our transformation	1:6
H12	We must be on guard against these kind of workers	3:2
I3	Our minds also should be occupied with things that are _____	4:8
J7	The value of the loss of all things is _____ compared to salvation in Christ.....	3:8
J10	Thanksgiving should accompany our prayers about this (two words).....	4:6
J13	God is able and will supply all of our _____	4:19
J15	Paul hoped their rejoicing would be more _____ if he returned to Philippi	1:26
M2	Paul wanted to experience the _____ of Christ's resurrection.....	3:10
N17	Some brothers in Christ will cause _____	1:14, 15

A	2	3		5	6		8		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		A
B																					B
C																					
D																					D
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S																					S
1	2	3		5	6		8	9	10	11	12		14	15	16	17	18		20	21	22

Answer Key:

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

- O4 On one hand Paul was ready to ____ this life..... I:23
- O7 We should forget the past and look at things that are 3:I3
- O21 Paul's _____ emboldened some of the brethren..... I:I4
- Q13 God gave Jesus this above all others..... 2:9
- Q19 Our attitude should be: to live is Christ, and to die is I:21

"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." *Philippians 4:11*



The Book of Books

All would pronounce the Bible the most interesting book they ever perused if their imagination had not become perverted by exciting stories of a fictitious character.

If we study the word of God with interest, and pray to understand it, new beauties will be seen in every line. God will reveal precious truths so clearly that the mind will derive sincere pleasure and have a continual feast as its comforting and sublime truths are unfolded.

To the diligent Bible student new light, new ideas, new gems of truth will constantly appear and be eagerly grasped, for it is impossible for any mind to comprehend all the richness and greatness of even one promise of God. One catches the glory from one point of view, and another the beauty and grace from another point, and the soul is filled with the heavenly light.

After the first acquaintance with the Bible the interest of the earnest seeker grows rapidly. The discipline gained by a regular study of the word of God enables him to see a freshness and beauty in truth that he never before discerned.

The Bible may be studied as a branch of human science would be; but its beauty, the evidence of its power to save souls that believe, is a lesson that is never thus learned. It is a leaf from the tree of life, and by eating it, by receiving it into our minds, we grow strong to do the will of God.

Those who bring to the investigation of the word a spirit of which it does not approve, will take away from the search a spirit which it has not imparted. We should take up the study of God's word with humble hearts. All selfishness, all love of originality, should be laid aside. Long cherished opinions must not be regarded as infallible.

Those who study the Bible simply to find texts to prove their theory or vindicate their opinion, will not be enlightened by the Spirit of God. Not through controversy and discussion is the soul enlightened. We must look and live. We must search the scriptures in order to receive life for the soul.

When the heart is brought into harmony with the word, a new life will spring up within, a new light will shine upon every line of the word, and it will become the voice of God to the soul. Then the truth of God's word will be regarded with new interest, and will be explored as if it were a revelation just from the courts above. Every declaration of inspiration concerning Christ will take hold of the in-most soul of those who love Him. Envy, jealousy and evil surmising will cease. The Bible will be regarded as a charter from heaven. Its study will absorb the mind, and its truths will feast the soul.

Several times each day, precious golden moments should be consecrated to prayer and the study of the Scriptures, if it is only to commit a

text to memory, that spiritual life may exist in the soul. We should take one verse and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which God has put in that verse for us until it becomes our own, and we know "what saith the Lord."

The mind must be restrained and not allowed to wander. It should be trained to dwell upon the Scriptures; even whole chapters may be committed to memory, to be repeated when Satan comes with his temptations. Even while you are walking on the streets, you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in your mind, and God will flash the knowledge obtained into the memory at the very time when it is needed.

We should open the Scriptures with reverence, and never allow one expression of lightness and trifling to escape our lips when quoting from them. As we take our Bible into our hands let us remember that we are on holy ground.

There is little benefit derived from hasty reading of the Scriptures. One may read the whole Bible through, and yet fail to see its beauty or comprehend its deep hidden meaning. One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind, and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained.

If Christians would earnestly search the Scriptures, more hearts would burn with the vivid truths therein revealed. Their hopes would brighten with the precious promises strewn like pearls all along through the sacred writings.

In contemplating the history of patriarchs and prophets, the men who loved and feared God and walked with Him, hearts will glow with the Spirit that animated these worthies. As the mind dwells on the virtue and piety of

holy men of old, the Spirit which inspired them will kindle a flame of love and holy fervor in the hearts of those who would be like them in character, and as they gather the golden truth from the word, the heavenly Instructor is close by their side.

In the word is poetry,

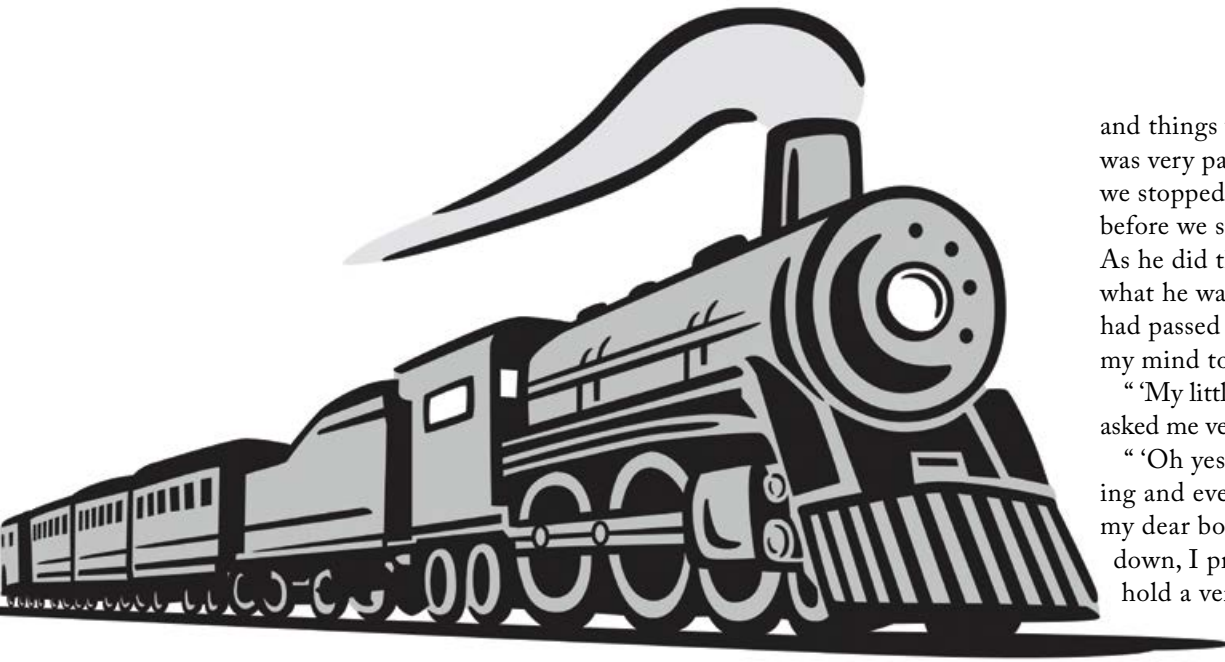
wisdom, history, biography

and the most profound philosophy. Here is a study that quickens the mind into a vigorous and healthy life, and awakens it to the highest exercise. Studied and obeyed, the word of God would give to the world men of stronger and more active intellect than will the closest application to all the subjects which human philosophy embraces. It would give men of strength and solidity of character, of keen perception and sound judgment: men who would be an honor to God and a blessing to the world, for it enlarges the mind, expands, elevates and endows it with new vigor, by bringing its faculties in contact with stupendous truths.

Even unconsciously we imitate that with which we are familiar. By having a knowledge of Christ—His words—and His Lessons of instruction, we instinctively borrow the virtues of the character which we have so closely studied and become imbued with the Spirit which we have so much admired. *The West Michigan Herald*, October 26, 1904. [LM](#)

“
*All would pronounce
the Bible the most
interesting book they ever
perused if their imagination
had not become perverted
by exciting stories of a
fictitious character.*”

The Praying Engineer



One winter, several years ago, there was a good deal of religious interest in a certain Midwestern town, and among those who joined the church was a little fellow twelve years of age, named Allen. His mother was a widow. Four years before, she had moved from their home in Vermont to this town in Wisconsin.

On the Sabbath evening of the day when he joined the church, Allen was sitting in the twilight with his mother.

"Allen, tell me what led you to want to be a Christian. Was it your home teaching, your lessons in the Sabbath school, the regular preaching of the pastor, or has it all come through the influence of the revival meetings?"

Allen looked up into his mother's face.

"Mamma, it was none of these. Do you remember when we were coming

from Vermont to live here four years ago, that I wanted to go on the engine and ride with the engineer? You were afraid to let me till the conductor, whom you knew well, told you that the engineer was a remarkable man, and that I would be just as safe on the engine with him as in the parlor car with you."

"I remember that very well," said his mother.

"Then," continued Allen, "you allowed me to ride on the engine, where I was to stay till you or the conductor came for me. When we were about ready to start from the station where I first got on the engine, the engineer knelt down for just a little bit, and then got up and started his locomotive. I asked him many questions about its different parts and about the places

and things which we passed by, and he was very patient in answering. Soon we stopped at another station, and just before we started he knelt down again. As he did this often, I tried to see what he was doing. Finally, after we had passed several stations, I made up my mind to ask him.

"My little lad, do you ever pray?" he asked me very earnestly.

"Oh yes, sir! I pray every morning and evening," I replied. "Well, my dear boy," said he, "when I kneel down, I pray. God has allowed me to hold a very responsible place here.

There are, perhaps, two hundred lives now on this train intrusted to my care. A little mistake on my part, a little failure to do all my duty, a little neglect, a little inattention to signals, might send all or many of these two hundred souls into eternity. So at every station I kneel for just a moment, and ask the Master to help me, and to keep the many lives He has put into my hands from all harm till we get to the next station. All the years that I have been on this engine, He has helped me, and not a single human being of the thousands that have ridden on my train has been harmed. I have never had an accident."

"I have never before mentioned what he did or said, but almost daily I have thought about him, and resolved that I would be a Christian, too."

True Education Reader, Fifth Grade,
©1933, 29-31. LM

Unto the Least

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.” John 15:13

As humans, we think that if we put our very lives on the line for someone, we are fulfilling this scripture. For example, police officers, paramedics, and fire fighters who are the first to rush into a dangerous situation to save the lives of complete strangers at the risk of, and often the cost of, their own; doctors and nurses who expose themselves to potentially deadly diseases in order to care for the sick and the dying; parents who will sacrifice life or limb to protect the life of their child; or the person who will sacrifice their life for what is right, just because it is right.

So is it true that the above have fulfilled the intent of John 15:13? Yes, I believe so; however, there is more to laying down one’s life than just being willing to die for someone. While a noble act, what about giving, sacrificing *in* your life for someone? First John 3:16-18 tells us, “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. **But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need,** and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? ... let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.”

In order to become the sacrifice necessary to save mankind from eternal death, Jesus had to sacrifice everything. He chose to be a man, to bear not only his physical weaknesses, but the weaknesses of his human nature (albeit without sin). He gave up His heavenly home and while on the cross, He was separated from the Father because of the sin of the world He carried. He left the love and praise of the heavenly angels and came to earth to live in poverty, tempted, scorned and rejected by the very ones He came to save. He lived a life that would be the example that man should follow so that he could develop the character needed to reach heaven. He showed man how to love even those who did not love Him. And then, He died for them.

If we are truly to fulfill the intent of the scripture to lay down one’s life, we must be willing to sacrifice everything: our property, our possessions, our wealth, our plans, our time, and yes, perhaps even our lives. The world groans as it suffers the painful burden of sin’s effects and consequences and the people of the world groan in their hearts, even if they aren’t aware of it, for lack of the one thing that could relieve their cares, fears, sorrows, and

burdens – Jesus Christ. And how can they know Him, if they are never told, never shown? We must sacrifice our lives to Him so that He then can give us the love that makes it possible for us to sacrifice our lives for them.

Dear Lord, let it not be said of us: “For I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me,” but rather “inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, ... you did it to Me.”

(Matthew 25:42, 43 *last part*, 40).
[All emphasis supplied.] **LM**

Your Letters

"Thank you so much for the spiritual food in the *LandMarks* publication. May God bless you always in your ministry."

—**ML, South Dakota**

"May God bless you in your ministry. We enjoy the *LandMarks* magazine. Keep up the good work. Jesus is coming soon! A few more days to gather our loved ones in. Praying for all of you at Steps to Life."

—**DW, Manitoba, Canada**

"The Bible Study Guide is so valuable and the sermons and short stories are invaluable. Thank you."

—**EB, Missouri**

October Sermon of the Month

Can the Great Commission be Fulfilled?

By John J. Grosboll

Today there are 7.5 billion people in the world. How can the three angels' messages reach every person in the world? First, we must have the Holy Spirit.

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

October 2021

Dear Friend,

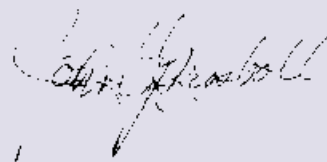
"Christ requires nothing of any soul that it is not possible for him to do. ... Christ engaged in covenant with God the Father to represent the love of God in His humanity for the fallen race. Christ knew that this great display of the grace of God, which He Himself engaged to represent—nothing less could represent that love of infinity than in giving His own Son to save the guilty sinner. Christ undertook the plan when He knew all things, that nothing else than the infinite capabilities that made Him equal with the Father could possibly express the plan unless He became one with humanity, taking upon Him the nature of man, and thus bearing all the temptations as man, and dying that man might live through faith in His redeeming power. ...

"As God made Christ His messenger to the world, Christ has made all who claim Him as their Redeemer, to represent Christ in mercy, forgiveness, and pardon, to the world. ... All of us are pledged to do, in our individual instrumentality, for Christ, what Christ did in His human life here upon the earth as the Sent of God for the representation of the Father.

"The riches of the love of God is beyond our computation! Now the Lord expects [this love to be revealed] through the persevering efforts made in behalf of the salvation of souls ready to perish in their ignorance and unbelief and sin. We are individually under bonds to God to convey the message of truth ... Many are saying, Oh, that I might find Him! They need the words and compassion and sympathy of one who has found Him precious to their souls.

"Tell the poor, perishing sinner the story of His love. The Saviour has given Himself to bring light and salvation to you, and now He says, I give you as My representative to the world; consider yourself as dedicated to My service. Speak tenderly, pityingly; tell them the glad tidings of Christ and His love; express your love in unselfish, Godlike deeds to save perishing souls." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, 191-194.

Your brother in sharing the message,



Pastor John J. Grosboll

13th Sabbath Offering

Here are the Reapers!

It is always encouraging to receive reports from the Bible workers that your donations enable us to support. The donations that we receive earmarked *Missions* go into a special fund that we use to provide funding for outreach efforts that our foreign workers are conducting, which are subsequently reported on the monthly activity reports we receive from the field.

Most of those we support in Africa are in relatively remote parts of their respective countries, often without many of the amenities that a large population center would provide. Thus when a camp meeting or evangelistic series is conducted, the needs, though relatively simple, require means beyond the ability of the local sponsoring church to provide.

Following is a narrative we recently received from Henry Mwesa, one of two workers we support in Zambia. It provides some interesting insight into the conditions faced by the front-line warriors in the great controversy.

Greetings in Jesus Name,

We request for your prayers as we prepare for our fourth camp meeting next month. Our prayer is that the Lord will hold the winds of strife and allow us to have an incident-free camp meeting. The coronavirus cases and deaths keep skyrocketing, leading to more and more restrictions.

Our country goes to the polls the same week we are having our camp meeting, coupled with the pandemic, this makes the current environment extremely unique to the previous times we held such meetings. Difficulties are hedging up our way by the day.

Brother Henry Mwesa (Zambia)

To support the work of Henry and others in the mission field, please mark your donations *Missions*.



from the
Mission Fields

Greetings from
Ghana & Kenya



*Mount Kilimanjaro, one of the most iconic
landscapes of Africa, in national park of Kenya.*



I give thanks to our Almighty God for the protection He gave to me as I recently spent a month traveling to a number of areas. God is so wonderful to me and gave me the opportunity to visit Tarkwa, Sraha in the western region, Obuasi Church, Fiakoma and Kumasi.

I spent a week at the church in Tarkwa helping them with various church activities and their radio program. The church members were so happy for the assistance.

I spent six days in Sraha before I left for Obuasi where I again helped with their radio program.

Finally, I visited Fiakoma for six days before heading to Kumasi. In Fiakoma we now have six new members and two older members who have returned and because of the program there, we believe that more people will be attending church in the days to come.

We look forward, as we prepare for the soon-coming of Christ, that we will be ready to meet Him when He comes so that we can soon go home.

Thank you for your support of our work here in Ghana. God bless you all in Jesus' name.

Joseph Class-Peters



Covid-19 has placed great restrictions on worship and traveling. In May, the government announced the closing of the churches in three counties: Kisii, Kisumu and Kericho. We have since been worshipping in individual homes each Sabbath.

We also meet three days a week—Monday, Wednesday and Friday—for Bible studies at a different church member's home.

Sometimes we meet outside under the trees when the house is small and attendance reaches 10-15 members because we have a requirement for social distancing of five meters.

What will come next only the Lord knows. Please continue to pray for us and thank you for your continued support of our work here in Kenya.

Your Brother in Christ,

Zachari Makworo

The Chicken Egg

A fertilized chicken egg is a very special creation. Before even thinking about a chick developing in an egg, it is interesting to ponder a few questions about the shell:

How does a chicken manage to get a shell around that slippery, raw, fertilized egg?

How does a chicken know it needs to make a shell with porosity so that the chick will be able to breathe?

How would mindless evolution know how to manufacture such a shell?

It turns out that the chicken has little to do with the formation of an egg-shell—the egg actually grows the shell around itself! It does this using processes that are also seen in bones and sea-shells. Around the egg is a membrane, and evenly spaced on the membrane are points where columns of calcite (a form of calcium carbonate) form. These columns stack together side by side to form the shell. The shell itself is highly specialized. Each eggshell has about 10,000 tiny pores. The developing chick needs these pores to breathe.

Within the first few days after the egg is laid, blood vessels begin to grow out of the developing chick. Two of these attach to the membrane under the eggshell and two attach to the yolk. By

the fifth day, the tiny heart is pumping blood through the vessels. The chick feeds from the yolk with the yolk vessels and breathes through the membrane vessels. The chick gives off carbon dioxide and water vapor as it digests the yolk. These waste products are picked up by the blood vessels and leave through the pores in the egg-shell. ... So here's another question:


What makes those blood vessels grow out of the chick, and how do they know where to go and what to attach to?

By the nineteenth day, the chick has gotten very big and the oxygen it has been getting through the pores in the shell is no longer sufficient to sustain its life. How does it know what to do next? A small tooth called the “egg-tooth” has grown on the end of its beak and the chick uses this to peck a hole into an

air sack at the flat end of the egg. The air sack provides only six hours of air for the chick to breathe, so instead of relaxing and breathing deeply, the chick pecks a small hole through the shell to gain access to the outside air. Two days later, on the twenty-first day, the chick “hatches” out of the shell.

Each step in the development of the chick defies evolutionary logic because if even one step in the process is missing or out of order, the chick will die. Timing is absolutely crucial!

The process must be orchestrated by God our Creator. The impersonal plus time/plus chance is not an adequate explanation for the wondrous complexities of life as we observe it. There had to be a Designer and His name is the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1; Colossians 1; Hebrews 1).

Sources: Dr. Jobe Martin, *The Evolution of a Creationist* (Rockwell, Texas: Biblical Discipleship Publishers, 2013), pages 209–211 and howstuffworks.com 



Q:

What is an unbelieving, professed believer?

A:

A adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4).

To be a friend of the world means to unite with the world, to enjoy what the world enjoys and to love what the world loves. It further means to follow my own inclinations and to seek my own gratification and pleasure, to love and serve myself.

I may go to church each Sabbath and give my tithes and offerings. I may say that I believe the doctrines and tenets of my church. I may read the Bible, but if I do not allow its precepts to affect my life and instead devote my attention

and desires to worldly things, then I am not a true believer. I only profess to be a believer and if I choose to do the things of the world while claiming to be a believer, then I show myself to be, in fact, an unbelieving, professed believer.

The Bible teaches that we are to be separate from the world (2 Corinthians 6:17). Our tastes, habits, fashions, customs, and attitudes are to be completely contrary to those of the world, when they conflict with God's way.

It is not only the outward acts and habits that tell what type of believer we are, but the state of the heart, for from out of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34). If our heart loves the world, then the way we look, talk, and act will be like the world.

If my attention is on Christ, if I love Him with all my heart, mind, soul, and spirit (Mark 12:30), then I will have no love for the world or the things of the world. When people see me, they will see Christ; when I speak, it will be His words; when I act it will be in His service.

"Would you grasp the things of the world? The world knoweth not God. Give yourselves to the world, and you will not know God; you cannot know Him. We need to behold Him. We need to purify our souls by obeying the truth." *The Review and Herald*, April 30, 1901. **LM**



The Body's Defenses

Today, during what so many consider to be a health crisis beyond any other, it is good to know that we have been “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14) by our God. The more we study just how our bodies were made and were intended to function, we are better able to understand those functions and how we are to take care of them.

The body, left to its own devices and given the right conditions, functions in order to survive and remain in the state of homeostasis (i.e., a state of dynamic equilibrium). In this state, the human organism maintains stability while ad-

justing to changing conditions. As soon as this stability becomes endangered, several built-in defense systems spring into action.

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

All through nature, millions of living organisms prey on others. This also applies to the human body, as it is daily exposed to attacks by germs, viruses and parasites that carry disease. Its main protector is the immune system, which has in recent times gained some recognition among the general public, mainly through advertisements offering preparations “to strengthen the immune

system.” Irrespective of whether or not these work, people buy them without knowing anything about the immune system—what it consists of or where it is located—yet the subject deserves attention.

The immune system is not a single organ or a single gland; its parts are located all over the body. Several organs (e.g., the liver, the brain and the pancreas) are so important that they have their own immune mechanism—the reticuloendothelial system, which gives them extra protection.

There is also the lymphatic system, which transports excess fluid from the

body tissues into the blood stream. The lymph itself is a straw-colored liquid containing cells that fight infection. The system consists of 700 nodes in a normal person, distributed throughout the body. Unlike the blood stream, circulated through the pumping action of the heart, the lymph is moved around the body by muscular action.

However, the main basic component of the system is located in the bone marrow, where the white blood corpuscles are formed. When they are released, they are not complete. Some wander to the thymus gland, where they are completed, and released as T lymphocytes; others drift to the spleen and lymphoid tissue and mature into B lymphocytes. All of them ingest germs, viruses, malignant cells or toxic substances, killing or otherwise neutralizing them.

As with all other parts of the organism, the immune system is made up of cells that need to be nourished. They require a full complement of minerals, enzymes and vitamins in their natural form, which is easily assimilated. Pills and drugs cannot cover that need; sometimes they are not absorbed at all. Here, as in the rest of the body, the need is for fresh, living, organic substances to nourish and maintain this essential life-preserving system.

THE ENZYME SYSTEM

Enzymes are often poorly understood by the lay person. According to one authoritative definition, they are "complex proteins that are capable of inducing chemical changes in other substances without being changed themselves." *Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: F. A. Davis Company, 1993). Everything that happens in the body—from taking a breath in order to supply oxygen to the blood, to digesting food and then to combining digested foods with oxygen in order to produce oxygen—hundreds of such processes require enzyme activity.

The body must build its own enzymes since it cannot utilize the ones found even in raw foods or animal products. In order to produce the hundreds needed, the organ systems require specific minerals as catalysts. (Catalysts are substances that speed up a reaction without themselves being altered.)

Researchers Dixon and Webb, Malcolm Dixon and Edwin C. Webb, *Enzymes* (New York, New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1964), performed a detailed study as to how the body builds enzymes. They found that, in most of the enzymes they studied, the body needed potassium as a catalyst, while sodium acted as an enzyme inhibitor (i.e., a blocking substance). Since enzymes are destroyed at temperatures above 140° F (60°C), the body receives no enzymes from cooked or processed foods. If it doesn't receive fresh living nutrients ... serious difficulties will arise. This is particularly true for patients already facing major health problems such as poor digestion, poor appetite, constipation, diarrhea and painful gas. The pancreatic enzymes are not doing their job of attacking tumor tissue and the oxidizing enzymes are not producing adequate energy, to name just a few deficiencies.

The reason why enzymes, especially pancreatic ones, are able to attack and destroy tumor tissue while digesting foods is because they recognize tumor cells as "foreign," needing to be elimi-

nated. However, the basic function of these same enzymes is to digest proteins.

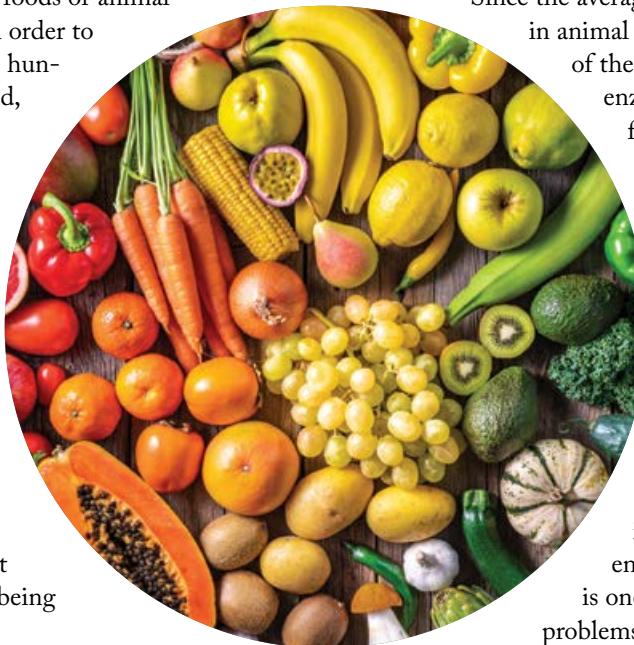
Since the average diet is high in animal proteins, most of the pancreatic enzymes are used for digestion and little—if any—is available to destroy tumor tissue, allowing the latter to grow and spread. Clearly, inadequate enzyme activity is one of the major problems with which sick people, especially

cancer patients, must contend. The answer lies in providing them with toxin-free, fresh organic food. ... Moreover, supplying extra doses of digestive and pancreatic enzymes is an integral part of the Gerson protocol, alongside fresh juices with their high oxygen content.

THE HORMONE SYSTEM

Hormones are substances found in certain glands that are released directly into the blood stream and are therefore called endocrine (i.e., ductless) glands.

The thyroid deserves special attention, as it is an important part of the immune system. Among its many other functions, it regulates body temperature, including fever. If and when the organism is invaded by germs or viruses, the immune system responds by producing excess heat, namely fever. We must remember that most germs and viruses, and even tumor tissues, do not tolerate elevated temperatures, which healthy cells can easily bear. Hence, the well-functioning thyroid helps to restore health if it is supplied with iodine, which it needs in order to



“
God has provided
us with a beautiful body
temple and has supplied
all of the wonderful fruits,
vegetables, grains and
legumes to uphold and
nourish it.



manufacture its vitally important hormone—thyroxin.

These days, iodine is unfortunately in short supply. Chlorine in the water supply is able to remove it from the thyroid. Fluoride, a dangerous toxin, is even more powerful in blocking this important element. In

addition, as a consequence of commercial farming methods, the soil contains too little iodine, thus producing iodine-deficient plant foods. In recognition of this, the governments of many countries have made it compulsory to add iodine to ordinary table salt on the grounds that, as the public already used a great deal of salt, everybody was likely to consume some iodine with it. High salt consumption, on the other hand,

is now known to be unhealthy and is, in fact, officially discouraged, resulting in a serious shortfall of iodine even in people on a good diet. (See “Excessive Sodium is One of the Greatest Health Threats in Foods,” World Health Organization (WHO) report from October 2006 meeting in Paris, part of the implementation of the WHO’s Global Strategy on Diets, Physical Activity and Health.)

Other enzyme inhibitors include food additives such as preservatives, emulsifiers, coloring agents, artificial flavors and many other so-called food cosmetics, plus pesticides and other agricultural poisons in our food supply—the hormone system, an important part of the body’s defenses, is itself under severe attack.

THE MINERAL BALANCE

In order to function well and keep its defenses strong, the body needs a large number—some 52 or so—minerals. On the Gerson Therapy, this requirement is amply fulfilled by the generous supply of fresh organic juices made from produce grown in rich soil. However, Dr. Gerson also recognized that two minerals, sodium and potassium, were mainly involved in creating mineral imbalance in the body.

The human body has become a “potassium animal,” needing some 90% potassium versus 10% sodium in its diet – the approximate percentage found in natural, fresh, organic vegetarian foods. Yet, these days, the average modern diet is far removed from these proportions; instead, it is overloaded with sodium, which the body must excrete. Excess sodium is an enzyme inhibitor. ... It has also been shown to stimulate tumor growth and produce edema, as the body ties it up with water to reduce its toxicity. (See M. Gerson, *A Cancer Therapy: Results of Fifty Cases and The Cure of Advanced Cancer by Diet Therapy: A Summary of Thirty Years of Clinical Experimentation*, 6th ed., San Diego, California: Gerson Institute, 1999, p. 210).

To remedy this situation, Dr. Gerson introduced large amounts of potassium to the patient’s diet. ... This resulted in an immediate reduction of edema, ascites and pain. He also noticed that adding any other minerals, such as magnesium, calcium or iron, disturbed the patient’s mineral balance and caused damage. His main warning was against adding calcium to the diet. He discovered—with his close friend, top biochemist Rudolf Keller (*Ibid.*, p. 64), that calcium belonged to the sodium group of minerals and stimulated tumor growth. Even in cases of severe bone destruction by tumor tissue, or in osteoporosis, the Gerson treatment—with its high level of well-balanced minerals—is capable of achieving bone restoration. In light of all this, it is easy to see why mineral balance is an important component of the body’s defenses.

God has provided us with a beautiful body temple and has supplied all of the wonderful fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes to uphold and nourish it. Will you think twice before eating something that will damage your body temple, a gift from God?

This article is a reprint from the January 2013 issue of LandMarks, written by Judy Hallingstad with excerpts taken from the book, Healing the Gerson Way, Defeating Cancer and Other Chronic Diseases, by Charlotte Gerson with Beata Bishop (Copyright 2010 by Gerson Health Media, 316 Mid Valley Center #230, Carmel, California 93923, pages 21 through 27). LM

Persecution and Character Development

By John J. Grosboll

Some people are persecuted because of their wrong-doing and others stir up resentment and opposition by their extreme or rigid ideas. But some people are persecuted because they have done what is right. Sounds strange, doesn't it?

In Matthew 5:10, Jesus gives the last of the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount when He says, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." In the previous beatitudes, Jesus has been describing the development of Christian character, but in this last beatitude He instead describes what would develop in the world once a person becomes Christlike. And it is indeed a strange reception that is accorded them. You might think, when you first read the gospel story, that a person with the character described by Jesus, one that is gentle, who loves righteousness, and is merciful, pure in heart and is a peacemaker, would be welcomed everywhere by everyone. But Jesus said that it would be just the opposite.

He declared that if you climbed this ladder of spiritual growth, it would lead to opposition and persecution; that a genuine Christian character would stir up enmity and hatred on the part of those in the world who do not have these virtues. The Bible gives abundant evidence that such is the case.

“

Some people are persecuted because they have done what is right.

The apostle Peter says, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world” (1 Peter 5:8, 9). So the development of a genuine Christian character would engender enmity, persecution, and hatred as Jesus predicted.

Character development produced by the experience of a person who has followed these first seven beatitudes arouses the enemy of all righteousness. He is especially incensed when those who climb this ladder reach the blessed realm of purity of heart, with a vision of God that qualifies them to become peacemakers to other alienated and troubled souls. This makes the prince of strife and confusion furiously angry with these ambassadors of peace, and he makes war upon them. His fiercest anger and his most relentless persecutions will be manifested against the remnant church just before Christ returns.

Revelation 12:12 says, “... rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” Then verse 17 says, “And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest [or the remnant] of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

The reason that genuine Christians are persecuted, as seen in 1 Peter 1:1, is because they are strangers and pilgrims in the earth. Paul, in describing the faithful people of God in past ages, said, “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13). Genuine Christians are not citizens of this world. They are living

in a land which Satan, the great adversary, claims as his, as its prince and ruler. The devil is called in the Bible the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4 KJV). “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning” (1 John 3:8).

Sin is the breaking of God’s law (1 John 3:4). As long as you live in sin, the devil will give you comparative rest because you are part of his kingdom. But when you choose to renounce the kingdom of Satan and follow Jesus Christ, obedient to the laws of heaven, the devil is very angry because he has lost you as one of his subjects. That results in his satanic wrath and persecution, and from that, no real Christian can escape. Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). He also said in John 15:20, “‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.”

You have to remember that you must forsake all sin if you are going to be a peacemaker, because it is sin that disturbs our peace. When you decide to forsake your life of sin and follow Jesus Christ, and you receive the Holy Spirit, then you begin to live a new life. You have transferred your citizenship to heaven by choosing to follow Jesus Christ and acknowledging Him as your Lord and Saviour.

This persecution foretold by Jesus was not limited just to the disciples to whom He was speaking or to others at some other certain time. Paul says, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). Just as Christ loves righteousness and hates lawlessness (Hebrews 1:9), Satan loves lawlessness and hates righteousness. And in this rebellious world we live in, vital holiness will provoke hatred and opposition because holiness is a disturbing element. The light of truth always exposes the darkness of error. It sweeps away the black mantel that covers the sins of the ungodly and it makes manifest the necessity of change, the need for reform. This revelation may be welcomed by some, but it is

resented by those who want to cling to their sins.

To Nicodemus Jesus said, “He who believes in Him [that is, in Christ] is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed” (John 3:18–20). That is the very same problem the Christian has faced in all ages; the same problem that Jesus Himself faced. Those who are not willing to forsake their lawless deeds begin to war against the truth and its advocates and hatred against truth and godliness is manifested by persecuting those who are sanctified by the truth.

If it is true that all who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution, why is there comparatively little persecution in Christendom in the western world at the present time? The book of Acts and the epistles of Paul tell us that in the time of the apostles, the church of God suffered great persecution. Some of the epistles of Paul were actually written from a Roman prison. After the time of the apostles in the second and third centuries, there was persecution of the Christians by the pagan Roman Empire that lasted for more than 200 years.

Again, during that long period of history known as the Dark Ages, persecution raised its ugly head and millions of Christians were martyred in many parts of the world. In the 16th century during the Reformation and again during the revivals in the time of John Wesley, there was persecution of the church. Persecution has appeared whenever there has been a revival of primitive godliness. And the reason that there is so little persecution in the modern church today is because vital godliness is lacking.



As long as you live in sin, the devil will give you comparative rest because you are part of his kingdom.

Notice what Jesus says to the church that would live in the last epochal period of Christian history: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit [spew] you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments [raiment], that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:15–20).

Do you understand what has happened? The church has compromised with the world and conformed to worldly standards so that there is very little vital godliness in the church. Christianity has become popular with the world and therefore awakens no opposition. A church that has lost its first love, that has

become lukewarm in its affection for both God and man, could hardly be expected to arouse the hatred of the enemy. He is so very well satisfied with the present spiritual condition of the church because he knows that few of its members have climbed the beatitude ladder.

But when there is a development of primitive godliness, a revival of the faith and power of the apostolic church, there will be a revival of persecution. The enemy will become aroused as soon as the church begins to awaken from its slumbering condition. However, we must always remember that Jesus said, “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake” (Matthew 5:10).

This persecution is not because of a person’s own wrong-doing or the natural consequence of their own course of conduct. There are many today who think themselves martyrs, and are anxious for persecution, and will follow a course that brings persecution upon themselves. They are not happy unless they are creating resentment and stirring up opposition; this is especially true of certain extremists and fanatics. Jesus is talking about the persecution that results from a person being personally righteous.

When Jesus was here on earth, He said that He was rejected and persecuted because He was not of the world, be-

cause He was different from the world. His godly life was a rebuke to sinners, and it made them angry. They hated and persecuted Him because He was righteous, and it exposed their unrighteousness. He was insulted, maligned, reproached, and finally murdered, not because they could find evil in Him, but because they could not. In fact, at His trial, Pontius Pilate said three times, “I find no fault in Him at all” (John 18:38).

Jesus says that His followers would receive the same treatment for the same reasons. Being like Christ they would be different from the world, and somehow, difference will always awaken opposition. The life of a genuine Christian, his very presence, is a reproof and rebuke to those who are selfish and proud. This makes them feel uncomfortable and arouses in them enmity and resentment. This last beatitude is the only one that Jesus enlarges upon. And He emphasizes its importance with this statement found in Matthew 5:11 and 12, literal translation: “Blessed are you when they revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets which were before you.” Jesus explains in these verses what He means by persecution for righteousness’ sake. He enumerates some of the forms in which the persecution would come and He emphasizes the greatness of the reward.

Sometimes when someone is persecuted, we tend to sympathize with them. We might be inclined to pity ourselves if we are being persecuted and ill-treated by

others. But Jesus offers His congratulations to those who are persecuted. He declares that those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake should rejoice. This is true, because it is an evidence that they actually are the children of God, and thereby have become a menace to Satan and his kingdom.

So persecution is often evidence that a person is climbing the ladder of spiritual growth, traveling the highway of holiness that leads to the Holy City, the celestial city of God. Jesus assures us

if we are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, that we have

the kingdom of heaven and should rejoice. He also tells us that we can rejoice because of the company that we are in. All those who have gone before you—the prophets, the apostles and many other godly Christians—were persecuted and the brunt of Satan’s attacks.

All of the prophets were opposed and persecuted and many suffered martyrdom because they were holy men of God acting as His spokesmen (2 Peter 1:19–21). It is the fate of prophets and sages to be rejected because the world will not bear rebuke. When we study the life of the apostles, we find that all except one of the 11 apostles died for their faith and that one, John the Beloved, suffered banishment to the Isle of Patmos. Many millions of Christians were persecuted and martyred during the pagan Roman persecutions. And many millions more, during the Dark Ages. If you are persecuted, remember Jesus says that you are in the company of the best people that have ever lived. To join the company of the persecuted, therefore, is cause not for sorrow, but for rejoicing.

Another cause for rejoicing is that persecution is one of the best of all purifiers and character developers. When we study Christian history, we find many times that the church has always been in its purest and most godly state while passing through persecution, and at such times, had its greatest power. Why? Because godliness awakens opposition and Christian character develops faster and becomes more vigorous under the strain and opposition of being persecuted. Godliness always precedes persecution, and persecution then performs an important part of burning out the dross and perfecting Christian character. The two blend together. Persecution increases with the increase of godliness. If you want to be ready to meet Jesus Christ when He returns to this world, you must be willing to follow Him through evil report as well as good report.

Revelation describes those who are ready to meet Jesus when He comes. John was asked, “‘Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?’ And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’” (Revelation 7:13, 14).

If you want to be ready to meet Jesus when He returns, you must be ready to go through, by His grace, the great tribulation. The Bible is very clear that before Jesus comes again, there will be a time of trouble in this world such as has never been since there was a nation. And we are rapidly approaching right now that time described in Daniel 12:1. Now is the time for us to prepare to go through the great tribulation and to be ready to meet the Lord when He returns. **LM**

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Satisfied

Oh! He wakes me from my dreaming
To behold Him face to face;
And He saves and keeps me ever
With the fullness of His grace.
And He does not keep me waiting
Till I reach the home above,
But He satisfies me daily
With the sweetness of His love.

In the stillness and the darkness,
When no human friend is near,
Oft He comes to sooth and comfort—
Wipes away the falling tear.
And He never disappoints me
When I seek the quiet place;
But He spreads a royal banquet,
And reveals His smiling face.

Though my way leads o'er the hilltops
With the sunshine beaming fair,
And the rarest flowers, nodding,
Breathe a welcome everywhere;
Or adown the lonely valley
With the shadows falling drear,
Still He satisfies me fully,
For I feel His present near.

O. E. Hart

Printed in *The Review and Herald*, January 16, 1900

October 31 – November 6, 2021

Money

Key Text

“The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the LORD of hosts” (Haggai 2:8).

Study Help: *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 148–157; *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 99, 652–662.

Introduction

“In all our expenditure of means we are to strive to fulfill the purpose of Him who is the alpha and omega of all Christian effort.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 49.

Sunday

1 HEARTS REVEALED

1.a. How does our use of money reveal the depth of our consecration to God? Matthew 6:21.

Note: “There is one thing in which we must be deeply in earnest, and that is in the service of God. There is no danger of having too much zeal here. If we would only work with an eye single to the glory of God, the mists would roll away, and our views of right and wrong would become clear. We should consecrate our property. The language of our hearts would be, ‘Lord, here is the means for which Thou hast made me responsible; what wilt Thou have me do with it?’” *The Signs of the Times*, January 7, 1886.

“Money is a trust from God. It is not ours to expend for the gratification of pride or ambition.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 287.

1.b. How does David’s devotion to God stand as an inspiration as well as a rebuke to many of us? 1 Chronicles 29:3–5.

Note: “Is gratitude dead in the heart? Does not the cross of Christ put to shame a life of selfish ease and indulgence? ... We are reaping the fruits of this infinite self-sacrifice; and yet, when labor is to be done, when our money is wanted to aid the work of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls, we shrink from duty and pray to be excused.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 21.

Monday

2 WORDS OF WARNING

2.a. How are we warned of a sinister plot against Sabbath keepers? Luke 21:34.

Note: “Satan told his angels that the churches were asleep. He would increase his power and lying wonders, and he could hold them. ‘But,’ he said, ‘the sect of Sabbath keepers we hate; they are continually working against us, and taking from us our subjects, to keep the hated law of God. Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ’s kingdom or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in the most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it. We must keep in our ranks all the means of which we can gain control. The more means the followers of Christ devote to His service, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects. ... Control the money matters if you can, and drive their ministers to want and distress. This will weaken their courage and zeal. Battle every inch of ground. Make covetousness and love of earthly treasures the ruling traits of their character. As long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back. Crowd every attraction around them, and they will be surely ours. And not only are we sure of them, but their hateful influence will not be exercised to lead others to heaven. When any shall attempt to give, put within them a grudging disposition, that it may be sparingly.’” *Early Writings*, 266, 267.

2.b. Why are we specifically warned against covetousness? Luke 12:15.

Note: “Selfishness and covetousness lurking in the human heart are most powerful passions, and the outcome of the conflict is not a mere conjecture. Unless the soul is daily living upon Christ’s flesh and drinking His blood, the godly element will be overcome by the satanic. Selfishness and covetousness will bear away the victory. A self-confident, independent spirit will never enter into the kingdom of God. It is only those who are partakers with Christ in His self-denial and sacrifice that will be partakers with Him in His glory.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 216.

Tuesday

3 A SERIOUS MATTER

3.a. How does the love of money deteriorate our spiritual life, and what is the cure for it? 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.

Note: “Christ offered Himself, an infinite sacrifice. This, in and of itself, bears directly against covetousness and exalts benevolence.

“Constant, self-denying benevolence is God’s remedy for the cankering sins of selfishness and covetousness. God has arranged systematic benevolence to sustain His cause and relieve the necessities of the suffering and needy. He has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death. Systematic benevolence is designed in the order of God to tear away treasures from the covetous as fast as they are gained and to consecrate them to the Lord, to whom they belong.” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 548.

“Self-sacrifice is the keynote of the teachings of Christ. Often it is presented and enjoined in language that seems authoritative, because God sees that there is no other way to save man than to cut away from his life the selfishness which, if retained, would degrade the whole being.” *Ibid.*, vol. 9, 49.

“That which is eating out the vitals of God’s people is the love of money and friendship with the world.” *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 657.

3.b. Where does God want us to focus our attention, and why? Colossians 3:1.



Note: “Selfishness is a soul-destroying sin. Under this head comes covetousness, which is idolatry. All things belong to God. All the prosperity we enjoy is the result of divine beneficence. God is the great and bountiful giver. If He requires any portion of the liberal supply He has given us, it is not that He may be enriched by our gifts, for He needs nothing from our hand; but it is that we may have an opportunity to exercise self-denial, love, and sympathy for our fellowmen, and thus become highly exalted. In every dispensation, from Adam’s time to ours, God has claimed the property of man, saying: I am the rightful owner of the universe; therefore consecrate to Me thy first fruits, bring a tribute of loyalty, surrender to Me My own, thus acknowledging My sovereignty, and you shall be free to retain and enjoy My bounties, and My blessing shall be with you.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 476, 477.

Wednesday

4 A COVENANT BY SACRIFICE

4.a. In view of the shortness of time before the Lord’s return, what should each one consider in managing his or her personal finances? Haggai 2:8.

Note: “The end is fast approaching and many in our churches are asleep. Let all now make it their chief business to serve the Lord. The Lord has entrusted to His people the talent of means, some more and some less than others. With many the possession of wealth has proved a snare. In their desire to follow the fashions of the world, they have lost their zeal for the truth, and they are in peril of losing eternal life. In proportion as God has prospered them, men should return to Him of the goods He has entrusted to their stewardship.” *This Day With God*, 349.

“Some close their ears to the calls made for money to be used in sending missionaries to foreign countries and in publishing the truth and scattering it like autumn leaves all over the world. Such excuse their covetousness by informing you that they have made arrangements to be charitable at death. They have considered the cause of God in their wills. Therefore they live a life of avarice, robbing God in tithes and in offerings, and in their wills return to God but a small portion of that which He has lent them, while a very large proportion is appropriated to relatives who have no interest in the truth.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 479, 480.

4.b. What specific warning concerning stewardship does Christ issue to parents? Matthew 10:37.

Note: “Believing parents have frequently transferred their property to their unbelieving children, thus putting it out of their power to render to God the things that are His. By so doing they lay off that responsibility which God has laid upon them, and place in the enemy’s ranks means which God has entrusted to them to be returned to Him by being invested in His cause when He shall require it of them. It is not in God’s order that parents who are capable of managing their own business should give up the control of their property, even to children who are of the same faith.” *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 528, 529.

Thursday

5 THE SAFEST DEPOSIT BOX

5.a. What comforting assurance does Christ offer all who make a covenant with Him through sacrifice? Matthew 6:28–33.

Note: “Open your hearts to receive this [God’s] kingdom, and make its service your highest interest. Though it is a spiritual kingdom, fear not that your needs for this life will be uncared-for. If you give yourself to God’s service, He who has all power in heaven and earth will provide for your needs.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 99.

“Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others will strengthen the spirit of beneficence in the giver’s heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 20.

5.b. What is the most fruitful way to preserve our wealth? Proverbs 3:9, 10.

Note: “Would you make your property secure? Place it in the hand that bears the nail prints of the crucifixion. Retain all in your possession, and it will be to your eternal loss. Give it to God, and from that moment it bears His inscription. It is sealed with His immutability.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 49.

“We are to make investments in heavenly interests, and always work with heaven in view, laying our treasure up in the bank of heaven.” *The Signs of the Times*, April 4, 1895.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why can money be a talent that reveals much about our hearts?
- 2 Describe one strategy that Satan is plotting against Sabbath keepers.
- 3 How are we blessed by overcoming a love for money?
- 4 What should be our consideration as the end of time draws nearer?
- 5 What promise is given to those who lay up their treasure in heaven?

November 7 – 13, 2021

The Tithe

Key Text

“The tenth shall be holy unto the LORD” (Leviticus 27:32).

Study Help: *Gospel Workers*, 222–228.

Introduction

“The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 93.

Sunday

1 FROM THE DAYS OF GENESIS

1.a. By what means did God reserve for Himself a portion of the garden of Eden? Genesis 2:16, 17. How does this compare to the tithe? Malachi 3:7, 8.

Note: “The Lord created every tree in Eden pleasant to the eyes and good for food, and He bade Adam and Eve freely enjoy His bounties. But He made one exception. Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they were not to eat. This tree God reserved as a constant reminder of His ownership of all. Thus He gave them opportunity to demonstrate their faith and trust in Him by their perfect obedience to His requirements.

“So it is with God’s claims upon us. He places His treasures in the hands of men, but requires that one tenth shall be faithfully laid aside for His work. He requires this portion to be placed in His treasury. It is to be rendered to Him as His own; it is sacred and is to be used for sacred purposes, for the support of those who carry the message of salvation to all parts of the world.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 386.

1.b. What was the practice of the early patriarchs regarding the tenth portion of their income? Genesis 14:18–20; 28:20–22.

Note: “The tithing system did not originate with the Hebrews. From the earliest times the Lord claimed a tithe as His, and this claim was recognized and honored.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 525.

Monday

2 IN THE HEBREW ECONOMY

2.a. What specific instruction was given to the early Hebrew nation regarding the tithe? Leviticus 27:30, 32. How is this principle emphasized in all ages? Malachi 3:10.

Note: “In the Hebrew economy one tenth of the income of the people was set apart to support the public worship of God. ...

“As the Israelites were about to be established as a nation, the law of tithing was reaffirmed as one of the divinely ordained statutes upon obedience to which their prosperity depended. ...

“‘The tithe ... is the Lord’s’ (Leviticus 27:30). Here the same form of expression is employed as in the law of the Sabbath. ‘The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God’ (Exodus 20:10). God reserved to Himself a specified portion of man’s time and of his means, and no man could, without guilt, appropriate either for his own interests.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 525, 526. [Emphasis author’s.]

2.b. What was required before the tithe could be reserved? Exodus 34:26, *first part*; 2 Chronicles 31:5, 6.

Note: “Even before the tithe could be reserved there had been an acknowledgment of the claims of God. The first that ripened of every product of the land was consecrated to Him. The first of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, the first of the oil and the wine, was set apart for God. So also were the first-born of all animals; and a redemption price was paid for the first-born son. The first fruits were to be presented before the Lord at the sanctuary, and were then devoted to the use of the priests.

“Thus the people were constantly reminded that God was the true proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that He sent them sunshine and rain for their seedtime and harvest, and that everything they possessed was of His creation, and He had made them stewards of His goods.

“As the men of Israel, laden with the first fruits of field and orchard and vineyard, gathered at the tabernacle, there was made a public acknowledgment of God’s goodness.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 526.

Tuesday

3 A TIMELESS PRINCIPLE

3.a. What was included among the reformations made in the days of Nehemiah? Nehemiah 10:37; 12:44.

3.b. What practice of the Pharisees met with Christ’s approval? Matthew 23:23. Why does the tithing principle apply also in the New Testament era? Hebrews 7:1–5, 8, 20, 21.

Note: “The New Testament does not re-enact the law of the tithe, as it does not that of the Sabbath; for the validity of both is assumed, and their deep spiritual import explained.

“God has made an absolute reservation of a specified portion of our time and our means. To ignore these claims is to rob God.” *The Review and Herald*, May 16, 1882.

“The tithe should be consecrated to God. His requirements come first. We are not doing His will if we consecrate to Him what is left after all our wants have been supplied. Before any part of our income is consumed, we should take out and present to Him that portion which He claims as His. When this is done, the remainder will be sanctified and blessed to our own use. But when we withhold that which He says is His, the curse rests upon the whole, and we are recorded in the books of heaven as guilty of robbery. God gives man nine-tenths, but the one-tenth He claims for sacred purposes—as He has given man six days for His own work and has reserved the seventh day to Himself.” *The Pacific Union Recorder*, October 10, 1901.

“While we as a people are seeking faithfully to give to God the time which He has reserved as His own, shall we not also render to Him that portion of our means which He claims? ...

“A tithe of all our increase is the Lord’s. He has reserved it to Himself, to be employed for religious purposes. It is holy. Nothing less than this has He accepted in any dispensation. A neglect or postponement of this duty, will provoke the divine displeasure. If all professed Christians would faithfully bring their tithes to God, His treasury would be full.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 66, 67.

Wednesday

4 WARNINGS FOR US

4.a. How does the tithing principle relate to the eighth commandment? Exodus 20:15; Malachi 3:7–9.

Note: “God lays His hand upon all man’s possessions, saying: I am the owner of the universe, and these goods are Mine. The tithe you have withheld I reserve for the support of My servants in their work of opening the Scriptures to those who are in the regions of darkness, who do not understand My law. In using My reserve fund to gratify your own desires you have robbed souls of the light which I made provision for them to receive. You have had opportunity to show loyalty to Me, but you have not done this. You have robbed Me; you have stolen My reserve fund. ‘Ye are cursed with a curse’ (Malachi 3:9).” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 387.

4.b. What must we never forget about the tithe? 1 Corinthians 9:13, 14.

Note: “The tithe is set apart for a special use. It is not to be regarded as a poor fund. It is to be especially devoted to the support of those who are bearing God’s message to the world; and it should not be diverted from this purpose.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 103.

“Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe, to use according to their own judgment. They are not to use it for themselves in



*The
tithe is
sacred, reserved
by God for
Himself.*

an emergency, nor to apply it as they see fit, even in what they may regard as the Lord's work." *Gospel Workers*, 225.

"A very plain, definite message has been given to me for our people. I am bidden to tell them that they are making a mistake in applying the tithe to various objects which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said that the tithe should be applied. Those who make this use of the tithe are departing from the Lord's arrangement. God will judge for these things.

"One reasons that the tithe may be applied to school purposes. Still others reason that canvassers and colporteurs should be supported from the tithe. But a great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers. There should be today in the field one hundred well-qualified laborers where now there is but one." *Ibid.*, 226.

Thursday

5 OUR FIRST FINANCIAL PRIORITY

5.a. What is the key to spiritual and temporal prosperity?
Matthew 6:33.

Note: "Not only does the Lord claim the tithe as His own, but He tells us how it should be reserved for Him. He says, 'Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first-fruits* of all thine increase' (Proverbs 3:9). This does not teach that we are to spend our means on ourselves and bring to the Lord the remnant, even though it should be otherwise an honest tithe. Let God's portion be first set apart. The directions given by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul, in regard to gifts, present a principle that applies also to tithing: 'On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as

God hath prospered him' (1 Corinthians 16:2). Parents and children are here included. Not only the rich, but the poor are addressed." *The Review and Herald*, November 10, 1896. [Emphasis author's.]

5.b. What does God declare to us about that which is His? Malachi 3:10.

Note: "Let the Lord's people pay a faithful tithe, and let them, also, from parents to children, lay aside for the Lord the money that is so often spent for self-gratification. The Lord has made us His stewards. He has placed His means in our hands for faithful distribution. He asks us to render to Him His own. He has reserved the tithe as His portion, to be used in sending the gospel to all parts of the world. My brethren and sisters, confess and forsake your selfishness, and bring to the Lord your gifts and offerings. Bring Him also the tithe that you have withheld. Come confessing your neglect. Prove the Lord as He has invited you to do." *The Review and Herald*, November 23, 1905.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What object lesson from Eden illustrates the tithing principle?
- 2 How were the Hebrews to acknowledge God's claims before returning their tithe to God's storehouse?
- 3 Why is the tithing system applicable in the New Testament era?
- 4 What would happen if every Christian paid a faithful tithe?
- 5 How does faithful tithing benefit everyone?

November 14 – 20, 2021

Offerings

Key Text

“What shall I render unto the LORD for all His benefits toward me” (Psalm 116:12)?

Study Help: Testimonies, vol. 3, 390–399; Ibid., vol. 4, 462–476.

Introduction

“Our self-denying benevolence, our willing offerings, are to give evidence that the truth has been doing its work upon our hearts.” *The Review and Herald*, July 14, 1904.

Sunday

1 FIRSTFRUITS

1.a. What did God require concerning first fruits? Exodus 22:29.

Note: “God has laid His hand upon all things, both man and his possessions; for all belong to Him. He says, I am the owner of the world; the universe is Mine, and I require you to consecrate to My service the firstfruits of all that I, through My blessing, have caused to come into your hands. God’s word declares, ‘Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits’ (Exodus 22:29). ‘Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase’ (Proverbs 3:9). This tribute He demands as a token of our loyalty to Him.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 72.

1.b. What practice was restored in the reformation of Nehemiah, which is also needed among us today? Nehemiah 10:34–37.

Note: “Besides the tithe the Lord demands the firstfruits of all our increase. These He has reserved in order that His work in the earth may be amply sustained. The Lord’s servants are not to be limited to a meager supply.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 384.

Monday

2 THANK, FREEWILL, AND TRESPASS OFFERINGS

2a. What does the Bible teach us about giving? Psalms 50:14; 116:12.

Note: “Jacob felt that God had claims upon him which he must acknowledge, and that the special tokens of divine favor granted him demanded a return. So does every blessing bestowed upon us call for a response to the Author of all our mercies. . . .

“Our time, our talents, our property, should be sacredly devoted to Him who has given us these blessings in trust. Whenever a special deliverance is wrought in our behalf, or new and unexpected favors are granted us, we should acknowledge God’s goodness, not only by expressing our gratitude in words, but, like Jacob, by gifts and offerings to His cause. As we are continually receiving the blessings of God, so we are to be continually giving.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 187, 188.

2.b. Why did Hezekiah see a need for reformation in Judah? 2 Chronicles 29:1–7, 27–33. What reformation do we also need today?

Note: “There has been a great neglect of duty. Many have withheld means which God claims as His, and in so doing they have committed robbery toward God. Their selfish hearts have not given the tenth of all their increase, which God claims. Neither have they come up to the yearly gatherings with their freewill offerings, their thank offerings, and their trespass offerings. Many have come before the Lord empty-handed. ‘Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings’ (Malachi 3:8).” *Testimonies*, vol. 3, 510.

“Bring in your trespass offerings, your thank offerings, and your freewill offerings; humble your hearts before the Lord, and He will be found ever ready to receive and pardon.” *The Review and Herald*, July 8, 1880.

“His [the Lord’s] messengers should not be handicapped in their work of holding forth the word of life. As they teach the truth they should have means to invest for the advancement of the work, which must be done at the right time in order to have the best and most saving influence. Deeds of mercy must be done; the poor and suffering must be aided. Gifts and offerings should be appropriated for this purpose. Especially in new fields, where the standard of truth has never yet been uplifted, this work must be done.” *Testimonies*, vol. 6, 384, 385.

Tuesday

3 LEVITICAL LIBERALITY

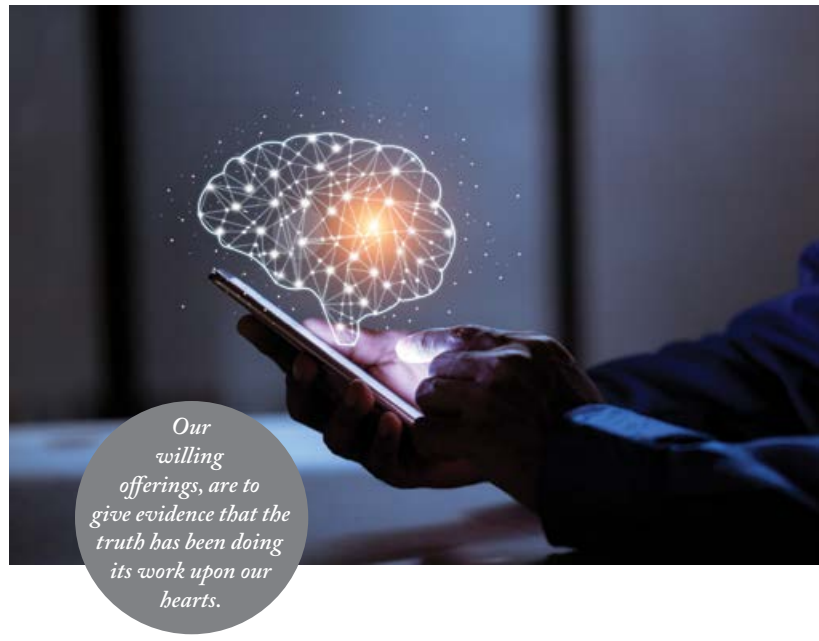
3.a. How has God combined duty and blessing? Proverbs 11:24, 25.

Note: “The Levitical dispensation was distinguished in a remarkable manner by the sanctification of property. When we speak of the tithe as the standard of the Jewish contributions to religious purposes, we do not speak understandingly. The Lord kept His claims paramount, and in almost every article they were reminded of the Giver by being required to make returns to Him. ...

“A conscientious few made returns to God of about one third of all their income for the benefit of religious interests and for the poor. These exactions were not from a particular class of the people, but from *all*, the requirement being proportioned according to the amount possessed.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 467, 468. [Emphasis author’s.]

“Whenever God’s people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out His plan in systematic benevolence and in gifts and offerings, they have realized the standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed His requirements. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, 395.

3.b. In making monetary pledges and vows, what must we never forget? Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5; Psalm 66:13, 14.



Note: “God would have the members of His church consider their obligations to Him as binding as their indebtedness to the merchant or the market. Let everyone review his past life and see if any unpaid, unredeemed pledges have been neglected, and then make extra exertions to pay the ‘utmost farthing’ (Matthew 5:26), for we must all meet and abide the final issue of a tribunal where nothing will stand the test but integrity and veracity.” *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 476.

“God has made an absolute reservation of a specified portion of our time and our means. To ignore these claims is to rob God. Christians boast that their privileges far exceed those of the Jewish age. Shall we then be content to give less to the cause of God than did His ancient people? The tithe was but a part of their liberalities. Numerous other gifts were required besides the free-will offering, or offering of gratitude, which was then, as now, of perpetual obligation.” *The Review and Herald*, May 16, 1882.

Wednesday

4 THE SECOND TITHE

4.a. In the Hebrew economy, what was the second tithe, and what was its purpose? Deuteronomy 14:22, 23, 27–29; 26:12, 13.

Note: “To promote the assembling of the people for religious service, as well as to provide for the poor, a second tithe of all the increase was required. Concerning the first tithe, the Lord had declared, ‘I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in

Israel' (Numbers 18:21). But in regard to the second He commanded, 'Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always' (Deuteronomy 14:23, 29; 16:11-14). This tithe, or its equivalent in money, they were for two years to bring to the place where the sanctuary was established. After presenting a thank offering to God, and a specified portion to the priest, the offerers were to use the remainder for a religious feast, in which the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow should participate. Thus provision was made for the thank offerings and feasts at the yearly festivals, and the people were drawn to the society of the priests and Levites, that they might receive instruction and encouragement in the service of God.

"Every third year, however, this second tithe was to be used at home, in entertaining the Levite and the poor,' ... [Deuteronomy 26:12 quoted]. This tithe would provide a fund for the uses of charity and hospitality." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 530.

4.b. How did the second tithe benefit the giver in a spiritual sense, and in what ways can it be a blessing today? Proverbs 19:17.

Note: "The consecration to God of a tithe of all increase, whether of the orchard and harvest field, the flocks and herds, or the labor of brain or hand, the devotion of a second tithe for the relief of the poor and other benevolent uses, tended to keep fresh before the people the truth of God's ownership of all, and of their opportunity to be channels of His blessings. It was a training adapted to kill out all narrowing selfishness, and to cultivate breadth and nobility of character." *Education*, 44.

"There will be an abundance of places to use the second tithe in doing earnest missionary work in new places." *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, 139.

Thursday

5 GIVING IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT

5.a. What should we realize in giving to God's cause? Mark 12:41-44. How can we determine the amount of first-fruits and other offerings? Deuteronomy 16:17.

Note: " 'How much owest thou unto my lord?' (Luke 16:5). It is impossible to tell. All that we have is from God. He lays His hand upon our possessions, saying: 'I am the rightful owner of the whole universe; these are My goods. Consecrate to Me the tithes and offerings. As you bring these specified goods as a token of your loyalty and your submission to My sovereignty, My blessing shall increase your substance, and you will have abundance.'" *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 245.

"The contributions required of the Hebrews for religious and charitable purposes amounted to fully one fourth of their income. So heavy a tax upon the resources of the people might be expected to reduce them to poverty; but, on the contrary, the faithful observance of these regulations was one of the conditions of their prosperity." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 527.

5.b. What attitude would the Lord have each of us manifest? 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7; Matthew 6:1-4.

Note: "The Lord does not need our offerings. We cannot enrich Him by our gifts. Says the psalmist: 'All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee' (1 Chronicles 29:14). Yet God permits us to show our appreciation of His mercies by self-sacrificing efforts to extend the same to others. This is the only way in which it is possible for us to manifest our gratitude and love to God. He has provided no other." *Counsels on Stewardship*, 18, 19.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Why does the Lord require us to render our first-fruits to Him?
- 2 What types of offerings does the Lord still specify for us today?
- 3 What can we learn from the Hebrews' example in giving?
- 4 For what purposes might the second tithe be used in our days?
- 5 How is the value of a gift measured in God's sight?

November 21 – 27, 2021

God's Storehouse: His Church

Key Text

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

Study Help: *The Acts of the Apostles*, 9–16.

Introduction

"The church of Christ is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock." *The Faith I Live By*, 280.

Sunday

1 A FOLD FOR CHRIST'S FLOCK

1.a. Why does God have a church on earth? 1 Peter 2:5, 9.

Note: "The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to 'the principalities and powers in heavenly places' (Ephesians 3:10), the final and full display of the love of God." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 9.

1.b. What characteristics are essential in God's true church? Revelation 14:12; Ephesians 4:4–6.

Note: "We are to unify but not on a platform of error." *Special Testimonies*, Series B, No. 2, 47.

Monday

2 A SAFE HAVEN

2.a. Since only the presence of Christ (John 15:4, 5) in our heart can make us one in the truth, what example of the early disciples should we never forget? Acts 1:13, 14; 2:46; 4:32.

Note: "These [the twelve apostles] were brought together, with their different faults, all with inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil; but in and through Christ they were to dwell in the family of God, learning to become one in faith, in doctrine, in spirit. They would have their tests, their grievances, their differences of opinion; but while Christ was abiding in the heart, there could be no dissension. His love would lead to love for one another; the lessons of the Master would lead to the harmonizing of all differences, bringing the disciples into unity, till they would be of one mind and one judgment." *The Desire of Ages*, 296.

2.b. What is the Christian's responsibility regarding the church? 1 Timothy 3:15.

Note: "Very close and sacred is the relation between Christ and His church—He the bridegroom, and the church the bride; He the head, and the church the body. Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church.

"The church is organized for service; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties." *Education*, 268, 269.

2.c. What privilege is extended to every member of God's true church? 1 John 1:7; Hebrews 10:24, 25.

Note: “Preaching is a small part of the work to be done for the salvation of souls. God’s Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do. God requires His church to nurse those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak unto them words that are ‘like apples of gold in pictures of silver’ (Proverbs 25:11).” *Evangelism*, 352.

Tuesday

3 CALLED TO SERVE

3.a. What duty of the believers is often neglected?
Psalm 60:4.

Note: “In many of our organized churches the banner of truth is trailing in the dust because the members are not doing service to God but are serving their own pleasure. They work through the influences that surround the soul. By precept and example, in self-indulgence, in their worldly habits of dress, in their words and actions, they testify against the truth, against self-denial, against the meekness of Christ. They are cold spiritually, and far separated from Christ. If they followed in the footsteps of Christ, they would be partakers of His self-denial, of His self-sacrifice, that they might lift up and save the souls that are ready to perish.” *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, 173.

3.b. What is the calling of every follower of Christ?
2 Timothy 2:1–4.

Note: “The church of Christ is organized for service. Its watchword is ministry. Its members are soldiers, to be trained for conflict under the Captain of their salvation. Christian ministers, physicians, teachers, have a broader work than many have

recognized. They are not only to minister to the people, but to teach them to minister. They should not only give instruction in right principles, but educate their hearers to impart these principles. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Its blessing can be retained only as it is shared.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 148, 149.

3.c. What helps to unify the church? Galatians 6:2;
Ephesians 4:1–3.

Note: “Never can the church reach the position that God desires it to reach until it is bound up in sympathy with its missionary workers. Never can the unity for which Christ prayed exist until spirituality is brought into missionary service, and until the church becomes an agency for the support of missions. The efforts of the missionaries will not accomplish what they should until the church members in the home field show, not only in word, but in deed, that they realize the obligation resting on them to give these missionaries their hearty support.” *Counsels on Stewardship*, 47, 48.

Wednesday

4 GROWING AND DEVELOPING

4.a. How does Inspiration depict the growth and development of the believer and of the church? Ephesians 2:19–22; 4:14–16; 1 Corinthians 3:9–13.

Note: “God is testing every soul that claims to believe in Him. All are entrusted with talents. The Lord has given men His goods upon which to trade. He has made them His stewards, and has placed in their possession money, houses, and lands. All these are to be regarded as the Lord’s goods and used to advance His work, to build up His kingdom in the world. In trading with the Lord’s goods, we are to seek Him for wisdom,

that we may not use His sacred trust to glorify ourselves or to indulge selfish impulses. The amount entrusted varies, but those who have the smallest gifts must not feel that because their talent of means is small, they can do nothing with it.” *Testimonies*, vol. 9, 245, 246.

“Our work was not sustained by large gifts or legacies; for we have few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard seed has grown to a great tree. The system of organization has proved a grand success. Systematic benevolence was entered into according to the Bible plan. The body has been ‘compacted by that which every joint supplieth’ (Ephesians 4:16).” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 27.

4.b. What enables talents and funds to be utilized most efficiently among believers? 1 Corinthians 1:10; 14:40. On the other hand, what causes much to be lost among many Sabbath keepers?

Note: “Oh, how Satan would rejoice to get in among this people and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings and to refute claims not endorsed by the word of God! We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of regulation and order. In this way license shall not be given to disorderly elements to control the work at this time. We are living in a time when order, system, and unity of action are most essential.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 228.

Thursday

5 OPTIMUM SERVICE AND CREDIBILITY

5.a. Describe the condition that must exist among Christ’s followers to ensure success in our missionary endeavors. John 10:16; 13:35; 17:18–23.

Note: “As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, organization was indispensable.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 26.

“[Said the angel,] ‘The church must flee to God’s Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.’ This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith.” *Early Writings*, 100.

“Jesus has prayed that His disciples all might be one. ... It is through this unity that we are to convince the world of the mission of Christ and bear our divine credentials to the world.” *The Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890.

“If there have been difficulties brethren and sisters—if envy, malice, bitterness, evil surmisings, have existed, confess these sins, not in a general way, but go to your brethren and sisters personally. Be definite. If you have committed one wrong and they twenty, confess that one as though you were the chief offender. Take them by the hand, let your heart soften under the influence of the Spirit of God, and say, ‘Will you forgive me? I have not felt right toward you. I want to make right every wrong, that naught may stand registered against me in the books of heaven. I must have a clean record.’ Who, think you, would withstand such a movement as this?” *Ibid.*, December 16, 1884.

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How can we identify God’s true church?
- 2 Why is church membership important for the individual believer?
- 3 In what way may we be in danger of testifying against the truth?
- 4 Name some factors that will foster unity in the church.
- 5 How are we to bear our divine credentials to the world?

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Sun-Dried Tomatoes

The tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) is a fruit from the nightshade family native to South America. While botanically it is a fruit, it is typically prepared and eaten like a vegetable.

Tomatoes are the major dietary source of the antioxidant lycopene and a great source of vitamin C, potassium, folate, and vitamin K, making it beneficial for heart and skin health and cancer prevention.

Fresh tomatoes are low in carbohydrates, consist mostly of simple sugars and insoluble fibers, and are 95% water.

Tomatoes are usually red when mature, but also come in a variety of colors, including yellow, orange, green, and purple, and many subspecies of tomatoes exist with different shapes and flavor.

Sun-dried tomatoes retain much of their antioxidants and vitamins and possess an intense sweet-tart flavor that is considerably more potent than fresh tomatoes, so a little goes a long way. They also have a chewier texture. Any type of tomato is good for drying, but the best tomatoes for drying are the Roma and San Marzano tomatoes.

How do you make sun-dried tomatoes? Lay them out in the sun, bake them in the oven or use a dehydrator. Drying essentially removes moisture from food and this inhibits the growth of fungi and bacteria and slows down the enzyme activity without deactivating them. These factors ensure that food doesn't spoil easily and hence, makes

drying a successful food preservation technique.

Source: [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com) and [nourishdoc.com](https://www.nourishdoc.com)



Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



SUN-DRIED TOMATO BRUSCHETTA

Ingredients

12 (¼-inch thick) sliced baguette (about ½ a large baguette)
1 Tbsp. olive oil
¼ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
½ cup cherry tomatoes, chopped
¼ cup vegan ricotta cheese
1 Tbsp. parsley or basil, chopped
Salt to taste

Process

- Preheat the oven to 300 degrees.
- Brush the baguette slices with olive oil.
- Bake for 3-4 minutes until lightly toasted.
- While the bread is baking, chop the sun-dried tomatoes into small pieces.
- Toss with the cherry tomatoes until combined.
- Spread vegan ricotta cheese on each baguette and top with tomato mixture.
- Sprinkle with parsley or basil, if desired. Add salt to taste.





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