

HISTORIC LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

Taking Christ for Granted

Many Jews thought they would know the Messiah when He came, but they didn't. They believed their teachers and leaders. Will we be guilty of doing the same?

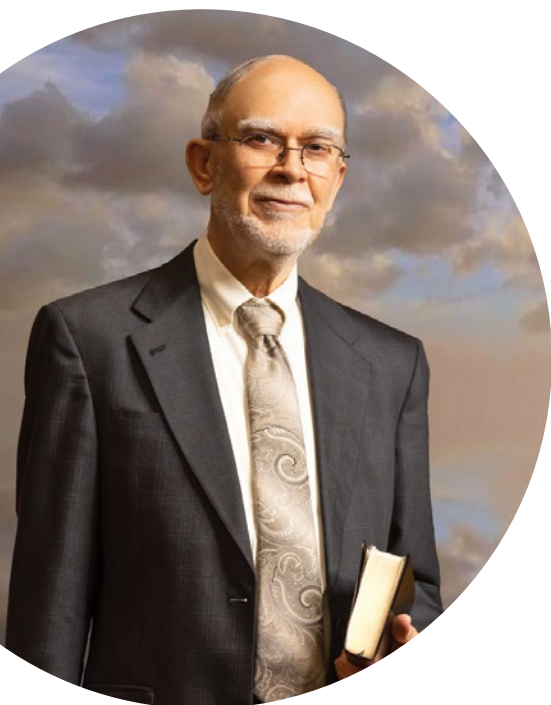
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From the Editor

John J. Grosboll

Will Few Be Saved? (Luke 13:23)

Felix was convicted on the truth when the apostle Paul spoke to him of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. Paul showed him that God's law "extends to the deep secrets of man's moral nature and throws a flood of light upon that which has been concealed from the sight and knowledge of men. ... The law searches his thoughts, motives, and purposes. The dark passions that lie hidden from the sight of men, the jealousy, hatred, lust, and ambition, the evil deeds meditated upon in the dark recesses of the soul, yet never executed for want of opportunity—all these God's law condemns." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 424

"[Felix] saw himself licentious, cruel, rapacious. Never before had the truth been thus brought home to his heart. Never before had his soul been so filled with terror. The thought that all the secrets of his career of crime were open before the eye of God, and that he must be judged according to his deeds, caused him to tremble with dread.

"But instead of permitting his convictions to lead him to repentance, he sought to dismiss these unwelcome reflections. ... 'Go thy way for this time,'

he said; 'when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.'" *Ibid.*, 425, 426

That convenient season never came and you will not see Felix in the kingdom of heaven. Paul had plainly declared to him "that there would surely come a day of judgment when all would be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body ... He showed that this life is man's time of preparation for the future life. Should he neglect present privileges and opportunities he would suffer an eternal loss; no new probation would be given him." *Ibid.*, 424

But Felix lost his golden opportunity. There have been multitudes of people in every generation who have planned to be saved, but they wanted to do something else first. "The first step taken in the path of unbelief and rejection of light is a dangerous thing" *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, 226

"[I]f there is a neglect to follow the light, it becomes darkness." *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 263

"Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians. They do not come to the point of yielding the will to God. They do not now choose to be Christians." *Steps to Christ*, 48 **LM**

HISTORIC

LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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

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Taking Christ for Granted

By Lawrence Nelson

“His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it, but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day’s journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, ‘Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.’ And He said to them, ‘Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?’”

Luke 2:41–49



Verse 44 is key to the statement we just read: “But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day’s journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.”

According to Bible prophecy, God’s last church in this world will have the following characteristics: (1) it will keep the commandments of God, (2) it will have the Testimony of Jesus, and (3) it will have the same faith that Jesus had. (See Revelation 12:17 and Revelation 14:12.)

Jesus has promised to be with His church until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). But it is possible for the church in the last days to take for granted that Christ is with them while they live in a way that will result in their losing His promised presence, just as the vast majority of the leaders and almost the entire Jewish nation lost the Saviour, even though He had come to them in the flesh and blood, desiring to be with them forever. Only a few accepted the Son of God. Why? What was their major problem?

Elder F. C. Gilbert, a converted Jew who for many years was in charge of our work to bring Christ to our Jewish friends, had knowledge on the problem of the Jewish nation. He knew all about the Jewish language, the Jewish culture, and when he spoke and wrote it was with authority. Elder Gilbert wrote an article in *Ministry* magazine in December, 1933, about the Jewish church leadership at the time of Christ’s first advent. He explained that the Jews as a nation rejected their Messiah because of higher learning. The rabbis thought that they could reach the world through scholastic achievements.

He wrote: “It was suggested by the Greeks that the Jews send their talented young men to Alexandria for training and instruction in the philosophies, sciences, and learning of the Greeks.

“Many of the elders of Israel feared the results of such a course, the sages remembering the sorrowing of their



ancestors who came into contact with heathen manners and customs. They counseled the younger men against such a procedure. These, in turn, argued that it would be an advantage for strong, thoughtful, vigorous young men who could enter the schools of Greece, as they might influence the philosophers and the Greek scholars to see the value and the beauty of the Jewish religion, and some of the learned Greeks might embrace Judaism. Still, the aged men of Israel advised against it. They maintained that should the younger men come into contact with the learning of the heathen, it might be ruinous to the future of the Jewish race. ...

“Many of Israel’s influential men yielded to Greek urging. They said that God would help their young men to be true to their religion, and the training schools of Jewry would have a better standing in the eyes of the nations. The men of Israel were made to feel that the advantages of the Jewish scholars would be immeasurable. The young men would gain knowledge, influence, and prestige.

“Gradually the Jewish schools came to confer degrees upon their graduates. There were the Rav, or rabbi, the Tana, the Gayon, the Sadi, and the Rabbon. It

was thought necessary for the graduates of the rabbinical schools to display their rank by wearing different clothing. Little by little an educational aristocracy was formed, which was called the Sanhedrin. This term is of Greek origin, the Hebrew name being *Beth din ha-go-dol*, Great House of Judgment.

“The religious schools continued to operate, but a marked declension in spiritual influence and power was apparent. Year by year the word of God was studied less, as studies based on culture and philosophy increased. Human concerns became exalted and God was less thought of.”

What a picture of the condition of the Jewish church because of higher education at the very time Christ came to this world!

The Desire of Ages, 29, confirms this. “As they departed from God, the Jews in a great degree lost sight of the teaching of the ritual service. ... The Jews lost the spiritual life from their ceremonies, and clung to the dead forms. ... In order to supply the place of that which they had lost, the priests and rabbis multiplied requirements of their own; and the more rigid they grew, the less of the love of God was manifested. They measured their holiness by the multitude of their ceremonies, while their hearts were filled with pride and hypocrisy.”

Quoting again from *Ministry* magazine, Elder Gilbert writes: “Because the leaders of Israel failed to accept the message of John [the Baptist] as coming from God, they were unprepared to receive the message of the Saviour, although He assured them that His life and advent were based on sacred Scriptures. The rabbis argued: ‘How knoweth this Man letters, having never learned?’ John 7:15.”

You see, Jesus never went for this higher education from Babylon.

“The Israelites did not realize that to be ... unlike other nations was a special privilege and blessing.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 607

“

Millions accept these false teachings because they are being presented by doctors of divinity.

Oh, somehow I wish that we, as a church, would read and think that through today. “God had separated the Israelites from every other people, to make them His own peculiar treasure. But they, disregarding this high honor, eagerly desired to imitate the example of the heathen! ... As they depart from the Lord they become ambitious for the gains and honors of the world. ... Many urge that by uniting with worldlings and conforming to their customs they might exert a stronger influence over the ungodly. But all who pursue this course thereby separate from the Source of their strength. Becoming the friends of the world, they are the enemies of God. ...

“Thus it has been in every age of the world.” Ibid., 607, 608

We have not been able to reach the surrounding churches with our God-given three angels’ messages, and the sad news is that the teachings of Babylon have infiltrated our educational system, our preaching, and the books that are being printed. We are losing our cardinal truths as we mingle with the churches in the ecumenical movement. We need but two divine streams to close the door of apostasy—the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, and nothing more. These two heavenly sources will keep us in touch with Jesus and prepare us to be ready to meet Him when He comes.

Consider with me the doctrine of the sanctuary. No other people in the world except the Jews of old who were faithful to God’s truth understood the living Christ within the heavenly sanctuary teaching. For instance, every sanctuary emblem represents Jesus Christ—the Lamb, the bleeding victim; the laver, in which Christ washes away the iniquity; the candlesticks, Christ the light of the world; the showbread, Christ the bread of life; the altar of incense, the place where Christ presents our requests to God the Father; the ark, the law, a transcript of Christ’s character. Yet when the living Christ appeared to His people they rejected Him.

Why? Because they had taken Christ for granted. They supposed they really knew Him when all they actually had was a form of religion, and for this God rejected the whole Jewish nation.

And what about us? We hear less and less today of the sanctuary, for it is within this doctrine that the true Christ is discerned. The majority will likewise reject Him in the time of judgment.

Consider more closely the truths of the heavenly sanctuary. Do you realize that you may know beyond a doubt that Christ entered the Holy place in heaven at Pentecost, there to act as our High Priest, cleansing our sins with His own blood? Do you realize that you may know with equal certainty that He entered the Most Holy place in 1844, and is this very moment standing before the ark of the ten commandments as our advocate until the final moments of this world? At that time God will declare, “He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.” Revelation 22:11

When Jesus appears the second time, will you and I be ready to meet Him? Or will we have followed in the path of the Jews of old, been misled by the teachings of Babylon? Will we listen to educated men who teach that there is no sanctuary in heaven, that Christ kept the law for us; that we are saved by faith alone, so we need only believe and continue in sin until Jesus comes? Rather than studying for themselves to know the truth, millions accept these false teachings because they are being presented by doctors of divinity. They are preparing to reject Him as did the Jews and will not be ready to meet Him when He comes.

Let’s consider the Magi. “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and have come to worship Him.’” Matthew 2:1, 2. Can you imagine the sensation that this caused? All Jerusalem was astir. Even King Herod was alarmed. Had not prophecy precisely predict-

ed that Bethlehem would be the King's birthplace? The shepherd's experience with heavenly angels was known to all the priesthood. Zacharias' encounter with the angel was also known widely. The birth of John the Baptist was revealed to thousands, yet both the priests and almost all the Jewish nation knew not that it was time for the Messiah to come. Sadly, only a few were ready to meet the Messiah.

Consider with me the dedication of the baby Jesus. The Christ child was to conform to the law in every particular. God had promised the Firstborn of heaven to save sinners and this gift was to be acknowledged by His consecration in commemoration of God's people being delivered from Egypt—Egypt meaning full deliverance from sin.

"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: "Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that He may serve Me. But if you refuse to let Him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn."'" Exodus 4:22, 23. After these judgments God commanded, "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine." Exodus 13:2. "... On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, ... They shall be Mine: I am the Lord." Numbers 3:13

When the tabernacle service was instituted, the tribe of Levi took the place of the firstborn. However, the firstborn was still regarded as the Lord's and must be bought back by a ransom. Just as the blood on the doorpost saved the firstborn, so the blood of Christ was to save the sinner. What a message was to be found in this dedication of the baby Jesus!

Picture with me the baby Jesus in the arms of Mary. The priest does not seem to comprehend the divine significance, for to him this is just an everyday common occurrence. As he begins the dedication service, he sees nothing unusual in Joseph and Mary except that they are



Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

very poor, offering the smallest gift the law allowed. He takes the Christ child from Mary's arms into his own and lifts Him high above the altar. This priest has no idea that this baby boy is the Majesty of heaven or that he is holding in his arms the King of glory.

God made every effort to alert His people in the day of Christ, so why was this priest not prepared for this divine moment? Because he took his religion for granted. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. At the precise moment of Jesus' dedication as the priest lifted Him up before the altar, Simeon enters the temple and takes the Baby out of the priest's arms and praises God that he has now seen the Messiah. How is this? Simeon took nothing for granted. He had been praying for the Messiah to appear. He has never before experienced such joy as he returned Jesus to Mary's arms. And before the astonished priest he speaks, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation." Luke 2:29, 30. Then he blessed the child Jesus, and Mary and Joseph also.

Immediately, God sends Anna the prophetess to alert the priesthood also. She, too, has taken nothing for granted. She has "served God with fastings and prayers night and day." Verse 37, *last part*. She confirms Simeon's testimony. "And

coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Verse 38

Such an acknowledgement by Inspiration quickly spread to every priest, ruler, and scribe. So why did the priests and the people reject Him? The people supposed that they were correct. They did not study or pray for themselves to discover the truth. They took for granted what the church leaders said and believed it.

Now let's return to the Passover visit when Jesus was 12 years old. The journey took several days as a large company traveled together. They passed historical sights and recounted the providences of God. Songs of victory filled the air when Jerusalem finally came into view and the whole company would burst into song, "Our feet have been standing within Your gates, O Jerusalem!" Psalm 122:2

During this Passover visit, Jesus takes His first look at the temple. He is captivated by the sights and the wonders. He beholds the white-robed priests performing their solemn duties. He sees the bleeding victim of sacrifice. He bows in prayer amidst the cloud of incense. Hour by hour the sanctuary truth unfolds to His mind. His every act of life seems bound up in this Passover ritual and new impulses are awakened within

“
By idle talk,
evilspeaking, or neglect of
prayer, we may in one day
lose the Saviour's presence,
and it may take many
days of searching to
find Him.

Him. Alone in the temple, He studies the sin problem, and the mystery of His mission unfolds before Him. God is teaching Him the facts of His mission.

“With most of the people in the days of Christ, the observance of this feast had degenerated into formalism. But what was its significance to the Son of God!

“For the first time the child Jesus looked upon the temple. He saw the white-robed priests performing their solemn ministry. He beheld the bleeding victim upon the altar of sacrifice. With the worshipers He bowed in prayer, while the cloud of incense ascended before God. He witnessed the impressive rites of the paschal service. Day by day He saw their meaning more clearly. Every act seemed to be bound up with His own life. New impulses were awakening within Him. Silent and absorbed, He seemed to be studying out a great problem. The mystery of His mission was opening to the Saviour.

“Rapt in the contemplation of these scenes, He did not remain beside His parents. He sought to be alone. When the paschal services were ended, He still lingered in the temple courts; and when the worshipers departed from Jerusalem, He was left behind. ...

“While He [Jesus] was obedient in every particular to the word of God, He did not conform to the rabbinical rites and usages. ... Jesus in the temple had been taught by God. That which He had received, He began at once to impart.

“Seating Himself at the feet of these grave, learned men, He listened to their instruction. As one seeking for wisdom, He questioned these teachers in regard to the prophecies, and to events then taking place that pointed to the advent of the Messiah. ...

“The doctors turned upon Him with questions, and they were amazed at His answers. With the humility of a child He repeated the words of Scripture, giving them

a depth of meaning that the wise men had not conceived of. If followed, the lines of truth He pointed out would have worked a reformation in the religion of the day. A deep interest in spiritual things would have been awakened; and when Jesus began His ministry, many would have been prepared to receive Him.” *The Desire of Ages*, 78, 79.

Can you imagine what would have happened had these priests listened to God? They supposed they knew it all for they had taken for granted that they were acquainted with God's truth.

A day's journey from Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary realized they had completely lost sight of Jesus. They had supposed that He was with them. They did not know that He had stayed in Jerusalem. They had become absorbed in visiting with their friends. How many like Joseph and Mary feel the presence of Jesus at a religious service, but lose the blessing on the way home?

“Jesus will not be found in the company of those who are careless of His presence, and who engage in conversation having no reference to their Redeemer, in whom they profess their hopes of eternal life are centered. Jesus shuns the company of such, so also do the angels who do His commands. These heavenly messengers are not attracted to the crowd where minds are diverted from heavenly things. These pure and holy spirits cannot remain in the company where Jesus' presence is not desired and encouraged, and His absence not marked. For this reason, great mourning, grief, and discouragement exist. Through lack of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they have lost all that is valuable.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, 37

This is exactly what happened to Joseph and Mary as they left Jerusalem to return home. As the day closed they prepared to pitch their tent only to miss the ever-ready hands of Jesus. Suddenly it struck them that He had not been with them all day. They had taken it for granted that He had been by their side. Now they shudder with fear for they remember how Herod had tried to kill Him. They remember that they had been charged with heaven's most precious gift. They reproached themselves as they retraced

their steps. All through the long dark night until early in the morning they walked the silent streets of Jerusalem looking for the boy Jesus. For three days they searched every nook and cranny.

Finally, they see a crowd of early worshippers entering a room of the temple. Following, they hear a familiar voice—serious, earnest, youthful, filled with melody. There's no mistake. They have entered the school of the prophets. They cannot contain their grief any longer as they listen to His meaningful answers.

Mary cries out, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." Luke 2:48

Every ear listens for the answer. "And He said to them, 'Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?'" Verse 49. We are told in the Spirit of Prophecy that as the boy Jesus spoke, He lifted His hand and pointed to heaven. Jesus was already engaged in His life work. Joseph and Mary had neglected theirs and blamed Jesus.

In committing His Son into their care, God had given to Joseph and Mary the highest honor. "If Joseph and Mary had stayed their minds upon God by meditation and prayer, they would have realized the sacredness of their trust, and would not have lost sight of Jesus. By one day's neglect they lost the Saviour; but it cost them three days of anxious search to find Him. So with us; by idle talk, evilspeaking, or neglect of prayer, we may in one day lose the Saviour's presence, and it may take many days of sorrowful search to find Him, and regain the peace that we have lost." *The Desire of Ages*, 83

How often we take Christ for granted!

"In our association with one another, we should take heed lest we forget Jesus, and pass along unmindful that He is not with us. When we become absorbed in worldly things so that we have no thought for Him in whom our hope of eternal life is centered, we separate ourselves from Jesus and from the heavenly



angels. These holy beings cannot remain where the Saviour's presence is not desired, and His absence is not marked. This is why discouragement so often exists among the professed followers of Christ." Ibid.

How can God's people mingle with the lost in attending rock concerts, in visiting sports arenas, where drinking, smoking, and profanity occur? How can one spend hours looking at movies in the theater or in the home, or reading novels that have been authored by Satan?

But you say, the youth are so young, they cannot understand. Look at the boy Jesus, only 12 years old. He understood because of the faithfulness of His parents. Parents, you, too, have a responsibility. God has given you a son or a daughter who is very precious in the sight of God. Are you having daily worship with them, teaching them to pray, and giving Godly counsel? Never forget, God gave you these children that you may lead them to Jesus to be saved for all eternity. Never, never take for granted that your child is with Jesus.

What of yourself? Could this be the reason you experience spiritual discouragement? "Many attend religious services, and are refreshed and comforted by the word of God; but through neglect of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they lose the blessing, and find themselves more destitute than before they received it. Often they feel that God has dealt harshly with them. They do not see

that the fault is their own. By separating themselves from Jesus, they have shut away the light of His presence." Ibid.

Don't take Christ for granted. He's the heaven's most precious gift. He's the Pearl of great price. Don't neglect one day in having morning devotions and searching to make sure you know that Jesus is with you in all that you do, and that the truth that you believe is the truth of God. "As we associate together, we may be a blessing to one another. If we are Christ's, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. We shall love to talk of Him; and as we speak to one another of His love, our hearts will be softened by divine influences. Beholding the beauty of His character, we shall be 'changed into the same image from glory to glory.' 2 Corinthians 3:18." Ibid. [LM](#)

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

As in the Days of Noah

By Michael C. Wells

The world is in turmoil and the nations are enraged, but this will not come as a surprise to anyone who is a Bible student. In studying our Bibles, we read about end time prophesies. “Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.’” Psalm 2:1-3

We see the obvious wickedness of war and the human tragedy, but miss the underlying causes of it all. As we read in the Psalms, it is because of the world’s hatred for God. That might seem a strange statement when we think of all the religious organizations in the world, yet the reason for all the heartache and misery is because the world does not love God.



Isaiah says, “Unless the Lord of hosts had left to us a very small remnant, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been made like Gomorrah.” Isaiah 1:9. A remnant is the very last of something. In this case, there will be very few in the last days who love God and are called His people, compared to the billions in the world who have no love for Him at all.

Noah and his family were the remnant, saved out of a people whose thoughts and hearts were continually wicked. They did not care for the law of God, nor did they adhere to it, and because of this attitude, there was murder and war, adultery and fornication. They took what they wanted even if it belonged to another. They hated and were greedy and self-centered. “Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Genesis 6:5. Sounds a lot like today, doesn’t it?

There will always be acts of kindness done toward people. We see this all the time during disasters, wars, and times of strife—people coming to the need of their fellow human beings. But these acts must be attributed to the workings of God on the hearts of men, because the minds of men and women are overrun by thoughts of self rather than a desire to follow the law of God.

If we examine ourselves, will we find that we are in perfect obedience to God? Is love for God the first thing we think of in the morning? Do we pray and offer thanksgiving as we start each day? Do we study His word and is His law foremost in our minds? Jesus tells us that it is not so with most living in the world today.

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all



away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24:37–39

Why did they not know that a flood was coming? Noah had been telling them for over 100 years. They had ample warning. They could see the huge ocean liner Noah was building. Why did they not believe in the disaster that was about to befall them? They were carrying on in their daily lives, wrapped up in the cares of this world and not in the leading of God and His Son Jesus. They were busy finding “love.” They were busy entertaining guests at parties. They were busy with their business practices and gaining wealth. There was no time given to the consideration of God’s law and righteousness.

It is the same in our day. Many people give lip service to God, claiming to be righteous, as the Pharisees did in Jesus’ day. They make a show of piety by going to church, attending the social gatherings, volunteering in the community, and paying their tithe to support their local church or conference; but their hearts refuse the workings of the Holy Spirit. Unconverted and unchanged, not having experienced the power that would make them heavenly citizens, they remain citizens of the world.

“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you unexpectedly.” Luke 21:34. For most it is nothing more

than the cares of this world that weigh them down and they do not seek to spend time with God each day.

“Cares, riches, pleasures, all are used by Satan in playing the game of life for the human soul. The warning is given, ‘Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.’” 1 John 2:15, 16. He who reads the hearts of men as an open book says, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.” Luke 21:34. And the apostle Paul by the Holy Spirit writes, “They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 55, 56

God will not spare any in this world who have not permitted a change to be made in their character and heart. He did not spare the angels who sinned and were cast from heaven with Satan, nor did He spare the world in Noah’s day. “For if God did not spare the angels

who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.” 2 Peter 2:4, 5. “For I am the Lord, I do not change.” Malachi 3:6, *first part*. Why do we think He would now save those of this world who have the same character and choose to walk the same path?

The people who will be saved are those who are mourning and crying over the wickedness in this world and in their own hearts. They will be calling on God to cleanse their hearts and renew their lives through His grace, with His law, the ten commandments, as the mirror that reflects their standing with God. When obeyed out of love for God, it is this law that will bring peace and love and conversion to the heart.

“‘Now, therefore,’ says the Lord, ‘Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.’” Joel 2:12. As we read His commandments and clearly see our true condition, we will see that only one prayer is appropriate.

“Look on my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.” Psalm 25:18

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” Psalm 51:7–10

God wants to write His law in our hearts and purge our sinfulness. He is asking today for us to accept His Holy Spirit to enter into and remove the wickedness from our minds. When we let Him cleanse our hearts, submitting to His will and not our own, this is His promise: “‘This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into



their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,’ then He adds, ‘Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’” Hebrews 10:16, 17

We must ask for the grace of God to fill us and redeem us from this world. If we have not accepted this saving grace from Jesus, we are still in the clutches of Satan and sin. There is only one result of sin and that is eternal death. But Jesus, if we let Him, can change our hearts. He paid the price; He only asks that we accept His sacrifice and leave all sin behind. That is what Jesus meant when He said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” Luke 9:23

Jesus has repeatedly said that we cannot enter heaven, we cannot have salvation, unless we leave all sin behind. To the woman accused of adultery, He said, “... ‘Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.’” John 8:10, 11. Jesus knows

the degradation that sin has caused in the world. He knows mankind’s struggles in dealing with sin, but sin cannot enter heaven again, and anyone who continues to harbor sin in their heart will not enter that holy place.

Jesus would rather us enter heaven maimed or lame if that is what it takes for us to be rid of sin (Matthew 5:30). Jesus does not want to condemn us for our sins, He would rather forgive us of our sins (John 3:17), but we must follow His instructions, “go and sin no more.” Jesus came to save us from sin, not as we continue in sin. When Joseph was told that Mary was to give birth to the Saviour of the world, the angel of God specified why Jesus was coming to this world. “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people *from* their sins.” Matthew 1:21. If we are His people, we will have done away with sin through the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we see nations rage and wars abound, as we watch the world slowly destroying itself, it is time to start looking to God for answers. The world is filled with pain and suffering, but Jesus can bring peace and happiness even in times of suffering. Call on Jesus today, ask Him to show you His goodness, give all to Him, and let Him sort out the rest. Jesus can help you overcome any obstacle in your life. He wants us to be ready for His soon coming. We have limited time here to prepare our hearts and minds for that glorious event. Our lives are but a whisper of time. “For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.” James 4:14, *last part*

What matters is how we spend our time in this life. Be a part of God’s last-day remnant. Make your life count for Jesus, and He will make your eternal life secure.

[Emphasis supplied.] [LM](#)

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What Would Jesus Do?

By Judy Rebarck

I have heard a multitude of times these days the question, “What would Jesus do?” Sometimes the question is asked with earnest interest and desire to follow in His footsteps. Other times it is asked with sarcasm. It is true that in Christianity today there are many people who claim to know what Jesus would do, but don’t themselves do what they claim.

All around the world people are shouting acceptance and tolerance, but I’m not sure we understand what true acceptance and tolerance really are. As sinners, we want to do the things we want to do and not be chastised or condemned for it. We want to be accepted as we are. We want others to tolerate our feelings and behavior. This is not exclusive to those outside of Christianity. Christians are just as guilty. And when you listen to the cries of the world, it is a tragic truth that those who expect tolerance are least willing to be tolerant; and those who expect to be accepted are the least willing to extend acceptance.



“

*Mercy implies the
imperfection of the object
upon which it is bestowed.*

Many times, “What would Jesus do?” is used to belittle those who stand true to what the Bible says, making them seem as though they are being intolerant, unloving—not like

Jesus. If a person steps up and calls an action or behavior sin, then he or she is often considered a hater, a racist, a phobic. This has been my experience. But it is also true that many Christians misinterpret or really don’t know what Jesus would do, and thus they use it in a harmful and hurtful way to condemn and force people to change.

I would like to be clear. True Christians are like Christ. That’s what the name means. Their lives have been surrendered to the moving of the Holy Spirit, a transformation has occurred, and they are no longer the selfish, sinful humans they used to be. Their characters are now Christlike. It is Jesus and His love they present to the world. But sadly, too many Christians only wear a coat of Christianity, something they can wear or take off at their own leisure. The life has not been surrendered and the Holy Spirit has not been allowed to make the needed change in the heart that transforms a character into Christlikeness.

So, let’s look closer at the answer to this very important question, “What would Jesus do?”

It seems that the answer really would be very simple. If we want to know what Jesus *would do* today, we just need to look at what He *did do* while here on earth.

First, I want to suggest some spiritual definitions of acceptance and tolerance.

I believe that true acceptance is loving the sinner, but hating the sin. While there is no text in the Bible that specifically states these words, there are texts that lay out the principle. Jude 1:22, 23 is one such example. “And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.” We can and should, with prayerful compassion and respect, com-

pelled by the love of Christ Jesus, encourage a brother or sister living in sin to turn away from that sin. Knowing that sin ultimately leads to eternal death, how can we say that we truly love our brother or sister if we let them continue in sin without a word?

I would define spiritual tolerance as grace, mercy.

“Mercy implies the imperfection of the object upon which it is bestowed. Because of man’s imperfection, mercy was brought into active existence. Sin is not the object of God’s love, but of His hatred. Yet He pities the sinner, because the guilty one bears the Creator’s image and has received from Him the capabilities that make it possible for him to become a son of God, not through his own merits, but through the imputed merits of Jesus Christ, through the great sacrifice the Saviour has made in his behalf. ...

“... We are all dependent on one another. ... Every human being on earth is subject to temptation. And all are in need of human influence and sympathy. ...

“God’s love and mercy are ever extended toward sinners. Shall men who themselves have sinned against God, refuse to forgive and accept a repentant sinner? ... God loved us while we were yet sinners. ... ‘As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise’ (Luke 6:31). ... Only those who walk with Christ can be truly merciful.” *That I May Know Him*, 46

Sadly, most people in the world want all the benefits of a Saviour without having to give up their own will. Everyone wants acceptance without the expectation of change. They expect others to tolerate them as they remain convinced that how they choose to live is not sin. There is a plethora of excuses, justifications and just plain “I can’t help being the way I am” being flung around today. But is any of that true? Because the Bible says, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13. That includes the choices we make and the sins we must overcome.

When we study the life of Christ, we see an example completely lacking in excuses or justification. Jesus simply said, “I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and

My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” John 5:30. And again in John 6:38, “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

Jesus offered acceptance to all who came to Him for help. How does He expect us to accept our fellow man? He said to “love your neighbor as yourself.” Matthew 22:39. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34, 35. Jesus is very clear that we are to love others more than ourselves, and if every person, Christian or not, followed this guidance, acceptance and tolerance would not be an issue.

Inspiration tells us that we are under the “most solemn obligation to present the word of God, without fear or favor. He [We] must call sin by its right name.” In fact, Inspiration continues much more compellingly and says, “The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; *men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.*” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 214

We must have the same love for our fellow man as Jesus has for them. Our characters must be like Christ’s, else we will not have the humility and love needed to accept others as those for whom Jesus died, nor can we help sinners recognize their sinfulness and desperate need of a Saviour. We must first recognize our own sins and need of a Saviour or else it will be impossible for us to show the true acceptance and tolerance that is generated by the love of God.

People with a worldly heart, including those who claim to be Christian, too of-



ten use the Scriptures like a baseball bat, beating others over the head regarding the actions that are called sin. The Bible says that sin is transgression of the law. The law says that idolatry, the unsanctified use of God’s name, not keeping the Sabbath holy, disrespecting parents, murder, adultery, lying, stealing, and coveting are sins. The Bible is also specific in many places, listing other actions not listed by name in the law.

“Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals [effeminate KJV], nor sodomites [abusers of themselves KJV], nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners [blackmailers] will inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9, *last part*, 10. Other texts condemn foolish talk and course jesting (Ephesians 5:4).

Do I ever find myself condemning others for the sins they willfully and openly commit, while glossing over or excusing my own? Do I claim to be a Christian yet shout at the top of my lungs that the Bible says, “Thou shalt not,” all the while I am?

The world has two definitions of acceptance.

One is represented this way: “I’m going to tell you what your sins are and you have to change.”

The other changes direction: “This is the way I am and you just need to accept me. Who are you to tell me how to live my life? Besides, for all your talk about changing and being like Jesus, I don’t see you giving up your sin.”

When we have handled the business of surrendering our lives to the Holy Spirit and have repented from our sins, then our lives are changed to be like Jesus, and we will be able to offer the kind of acceptance that allows people to see Jesus instead of us. We must remember that our work is to share the gospel with the world. It is the Holy Spirit’s work to change lives.

Christ offered acceptance and tolerance to all with whom He came in contact while He lived here on earth as a man. Let’s look at a few examples.

Judas was not a “called” disciple, although he was not a rejected one. He came and insinuated himself into the disciples, but Jesus did not turn him away (*Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 20, 105). Judas was selfish, prideful, covetous, greedy, and dishonest. He was a thief and a betrayer. His whole purpose in joining the disciples was to work his way into a high and powerful position in the new kingdom that he assumed Jesus would establish when He overthrew the Romans and freed Israel from their control, restoring them to their rightful place as His chosen nation.

But the person Jesus saw and loved was a sinner who needed a Saviour, and He would be that Saviour, if Judas would accept His offer. Jesus extended grace and mercy to Judas for as long as it took him to make his final choice.

“Jesus knew that Judas was defective in character, but notwithstanding this, He accepted him as one of the disciples, and gave him the same opportunities and privileges that He gave to the others whom He had chosen. Judas was left without excuse in the evil course he afterward pursued. Judas might have become a doer of the word, as were eventually Peter

and James and John and the other disciples. Jesus gave precious lessons of instruction, so that those who were associated with Him might have been converted, and have no need of clinging to the defects that marred their characters." *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 46, 47

At the last supper, Jesus openly exposed to Judas his character. With love and sorrow, Jesus pled with the heart of Judas to repent. Sadly, we know that he did not.

In 1 Samuel 13, the Bible tells us that God had turned His back on Saul as king of Israel and sought another man, one who was "after His own heart." That man was David. How was David a man after God's heart? He trusted in God and obeyed Him. David had an amazing life, one that began as a young shepherd; then he became a mighty warrior—the slayer of a lion and a bear, and a giant—until ultimately, he became the king of Israel. But David failed God. He followed his own desires and stole another man's wife and then murdered him to keep his affair a secret. But it became very public, and the consequences of his actions brought a heavy toll. He lost four of his own sons and the evil influence of his sins provided a justification among the children of Israel for their sins—a justification that we find is still used today.

But God loved David. He extended to him grace. In His mercy, God sent the prophet Nathan to rebuke David (2 Samuel 12) and when he recognized how terrible were his sins and, perhaps more so, the consequences of them, David repented and again became a man after God's own heart (*Conflict and Courage*, 180). He pleaded, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit." Psalm 51:10–12



Jesus accepted Mary with love and sympathy for the sinner she was, but granted to her grace and mercy until, after seven times casting out her demons, she repented of her sins. Her life was changed and she was able to obey His injunction to "Go, and sin no more." He saw Mary for what she was, but He also saw what she could become if she were to accept His love and the offer of grace and salvation He extended to her.

"When to human eyes her case appeared hopeless, Christ saw in Mary capabilities for good. He saw the better traits of her character. The plan of redemption has invested humanity with great possibilities, and in Mary these possibilities were to be realized. Through His grace she became a partaker of the divine nature. The one who had fallen and whose mind had been a habitation of demons, was brought very near to the Saviour in fellowship and ministry.

"It was Mary who sat at His feet and learned of Him. It was Mary who poured upon His head the precious anointing oil, and bathed His feet with her tears. Mary stood beside the cross, and followed Him to the sepulcher. Mary was first at the tomb after His resurrection. It was Mary who first proclaimed a risen Saviour." *Testimo-*

nies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce, 254

Peter was strong-willed, confident, and arrogant. He knew that he was a sinner, but he trusted in himself and was confident that he could overcome anything. He was determined that he could follow Jesus. Jesus loved Peter and He said to him, "'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.'" Luke 22:31, 32

"It is not wise to boast. Peter fell because he did not know his own frailty. ..." *This Day With God*, 260. Peter was confident that he would be willing to go with Christ, no matter where He had to go, even if it meant death. He said, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." Luke 22:33

But that isn't what happened, is it? When put to the test, Peter repeatedly denied his Lord. And looking upon His face, filled with loving pity and mercy, Peter at last saw himself for what he was: a sinner who needed grace.

"Peter followed his Lord after his betrayal. He was anxious to see what would be done with Jesus. And when he was accused of being one of his disciples, he denied it. He was afraid for his life, and when charged with being one of them, he declared that he knew not the man. The disciples were noted for the purity of their words, and Peter, to deceive, and convince them that he was not one of Christ's disciples, denied it the third time with cursing and swearing. Jesus, who was some distance from Peter, turned a sorrowful, reproving gaze upon him. Then he remembered the words which Jesus had spoken to him in the upper chamber, and also his zealous assertion, 'Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended. He denied his Lord, even with cursing and swearing; but that look of Jesus melted Peter at once, and saved him. He bitterly wept and repent-



“
God’s love and mercy
are ever extended
toward sinners.”

ed of his great sin, and was converted, and then was prepared to strengthen his brethren.” *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 1, 49, 50

Friends, acceptance is loving someone because God loves them, full stop. And tolerance is loving while you wait for them to see just who they are and extending a helping heart and hand. It is being so filled with Jesus that when people look at you and interact with you, all they will see and hear is Him.

What did Jesus do? He didn’t hate me because I am a sinner and struggling to come to Him to receive His mercy and grace so that I can obey Him. Jesus loved me before I was ever born. He has loved me every minute of my life and nothing I can do will make Him stop loving me. He says so through Paul in Romans 8:31–39. He lived a life on this earth so that I would know how to live and then could one day be with Him forever. He died on the cross to pay the debt I couldn’t pay. He rose from the grave so that He could return to heaven and intercede with the Father on my behalf even when I am determined to live my own way, following my own desires. And He speaks to my heart, offering me acceptance and tolerance—grace

and mercy—so that I can clearly see just how much I need Him.

Jesus accepts me where I am, but the beautiful thing is that He doesn’t leave me there. “The Bible does not teach that man must repent before he comes to Christ.” *The Signs of the Times*, March 18, 1903. But if I seek forgiveness and surrender my will to His, He will transform me to be like Him. What did Jesus do? He loved me when I didn’t love Him. He waited for me when I was far away from Him.

“[B]eing confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

“Christ does not leave us in our weakness and inefficiency, but, gathering us in the arms of His mercy, binds us to His great heart of infinite love.” *The Watchman*, October 16, 1906

What will Jesus do? He will make me just like Him so He can use me to tell others how He saved me from my sins and is waiting to save them from theirs.

“Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be, but *the worse you are, the more you need Jesus*. He turns no

weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration.” *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, 254, 255

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name. Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite. The Lord lifts up the humble . . . The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy.” Psalm 147:3–6, *first part*, 11

The Bible is not a bat, it is the revelation of God’s love and mercy for mankind. Scripture tells us that a life of sin is a life lost. But God accepts the sinner, and through His grace and mercy, transforms the life lost into a life saved, if we will surrender to Him. Filled with His love and compassion, this is the message we are meant to take to the world.

[Emphasis supplied.] LM

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Jesus' Second Coming

Clues – KJV

Across:

- B13 Jesus: you don't know when I'm coming, so be _____ Matthew 24:44
 C2 If we want a to return to heaven with Jesus, we must be _____ 1 John 3:2, 3
 C18 Jesus said _____ would fall before He returns Matthew 24:29
 D5 Paul says the second coming will be as unexpected as a _____ 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3
 D11 At the second coming, we will have _____ from God 1 Corinthians 4:5
 G2 Jesus' second coming will be as noticeable as _____ Luke 17:24
 G14 Jesus said He will reward us according to our _____ at the second coming Matthew 16:27
 H19 Jesus said to _____ always before His second coming Luke 21:34, 36
 I4 Jesus has promised the righteous _____ at His return Matthew 25:46
 J17 If possible, Satan will deceive even the _____ Matthew 24:24
 K8 At the second coming, the unrepentant wicked will cry for the _____ to fall on them Revelation 6:15, 16
 L2 At the second coming, the heavens will open like a _____ Revelation 6:14
 L12 Peter warns us that there will be _____ in the last days 2 Peter 3:3
 N14 Every _____ will see Jesus return to earth Revelation 1:7
 N18 _____ will be prevalent in the last days 2 Timothy 3:2
 O2 After the second coming, the wicked will be as _____ on the ground Jeremiah 25:33
 P8 In the last days, many people will be without _____ affection 2 Timothy 3:3
 P16 At the second coming, the unrepentant wicked will want to hide in _____ Revelation 6:15
 Q3 When Jesus returns, the powers of heaven will be _____ Luke 21:25-27
 R13 Jesus said He will bring His _____ with Him when He returns Revelation 22:12
 S6 We should separate from those with only a _____ of godliness 2 Timothy 3:5

Down:

- A5 Paul says we will _____ Jesus in the air 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17
 A15 Unless God shortens those _____, humanity would destroy itself Matthew 24:22
 C2 The last days will be _____ 2 Timothy 3:1
 C7 When Jesus returns, it will not be in _____ Psalms 50:3
 C12 _____ will destroy the unrepentant wicked at the second coming 2 Thessalonians 2:8
 C18 False prophets will show false _____ regarding the second coming Matthew 24:24
 C20 Paul assured the Colossians that Jesus would again _____ Colossians 3:4
 D16 _____ mountain and island will be moved at the second coming Revelation 6:14
 E4 _____ shall gather the righteous to meet Jesus when He returns Matthew 24:31
 G9 At the second coming, there will be distress among _____ Luke 21:25
 G14 Paul said definitively that Jesus _____ Hebrews 10:37
 H19 In the last days, people will be loving _____ above loving God 2 Timothy 3:4
 I6 We are not to _____ someone who claims to be Christ Luke 17:23, 24
 I17 In the last days, many will learn but _____ come into the truth 2 Timothy 3:7
 L3 We'll all see Jesus returning in the _____ Matthew 24:30
 L21 The "remnant" of God's people in the last days will _____ Zephaniah 3:12, 13
 N8 Angels: Jesus will return in the same _____ as He left Acts 1:11
 N10 Jesus said to _____ regarding His return Matthew 25:13
 N12 Jesus: we receive life or death according to our _____ throughout life Revelation 22:12
 O17 At the second coming, some men's hearts will fail from _____ Luke 21:26
 P14 The "remnant" of God's people in the last days will not tell _____ Zephaniah 3:13
 Q4 We have a blessed _____ in the return of Jesus Titus 2:13

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The Fight of Faith

Everyone who shall be found with the wedding garment on, will have come out of great tribulation. The mighty surges of temptation will beat upon all the followers of Christ; and unless they are riveted to the eternal Rock, they will be borne away. Do not think you can safely drift with the current; you must stem the tide, or you will surely become a helpless prey to Satan's power. You are not safe in placing your feet on the ground of the enemy, but should direct your path in the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. Even in the path of holiness you will be tried; your faith, your love, your patience, your constancy, will be tested. By diligent searching of the Scriptures, by earnest prayer for divine help, prepare the soul to resist temptation. The Lord will hear the sincere prayer of the contrite soul, and will lift up a standard for you against the enemy.

Jesus left His home in heaven, and came to this dark world to reach to the very depths of human woe, that He might save those who are ready to perish. He laid aside His glory in the heavenly courts above, clothed His divinity with humanity, and for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. He came to the earth that was all seared and marred with sin; "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He submitted to insult and mockery, that He might leave us a perfect example. When we are inclined to magnify our trials, to think we are having a hard time, we should look away from self to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." All this He endured that He might bring many sons and daughters to God, to present them before the universe as trophies of His victory.

Will man take hold of this divine power which has been placed within his reach, and with determination and perseverance resist Satan, as Christ has given example in his conflict with the foe in the wilderness of temptation? God cannot save man against his will from the power of Satan's artifices. Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. Christ was a perfect overcomer; and we must be perfect, wanting nothing, without spot or blemish.

In order to be overcomers, we must heed the injunction of the apostle: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He is the Pattern that we, as His disciples, must follow. We cannot cherish selfishness in our hearts, and follow the example of Christ, who died to make an atonement for us. We cannot extol our own merits, and follow His example; for He made Himself of

no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant. We cannot harbor pride, and follow Christ, since He humbled Himself until there was no lower place to which He could descend. Be astonished, O heavens, and be amazed, O earth, that sinful man should make such returns to his Lord in formality and pride, in efforts to lift up and glorify himself, when Christ came and humbled Himself in our behalf even to the death of the cross.

Christ came to teach us how to live. He has invited us to learn of Him to be meek and lowly of heart, that we may find rest unto our souls. We have no excuse for not imitating His life and working His works. Those who profess His name, and do not practice His precepts, are weighed in the balances of heaven, and found wanting. But those who reflect His image will have a place in the mansions which He has gone to prepare.

The redemption that Christ achieved for man was at infinite cost to Himself. The victory we gain over our own evil hearts and over the temptations of Satan will cost us strong effort, constant watchfulness, and persevering prayer; but, gaining the victory through the all-powerful name of Jesus, we become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. We must be victors on our own account. Then we shall not only reap the reward of eternal life, but shall increase our happiness on earth by the consciousness of duty performed, and by the greater respect and love that we shall win from those about us.

He who is a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as a part of the cross of Christ, a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and to save the lost.

The Christian is ever to realize that he is bought with a price, to stand under the blood-stained banner of

Prince Immanuel, to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. He is to reveal Christ to the world. The self-denial, the self-sacrifice, the sympathy, the love that were manifested in the life of Christ are

to reappear in the life of

His followers. In order to do this, we must put on the whole armour of God; "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." If we do not overcome, we lose the crown; and if we lose the crown, we lose everything. Eternal loss or eternal gain will be ours. If we gain the crown, we gain all things; we become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.

Christ is coming in a little while. He has been our brother in suffering; and if we overcome through His grace, we shall see Him as He is. We shall suffer here but a few days longer, and then enter into an eternity of happiness; for there is sweet rest in the kingdom of God. For those who fight the good fight of faith, there is reserved a crown of glory, a palm of victory, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Let the determination of every soul be, "I must run the race; I must overcome."

The Bible Echo, January 1, 1893 **LM**

“
*Even in the path of
holiness you will be tried;
your faith, your love, your
patience, your constancy,
will be tested.*”

Life Friendship



Many people feel that in this current atmosphere it is hard to make and maintain friendships. It seems that people are so busy, no one has any time for anyone else, even within Christian circles. Invitations to a home for a meal, visits to make new church members welcome, making friends for friendship's sake, all seem to be things of the past. The modern attitude is: "I am so busy making money, taking care of family, household chores, and hobbies, what's in it for me?"

Let me introduce you to a story about friendship that was born in the most inhospitable circumstance between two most unlikely people.

Jesse Owens, son of an Alabama sharecropper and grandson of slaves and Carl Ludwig "Luz" Long, an attorney in Leipzig, Germany, were both competing in the long jump preliminaries, hoping to qualify for the event in the afternoon of August 4, 1936, Olympic games in Berlin.

Jesse Owens won gold for the 100-meter dash. The following day he won gold again for long jump with a leap of 8.06 meter (26 ft. 5 in.), later

crediting this achievement to the technical advice that he received from Luz Long, the German competitor whom he defeated. Jesse continued to win another gold medal with the 200-meter sprint and collected a fourth gold when the relay team won the 4 x 100-meter relay. He was competing in the most intimidating environment imaginable, where the racist ideology of the Nazi regime was building in intensity and where the instigator, Adolf Hitler, was a regular spectator in the stands of the Olympic stadium.

Luz was the German long jumper—tall, blue-eyed and blond—the personification of the Aryan ideal and Hitler's opportunity to see the Nazi's theory of racial superiority in action. Jesse had fouled in the qualifying round in the long jump and had one jump left, and sat dejected on the ground waiting for his final jump.

In view of the stadium of 100,000 capacity, Luz walked up to Jesse and introduced himself. Recognizing Jesse was having some trouble and should have been doing better, Luz advised Jesse to jump from a spot several inches behind the take-off board. Jesse took the leap and qualified. Hitler left the stadium.

When Jesse won the gold medal, Luz won the silver and was the first to congratulate his new friend. Jesse later recalled, "It took a lot of courage for him to befriend me in front of Hitler. ... I would melt down all the medals and cups I have, and they wouldn't be a plating on the twenty-four-karat

friendship that I felt for Luz Long at that moment."

Jesse and Luz corresponded after the 1936 Olympics. In his last letter, Luz asked Jesse to contact his son Kai and tell him about his father and "what times were like when we were not separated by war. I am saying, tell him how things can be between men on this earth."


Luz served in the Wehrmacht during World War II. During the Allied invasion of Sicily, he was killed in action on July 14, 1943. After the war, Jesse revisited Germany to meet Kai Long and later was best man at Kai's wedding.

Friends, would you have the courage, in the middle of the stadium for all to see, to reach out to the perceived enemy of the Aryan race? Think of it. This friendship was witnessed by 100,000 people!

I want this kind of courage. Let us reach out to people and make friends for Jesus.

Paul said, "Look not every man on his own thing, but every man also on the things of others." Philippians 2:4, KJV

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." Colossians 3:12-14, KJV

What a courageous friendship! 

Invited, but ...

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is an example of an invitation received and accepted. We know that the invitation was not accepted at first. In fact, every manifestation of God's power and presence were denied, including the most obvious example when Christ walked among the flames of the fiery furnace with the three worthies. Repeatedly, Nebuchadnezzar rejected the extended invitation until God, in His mercy, took from Nebuchadnezzar all that he had, including his senses.

"They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." Daniel 4:25

For seven years, Nebuchadnezzar lived like a beast, no longer a king, with no subjects, eating grass in the field. And then, his reason was restored and Ellen White says:

"[L]ooking up in humility to the God of heaven, he recognized the divine hand in his chastisement. In a public proclamation he acknowledged his guilt and the great mercy of God in his restoration. ...

"God's purpose that the greatest kingdom in the world should show forth

His praise was now fulfilled. This public proclamation, in which Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the mercy and goodness and authority of God, was the last act of his life recorded in sacred history."

Conflict and Courage, 253

Brought to see his own weakness, he acknowledged the supremacy of God.

"At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. And He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? ... Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.'" *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 3, 186

"King Nebuchadnezzar, before whom Daniel so often honored the name of God, was finally thoroughly converted, and learned to 'praise and extol and honor the King of heaven.'" *The Review and Herald*, January 11, 1906

"The king upon the Babylonian throne became a witness for God, giving his

testimony, warm and eloquent, from a grateful heart that was partaking of the mercy and grace, the righteousness and peace, of the divine nature." *The Youth's Instructor*, December 13, 1904

Lord, You have extended this same invitation to the whole world. You loved the people of this world so much that You gave Your life for us and promised to save us from our sins. Two thousand years ago You said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. Help us not to leave the invitation unopened. Let us accept it with joyous hearts and then extend it to all with whom we come in contact. **LM**





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September Sermon of the Month

The Sleeping Church

By John J. Grosboll

Three times Jesus found His disciples sleeping in the Garden of Gethsemane. They could not stay awake to pray with Him for even hour. Are we like the disciples?

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

September 2022

Dear Friend,

Do you know what importunity is?

The man was adamant—You are not to visit our home anymore. But the gospel worker was persistent. He perceived that although the man was adamant the wife was interested. So he kept trying to make friends with the husband while looking for opportunities to leave literature in their home. His efforts were successful. Both that man and his wife became Seventh-day Adventists.

Jesus told a story about this kind of situation: “‘Which of you’ He said, ‘shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, “Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?” And he from within shall answer and say, “Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.” I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.’ ...

“‘If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?’” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 140, 141

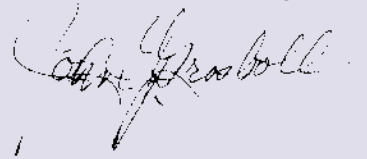
Ellen White understood what importunity was. In relating her experience she wrote, “I arranged meetings with my young friends ... A number of them were vain and thoughtless; my experience sounded to them like an idle tale, and they did not heed my entreaties. ...

“But at every one of our little meetings I continued to exhort and pray for each one separately, until everyone had yielded to Jesus, acknowledging the merits of His pardoning love. Everyone was converted to God.” *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, 41, 42

“Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.

“Those who exercise but little faith now are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience.” *The Great Controversy*, 621, 622

Your brother in witnessing,



John J. Grosboll

The Seventh Month

A Pilgrim band, with unaccustomed feet,
Set out to follow TRUTH. Then Wisdom smiled,
And pointed to a path that led far out
Beyond the dim philosophy of time,
And said, "if ye indeed will drink the cup,
Of which I drink, and also be baptized
With My baptism, then shall ye enter in
And tread the thorny path that follows Truth."
They bowed with one consent, and onward pressed;
And, as the pathway narrowed, cast aside
Their worldly happiness and each hindering weight—
Idols, and self and sympathies, and tears,
Nor looked behind to see how strangely far
They had advanced beyond each time-worn chart;
For on one side their feet dark waters yawned,
And on the other, still refining fire.
At length, the trial came, when Wisdom sought
To test and purify their faith and zeal,
And seal them for the glory and the crown
Of righteousness. The day—the test hour—came,
They stood together, firm, united, free,
Upon eternal rock. The waves dashed round
And wildly threatened, while red lightnings blazed
And thunders rolled; and from the gathering shade
Strange voices whispered unbelief. Yet still,
Unheeded for a while, they braved the storm.
At length a murmur rose, and some looked back,
Astonished at their distance from the shore;
For still the land of Egypt was in sight,
Where the proud fanes [temple or church] of worldly worship stood,
And human policy, and ancient names,
Earth's wisdom, science and religion's form.
Then with a wild attempt their life to save,
Some, that had been the foremost in the train,
Rushed o'er the beetling verge of that high rock,
And loudly called upon the rest to turn,

And with confessions deep, give up at once
The FALSE pursuit. And now, while yet was heard
The echo of their voice beyond the wave,
In praise of Wisdom's consecrated path,
Their voices change, and desecrate that way,
Proclaiming Wisdom had not led them out
So far from earth; but some strange wily fiend,
In Wisdom's garb. Ah, judge what sad dismay
Entered the trusting hearts of that poor flock.
Some cried, "and it is all delusion, then,
A vision false, to which my soul has bowed;
My sacrifice, and consecration, all
A shadow, wrong and vain?" Then Unbelief
Came in, and many sank in chill despair
Beneath the sullen waves, striving in vain
To reach the kingdom in some easier way.
But now, the third long watch is fully past,
And the dark mist that hung upon THAT ROCK,
Is driven before the light of opening day.
What see we there? Bones scattered round its base,
Washed from the depths beneath. But turn again.
Upon its highest point, is seen a group—
A remnant—that unshaken, there remains;
Who still have kept their joy and confidence,
Though winds have rent, and raging waters drenched,
And earth, and hell, combined to drive them hence.
Yet there they stand, held by a power unseen,
And wait a sure salvation from on high.
To them, what is reproach, or scorn, or hate?
Or the low ridicule of dying things?
What the last howlings of the storm to them,
When rest is just in sight, and Jesus calls,
And says, "come out of tribulation, come,
My suffering and My ransomed ones, COME HOME."

The Present Truth and The Advent Review,
published by James White, C. S. M., 14, 1850



from the
Mission Fields



Moses Asimba (left) and Zachary Okeyo Makworo (right) at the entrance of the new Steps to Life office compound.

New Steps to Life Office in Kenya

By Domingo Nunez

Two years ago an office was opened in the town of Kisii located about 380 kilometers from Nairobi, Kenya. The purpose of this office was to provide assistance to the entire region to include literature distribution and a training program accessible to all those who are interested in taking the leadership training programs. Completion of the program will qualify graduates to serve as a lead pastor in church organization or as leaders in their own congregations and in churches in the area around Kisii.



Steps to Life office building under construction in Kenya.

During the last two years, we have experienced an increase in activities from the town of Keroka, about 40 to 45 minutes from Kisii. The decision was made to look for property to purchase, enabling us to build an office that will house all of the equipment needed to produce the literature used in the local outreach and evangelistic ministries, as well as to produce in-house materials to assist with these ministries and to conduct prophecy seminars. This facility will provide all the space we will need to operate effectively and efficiently for the honor and glory of God in Kisii and the surrounding areas.

A plot of land 100' by 70' has been purchased in the town of Keroka and construction has begun on the building,

with an estimated completion in approximately two and half months. Once completed, this facility will be the Steps to Life offices in Kenya. It will have satellite internet access and a conference room so that we will be able to communicate via Zoom to monitor the activity of the office and the outreach programs established in the local communities and to provide ministerial support as necessary.

Steps to Life Ministry is legally registered in Kenya making it possible for the ministry to more easily purchase the land and complete the necessary legal paperwork. With everything in proper legal order, we praise God for His grace as we move forward to make a better and more useful place for the workers in Kenya to do His work and pray daily

that all the work done in this office will be to His glory.

The Saviour Himself, during His earthly ministry, foretold the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles. In the parable of the vineyard He declared to the impenitent Jews, "... the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it." Matthew 21:43. And after His resurrection He commissioned His disciples to go "into all the world" and "teach all nations." They were to leave none unwarned, but were to "preach the gospel to every creature." Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15

Please pray for us that, as we take on this challenging project, everything will be done according to God's will, by His grace and power, giving Him all the praise. **LM**

Why Don't They Get Stuck?



Flies and moths unwittingly find themselves trapped in a spider's web, hopelessly entangled and unable to free themselves. But the spider can rush across the web to enjoy a tasty, fresh meal without being trapped itself. A study published by two Costa Rican biologists some years ago suggests that spiders stay unstuck thanks to a combination of behavior, anatomy and, yes, even an oily non-stick coating.

Webs typically look something like a wheel with a series of spirals that form the round shape connected by spokes running from the outside spiral to the

center of the web. It appears that the spiral strands are coated with droplets of adhesive. When a bug flies into a spider's web it is instantly stuck, or if you walk into a web, the strands stick to your skin, hair, and clothing. Uck!


Spiders avoid getting stuck by walking on the spoke strands which do not have adhesive on them. If by chance the spider should stray into a sticky area, it will very gently pull the trapped leg back. The key word being gently. Pulling quickly or jerkily, like a bug trying to avoid becoming a main course, causes the adhesive to harden and trap the body.

In addition, the spider has oily substances and special hairs on its legs that prevent it from getting stuck, and it tiptoes carefully from strand to strand.

A spider is also a very careful groomer. It pulls each of its legs through its mouth scraping off any silk bits and other debris that may have gotten stuck to its claws or bristles. This grooming likely ensures that its legs and body are less prone to sticking if it should suffer a misstep in the web.

Like the fly or the moth, we can get stuck in a web of sin, unable to free ourselves. The devil, like the spider, hurries to devour our souls and keep us his slaves to sin. But if we look to Jesus, relying on Him to guide us and keep us from responding to Satan's temptations, then we can be safe from the devil's wiles.

"The heart not given entirely to the control of Jesus Christ has a door open for Satan to enter, and the archdeceiver weaves about the soul ingenious apologies in performing its hidden purposes of evil. All these excuses and pretensions are seen of God, and are as spiderwebs in the eyes of Him who never slumbers or sleeps." *Christ Triumphant*, 171

Sources: howitworksdaily.com/how-does-a-spider-make-a-web-and-why-doesn't-it-get-stuck-in-its-own-web; thoughtco.com/spiders-stuck-in-webs by Debbie Hadley, *Entomology Expert*; burkemuseum.org/spidermyth/oilyfeet 

Q:

Were There Really Giants?

A:

“There were many giants, men of great stature and strength, renowned for wisdom, skillful in devising the most cunning and wonderful works; but their guilt in giving loose rein to iniquity was in proportion to their skill and mental ability.”

Conflict and Courage, 33

“There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward ...” Genesis 6:4, *first part*

The Philistines were a race of giants with Goliath as their champion. And when God told the children of Israel to go and take the land of Canaan as their home, the people were afraid because the men sent to spy out the land said it

was inhabited with giants, the children of Anak.

But being a giant isn’t always determined by size. We find many giants recorded in the Bible, but they were giants because of their characters, not their height.

Gideon, David, and Jeroboam are all described as mighty men of valor (Numbers 13:1–33; Judges 6–7; 1 Samuel 16; 1 Kings 11).

Caleb and Joshua, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses were all giants of faith, believing and trusting in God (Numbers 13; Hebrews 11).

Daniel stood tall in the courts of Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, and Cyrus, and

Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego stood tall on the plain of Dura.

These giants for God weren’t always perfect, but we will see every one of them in His kingdom. It isn’t the physical size of a man that makes him a giant; it is his spiritual connection to God.

“Let us take hold of the arm of infinite power. Let us walk humbly before God, but let us be giants in meeting discouragement and difficulty. We must have increased faith. Let us praise God. He is our strength, our shield, and our defense, our front guard and our rearward.” *Pamphlet 067*, 17 **LM**



Pure, Fresh Air

“Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies.”

The Ministry of Healing, 127

Consider the health benefits of breathing pure, fresh air. “Air, air, the precious boon of heaven, which all may have, will bless you with its invigorating influence if you will not refuse its entrance. Welcome it, cultivate a love for it, and it will prove precious ...” *Healthful Living*, 203

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” Genesis 2:7

The story of creation clearly depicts power in the breath of life. It proves vital to the lives of all living creatures on Earth. In turn, pure, fresh air proves vital to our health and has the same health benefits today as in Mrs. White’s day.

“... Its influence tends to invigorate the system and soothe the nerves. It purifies the blood and promotes a good circulation; it gives a healthful stimulus to the appetite and renders the digestion more perfect; and it induces sound, refreshing sleep. The pure, sweet air does its part toward making the body strong and healthy, and its influence is no less decidedly beneficial upon the mind, imparting to it tone and clearness, as well as a degree of composure and serenity.” *Manuscript 58*, 1890

The lungs are a part of a multi-organ respiratory system that allows the body to take in air while performing gas waste exchange. When we breathe in, air enters the lungs and moves through the blood stream where it is dispensed

Tips for improving breathing habits

1. Correct posture increases lung expansion and capacity.
2. Wear non-restrictive clothing.
3. Sleep in a well, ventilated room that has been thoroughly aired during the day.
4. Practice breathing exercises and breathing from the diaphragm.

Tips for improving efforts to obtain pure, fresh air

1. Enjoy the sunshine.
2. Spend time outside when the sky is overcast or in the cool of the evening.
3. Enjoy the beauty of a sunset.
4. Open the curtains and windows. Let in the sunshine and fresh air. This will eliminate stale air, germs, and allergens that cause illness.


throughout the organs and tissues of the body. Air is vital to the life of each cell. Each cell exchanges air for gas waste which is then moved back through the bloodstream, into the lungs, and expelled as carbon dioxide when we exhale. Additionally, the respiratory system adapts the air breathed in to the appropriate body temperature and humidity level, prevents harmful substances from thriving, and supports the sense of smell.

The lungs are one of the largest organs in the body. Maximum lung capacity is about 1.5 gallons. Maturing by the age of 25, the lungs begin to decline in function after age 35; diaphragm muscles weaken, lung tissue loses elasticity, and rib cage bones get smaller. Slight breathing changes are normal. However, sudden breathing difficulties and shortness of

breath indicate the need for a medical assessment.

In valuing the precious gift of fresh air, we must dedicate ourselves to spending as much time as possible outdoors. We do have to be careful because today we must deal with the harmful effects of air pollution, but this just increases our anticipation of the time when we will breathe in the crisp, refreshing air in the Garden of Eden.

“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!” Psalm 150:6

Sources: American Lung Association (ALA) - Staff, STL Air Pamphlet - Jack Kendall, Vanderbilt Heath/ My Southern Health Staff; lung.org/lung-health-diseases/wellness/breathing-exercises; mysouthernhealth.com/4-outdoor-activities-to-bring-some-fresh-air-into-your-life/ 



Is My Name Written There?

By John J. Grosboll

Revelation 22:11 and 12 imply that when Jesus Christ returns the second time, there will have been a judgment court at which all mankind from all ages of earth's history will have stood before God where their characters have been fixed and their eternal destinies set.

Daniel talks about this same judgment in Daniel 7:9 and 10. "I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened."

“

If we are to have eternal life, our names must be written in the book of life.

Today, we keep most of our records in a computer system. However, God uses a far more accurate system of recordkeeping than anything we could devise.

The Bible is very clear that God has record books and that the information contained in these books will determine every individual's future destiny. Revelation 20:12 says that the "... books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which are written in the books."

But notice what Revelation 20:15 says: "Anyone not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." My friend, the Bible is saying that if we are going to have eternal life, our names must be written in the book of life.

So we must ask ourselves this most important question: "Is my name in the book of life?"

Solomon, the wisest man to ever live, said in Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14, "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether it is good or whether it is evil."

All of our works, everything we've ever thought, said, or done is recorded in God's book. Jesus said, "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Matthew 12:36, 37

Concerning our thoughts, 1 Corinthians 4:5 says, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts."

What does it mean to "reveal the counsels of the hearts"? Isaiah explains this in Isaiah 66:18, "I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues: and they shall come and see My glory."

David also understood this and wrote in Psalm 139 explaining God's knowledge of the human beings that He made. "O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up. You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it. Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall fall on me' [or cover me], even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to You." Verses 1-12

It is clear that no matter where we go, what we do or say or think, God knows it all. As we have read, the record of each person's life is recorded and one day soon God will ask each of us to give an account of the life that we have lived. Jesus tells us that there is nothing that will not be revealed. "Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known." Matthew 10:26

There really are no secrets. We may be able to hide from man, but not God. Every deed known or unknown will be examined in the judgment, and we will be called to account for whether we obeyed God or not.

Luke 10 records the Lord's appointment of the 70 elders who were sent out two by two to prepare the way for His eventual visit to a number of different places. It was their purpose to spread the good news of salvation offered by Jesus Christ, to heal the sick, and to point them to Him who heals both the body and the soul.

When the 70 returned to Jesus, they came to Him rejoicing because even the demons

were constrained by them. When they spoke to the demons in Jesus' name, the demons were forced to depart. But Jesus said to them in verse 20, "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." It isn't the power to work miracles, or even to cast out demons, that saves us. Jesus said our names must be written in the book of life.

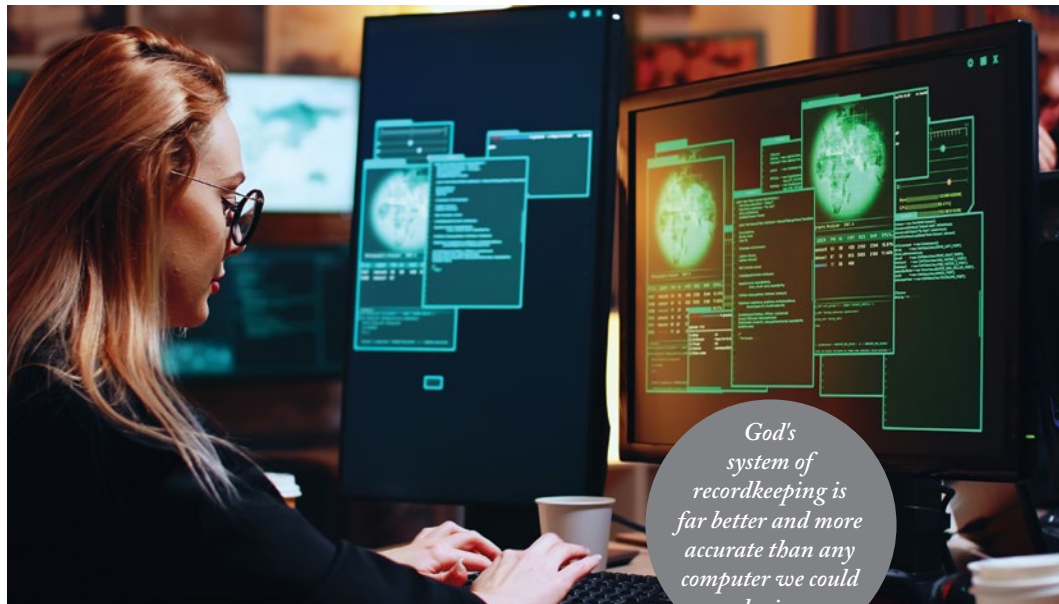
When the judgment has come, Daniel 12:1 says, "At that time Michael shall stand up, the Great Prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time Your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book."

So, is your name written in heaven's book of life?

But here is another critical question each of us must consider: "Can I be sure that my name will not be blotted out of the book of life?" The Bible is very clear that during the period of time when probation is open and available, right now, names are being added to the book of life, but names can also be taken out of the book of life. What happens that determines if a name is blotted out of the book of life? How can you have assurance that your name is written in the book of life?

Acts 16:30, 31 say, "He brought them out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.'"

Believing something with your whole heart means making a commitment. In this scripture it is saying that if you believe in Jesus with all your heart, then you are making a commitment to Him. Jesus is our Saviour and Deliverer, and if we believe this, then we are accepting Him as such and making Him the Lord of our lives. Making Him the Lord of your life means that you are committing to obey Him. Obeying Him in all



God's system of recordkeeping is far better and more accurate than any computer we could devise.

that He says and asks will result in your name being written in the book of life.

But how is a person's name erased or blotted out of the book of life? If obedience is necessary in order to have one's name written in the book of life, then disobedience can result in a name being removed from it.

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:19–21. So, the New Testament teaches that when you come to Christ, you start to live a new life and your life of sin is in the past. You have been converted, a new creation—created to live a new Christlike life.

This text tells us that before Jesus comes again, our sins will be blotted out and our names will be retained in God's book. The Old Testament prophets support this. "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins." Isaiah 43:25. And Isaiah 44:22, "I have blotted

out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

But, what happens if a person claims to follow Jesus, but continues to live a life of sin? What if he is not converted? He professes to follow Jesus, but his life is not one of obedience and does not reflect Jesus' character. The result is that when Jesus comes again, instead of his sins being blotted out, his name will be blotted out of God's book.

"Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders." Nehemiah 4:5

"Let them [Christ's enemies] be blotted out of the book of the living." Psalm 69:28

Moses pleaded with the Lord on behalf of the children of Israel who had rebelled and sinned against Him. He said, "'Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.' And the Lord said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.'" Exodus 32:31–33



... the
books were
opened. And
another book was
opened, which is the
book of life.

Notice, the name of the person who continues in sin will be blotted out of God's book. But if a person chooses to follow Jesus, their life of sin becomes part of their past. He or she is a new creation, created to live a new, Christ-like life.

We all have a case pending in God's court. If we have made a commitment to believe in and follow Jesus and accept Him as our Saviour, then our sins are blotted out, our name is written in the book of life, and our eternal life begins. On the other hand, if we have made no commitment to Jesus, nor do we accept Him as our Saviour, and continue living a life of sin, then our sins will not be blotted out, but our names will be, and we will miss out on eternal life. We must be saved *from* our sins if we are to spend all of eternity with Jesus when He comes again.

How can I know that my name will be retained in the book of life and not be taken out? This question is addressed very directly in Revelation 3:5, "He who 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."

Jesus said the same thing to His disciples. We find it in Matthew 10:32, 33. "Whoever confesses Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

If we expect to have our name written in the book of life and for it to remain there until Jesus comes, then we must overcome the world and the flesh. The book of Revelation repeatedly states that the one who will be saved is the one who overcomes.

Who is an overcomer? And what must he or she overcome?

"Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." 1 John 5:4. If you have been converted and born again as a child of God, if your love and life are given to God, and you are obedient to His instruction and faithfully follow His direction, then you are an overcomer. You will not love the world, nor will you be controlled by your sinful nature (the flesh).

"Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

Romans 6:6

There are three things that the overcomer must overcome. We've already seen the first—the world. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world."

1 John 2:15, 16

Second, the overcomer must overcome the flesh. "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." Galatians 5:24. What is the flesh? It is our sinful, carnal, selfish nature. There is only one way to overcome the flesh and that is through the power of the Holy Spirit working a transformative miracle in each life. When this occurs, a person is set free from his or her life of sin.

But there is still a third thing that the overcomer must overcome and that is the devil himself. James 4:7, 8 tell us exactly how that can be done. "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts you double-minded."

So, if you want your name in the book of life, and if you want it to be retained there, then you must be an overcomer. You must overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. And all of this can be accomplished because the Lord will give you the power to do it if you choose to fully and completely give your heart to Him and follow Him. **LM**

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September 25 – October 1, 2022

God's Church Today

Key Text

"[B]ut if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Timothy 3:15

Study Help: *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 15–31

Introduction

"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." *Education*, 268

Sunday

1 GOD'S MOST PRECIOUS OBJECT ON EARTH

1.a. How does God depict His church? Deuteronomy 32:9, 10; Zechariah 2:8

Note: "The church is to be the Lord's light bearer to shine amid the moral darkness of a corrupt and sinful generation. There can be nothing in the world that is so dear to God as His church. Nothing is guarded by Him with such jealous care." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 18, 208

"The church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard. ... He comes personally by His Holy Spirit into the midst of His church." *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 15

1.b. What did Jesus say of His church built upon the Rock? Matthew 16:18

Note: "The word Peter signifies a stone—a rolling stone. Peter was not the rock upon which the church was founded. The gates of hell did prevail against him when he denied his Lord with cursing and swearing. The church was built upon One against whom the gates of hell could not prevail." *The Desire of Ages*, 413

"The church ... is built on faith in Christ, 'and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matthew 16:18)." *Sons and Daughters of God*, 77

Monday

2 CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH—A CITY OF REFUGE

2.a. In the Old Testament, what provision was made to save a person who accidentally killed someone? Numbers 35:11–15

Note: "The cities of refuge appointed for God's ancient people were a symbol of the refuge provided in Christ. The same merciful Saviour who appointed those temporal cities of refuge has by the shedding of His own blood provided for the transgressors of God's law a sure retreat, into which they may flee for safety from the second death. No power can take out of His hands the souls that go to Him for pardon." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 516

"As the manslayer was in constant peril until within the city of refuge, so is the transgressor of God's law exposed to divine wrath until he finds a hiding place in Christ." *The Signs of the Times*, January 20, 1881

2.b. What are two purposes of the church in these last days? Acts 2:47; Ephesians 4:11–13; Mark 16:15

Note: "The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only begotten Son. From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony

to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people. ...

“During ages of spiritual darkness the church of God has been as a city set on a hill. From age to age, through successive generations, the pure doctrines of heaven have been unfolding within its borders.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 11, 12

Tuesday

3 THE CHURCH IS THE FOLD

3.a. To what are the believers compared in the Bible?

Psalm 100:3, 4; John 10:16. Where should those who are baptized in Christ be? 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13

Note: “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. This is an important part of one’s training; and in a church imbued with the Master’s life, it will lead directly to effort for the world without.” *Education*, 268, 269

“All who believe are to be gathered into one church.” *The Desire of Ages*, 821

“The Lord could carry forward His work without our cooperation. He is not dependent on us for our money, our time, or our labor. But the church is very precious in His sight. It is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock, and He longs to see it without spot or blemish or any such things. He yearns after it with unspeakable love.” *In Heavenly Places*, 324

3.b. What is stated in the word of God about the good shepherd and His sheep? Psalm 23:1; Isaiah 40:10, 11; John 10:11–15. How does the undershepherd function? Luke 15:4–6

Note: “Jesus is the good Shepherd. His followers are the sheep of His pasture. A shepherd is always with his flock to defend them, to keep them from the wolves, to hunt up the lost sheep and carry them back to the fold.” *Lift Him Up*, 215

“When the lost sheep was found, it was borne home with joy, and much rejoicing followed. This illustrates the blessed, joyful work of laboring for the erring. The church that engages successfully in this work is a happy church.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 22

“Many are starving for the bread of life, and there is no time for accusing the brethren; rather pray one for another that ye may be healed, and go forth to seek and to save the lost and wandering sheep. Find the erring, discouraged ones by careful, diligent search, and bring them back to the fold.” *The Review and Herald*, October 24, 1893

Wednesday

4 THE CHURCH IS A GARDEN

4.a. To what plants “planted in the house of God,” is the church compared? Psalms 1:3; 92:12, 13; Jeremiah 17:8

Note: “In all the Lord’s arrangements there is nothing more beautiful than His plan of giving to men and women a diversity of gifts. ... Many have received but a limited religious and intellectual training, but God has a work for this class to do if they will labor in humility, trusting in Him.

“From the endless variety of plants and flowers, we may learn an important lesson. All blossoms are not the same in form or color. Some possess healing virtues. Some are always fragrant. There are professing Christians who think it their duty to make every Christian like themselves. This is man’s plan, not the plan of God. In the church of God there is room for characters as varied as are the flowers in a garden. In His spiritual garden there are many varieties of flowers.” *Evangelism*, 98, 99

“A garden demands constant labor. The weeds must be removed; new plants must be set out; branches that are making too rapid development must be pruned back. So the Lord works for His garden, so He tends His plants. He cannot take pleasure in any development that does not reveal the graces of the character of Christ. The blood of Christ has made men and women God’s precious charge. Then how careful should we be not to manifest too much freedom in pulling up the plants that God has placed in His garden! Some plants are so feeble that they have hardly any life, and for these the Lord has a special care.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 65

“

*Very close and sacred
is the relation between
Christ and His
church.*



4.b. What does the Lord expect from those who are planted in His church? John 15:4, 5, 8, 16; Matthew 7:16–20

Note: “Just as a good tree will bear good fruit, so will the tree that is actually planted in the Lord’s garden produce good fruit unto eternal life. Besetting sins are overcome; evil thoughts are not allowed in the mind; evil habits are purged from the soul temple. The tendencies which have been biased in a wrong direction are turned in a right direction. Wrong dispositions and feelings are changed, new principles of action supplied, and there is a new standard of character. Holy tempers and sanctified emotions are now the fruit borne upon the Christian tree.” “Ellen G. White Comments,” *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, 1080

Thursday

5 THE CHURCH IS A BODY

5.a. Why is the church compared to the human body? 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27, 28; Ephesians 4:11, 12, 15, 16; Colossians 1:17, 18, 24

Note: “By a comparison of the church with the human body, the apostle [Paul] aptly illustrated the close and harmonious

relationship that should exist among all members of the church of Christ.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 317

5.b. Who is the head of the church? Colossians 1:18

Note: “Christ is the head of the church. The members of His body follow the directions of the Head, just as the members of the human body obey the impulses of the mind.” *The Review and Herald*, July 18, 1882

“The great heart of the work is at ____; and, as the human heart throws its living current of blood into all parts of the body, so does the management at this place, the headquarters of our church, affect the whole body of believers. If the physical heart is healthy, the blood that is sent from it through the system is also healthy; but if this fountain is impure, the whole organism becomes diseased by the poison of the vital fluid. So it is with us. If the heart of the work becomes corrupt, the whole church, in its various branches and interests, scattered abroad over the face of the earth, suffers in consequence.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, 210

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Who is the Rock on which the church is built?
- 2 Why does God want His servants to become members of His body?
- 3 In what sense is the church compared to a sheepfold?
- 4 Describe the variety of gifts in the church.
- 5 How does the condition of the spiritual heart affect the whole body, the church?

October 2 – 8, 2022

The Organization of the Church

Key Text

“And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.” 1 Corinthians 12:28

Study Help: *The Acts of the Apostles*, 158–165

Introduction

“System and order are manifest in all the works of God throughout the universe. Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God’s people on the earth.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 26

Sunday

1 THE CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED

1.a. What did Jesus do during the first part of His earthly ministry? Luke 6:12, 13

Note: “When Jesus had ended His instruction to the disciples, He gathered the little band close about Him, and kneeling in the midst of them, and laying His hands upon their heads, He offered a prayer dedicating them to His sacred work. Thus the Lord’s disciples were ordained to the gospel ministry.” *The Desire of Ages*, 296

1.b. What commission was given to the disciples—and to us? Matthew 28:18–20

Note: “To His disciples Christ said, ... To you, My disciples, I commit this message of mercy. It is to be given to Israel first, and then to all nations, tongues, and peoples. It is to be given to Jews and Gentiles. All who believe are to be gathered into one church.” *The Desire of Ages*, 821

“The disciples were to teach what Christ had taught. That which He had spoken, not only in person, but through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament, is here included. Human teaching is shut out. There is no place for tradition, for man’s theories and conclusions, or for church legislation. No laws ordained by ecclesiastical authority are included in the commission. None of these are Christ’s servants to teach. ‘The law and the prophets,’ with the record of His own words and deeds, are the treasure committed to the disciples to be given to the world.” *Ibid.*, 826

Monday

2 CHURCH GOVERNMENT

2.a. Who has God appointed to facilitate church organization? 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11

Note: “Let none entertain the thought that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study and many prayers for wisdom, that we know God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by His direction, through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled. ...

“Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the cooperation of the heavenly messengers must work in unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can cooperate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 27, 28

2.b. What would be the result if there were no order, system, and organization in the church? 1 Corinthians 14:33; Ephesians 4:14

Note: “O how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this [independent-minded] 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 organization and order that has been built up by wise, careful labor. License must not be given to disorderly elements that desire to control the work at this time.” *Gospel Workers*, 487

Tuesday

3 EXAMPLES OF ORDER AND ORGANIZATION

3.a. Describe the experience of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Acts 9:1–6, 10–12

Note: “Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independently of His recognized followers on earth. But in the history of the conversion of Saul, important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. He was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be a ‘chosen vessel’ unto Him; yet the Lord did not immediately impart to him the lessons of truth. He arrested his course and convicted him; but when asked by him, ‘What wilt thou have me to do?’ the Saviour placed him in connection with His church, and let them direct him what to do.

“Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church, and placed Saul in connection with His representatives

on earth. All blessings flow from Christ, but He had now established a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life.

“Jesus is the friend of sinners; His heart is touched by their woe; He has all power, both in heaven and upon earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world.” *The Review and Herald*, March 23, 1911

3.b. Can someone belong to Christ while he or she repudiates the organized church, the body of Christ? Matthew 12:30

Note: “Everyone who seeks to do well in his own finite strength, will find his efforts a failure; but those who accept Christ by faith, will find him a personal Saviour. They will enlist in His army ...” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 292

“[I]ndependence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 163

“The Lord loves His church. It is not to be disorganized or broken up into independent atoms. There is not the least consistency in this; there is not the least evidence that such a thing will be.” *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 68, 69

Wednesday

4 DISORDERLY ELEMENTS

4.a. What does the word of God say about persons whom the Lord does not call for the gospel ministry but who push themselves in? Jeremiah 23:21

Note: “Those men who are not called of God are generally the very ones that are the most confident that they are so called and that their labors are very important.” *Early Writings*, 98

“The church should feel their responsibility and should look carefully and attentively at the lives, qualifications, and general course of those who profess to be teachers. If unmistakable evidence is not given that God has called them, and that the ‘woe’ is upon them if they heed not this call, it is the duty of the church to act and let it be known that these persons are not acknowledged as teachers by the church. ...

“[I]n the apostles’ day the church was in danger of being deceived and imposed upon by false teachers. Therefore the brethren chose men who had given good evidence that they were capable of ruling well their own house and preserving order in their own families, and who could enlighten those who were in darkness. Inquiry was made of God concerning these, and then, according to the mind of the church and the Holy Ghost, they were set apart by the laying on of hands.” *Ibid.*, 100, 101

4.b. What should the church do about those who act divisively independent from the church, the body of Christ? Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10

Note: “The spirit of pulling away from fellow laborers, the spirit of disorganization, is in the very air we breathe. By some, all efforts to establish order are regarded as dangerous—as a restriction of personal liberty, and hence to be feared as popery. These deceived souls regard it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. ...

“Some have advanced the thought that, as we near the close of time, every child of God will act independently of any religious organization. But I have been instructed by the Lord that in this work there is no such thing as every man’s being independent. The stars of heaven are all under law, each influencing the other to do the will of God, yielding their common obedience to the law that controls their action. And, in order that the Lord’s work may advance healthfully and solidly, His people must draw together.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, 257, 258

Thursday

5 THE PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

5.a. Why is organization vital in the church? Ephesians 4:11–16

Note: “In order for the work to be carried forward with efficiency, the Lord sent forth His disciples two and two. God has a church, and these churches are organized on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.” *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, 7

“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

5.b. What was Paul’s attitude about organization?

1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 14:33, 40

Note: “Notwithstanding the fact that Paul was personally taught by God, he had no strained ideas of individual responsibility. While looking to God for direct guidance, he was ever ready to recognize the authority vested in the body of believers united in church fellowship. He felt the need of counsel, and when matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make right decisions.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 200

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What characterizes the doctrinal standard of God’s true church?
- 2 What contrasts exist between God’s organizational plan and Satan’s ways?
- 3 What does Saul’s conversion experience teach us about organization?
- 4 What basic qualifications for ordination should be taken more seriously?
- 5 In what ways does organization bring blessings to the church?

October 9 – 15, 2022

The Authority of the Church

Key Text

“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 16:19

Study Help: *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 260–264

Introduction

“On the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ’s stead. ... Whatever the church does that is in accordance with the directions given in God’s word will be ratified in heaven.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 263

Sunday

1 CONFERRED AUTHORITY

1.a. What steps are to be taken before a person receives church discipline? Matthew 18:15–18

Note: “No church officer should advise, no committee should recommend, nor should any church vote, that the name of a wrongdoer shall be removed from the church books, until the instruction given by Christ has been faithfully followed. When this instruction has been followed, the church has cleared herself before God. The evil must then be made to appear as it is, and must be removed, that it may not become more and more widespread.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 262, 263

1.b. What authority does the church have regarding discipline? John 20:23; Matthew 18:18

Note: “To it [the church] the Lord has delegated the power to settle all questions respecting its prosperity, purity, and order. Upon it rests the responsibility of excluding from its fellowship those who are unworthy, who by their un-Christlike conduct would bring dishonor on the truth.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 263

Monday

2 DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED

2.a. What is the tragic response of some as the Lord calls them to return to Him? Jeremiah 6:16; 13:10

Note: “Those whose deeds are evil, will not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reprov’d and their real characters revealed. If they continue in the path of transgression, and sever themselves entirely from the Redeemer, stubbornness, and sullenness, and a spirit of revenge will take possession of them, and they will say to their own souls, Peace, peace, when there is every reason that they should be alarmed, for their steps are directed toward destruction.” *The Signs of the Times*, June 22, 1888

“By repentance and confession you can have pardon registered against your name; or you can resist the conviction of the Spirit of God. ... But there stands the action, there stands the evil committed.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 309

2.b. If the leaders keep silent and gloss over the wrongs of the members, what will be the result? Isaiah 56:10, 11; Philippians 3:2; Ezekiel 33:2–9; John 3:19, 20

Note: “Those who have too little courage to reprove wrong, or who through indolence or lack of interest make no earnest effort to purify the family or the church of God, are held accountable for the evil that may result from their neglect of duty. We are just as responsible for evils that we might have checked in others by exercise of parental or pastoral authority as if the acts had been our own.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 578

“He [God] would teach His people that disobedience and sin are exceedingly offensive to Him and are not to be lightly

regarded. He shows us that when His people are found in sin they should at once take decided measures to put that sin from them, that His frown may not rest upon them all. But if the sins of the people are passed over by those in responsible positions, His frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for those sins. In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation." *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 265

Tuesday

3 THE GUILTY MUST BE REPROVED

3.a. What is the duty and responsibility of those holding a position of trust in the church when they see members practicing sin? 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:13; 2:15

Note: "The divine rebuke is upon that false sympathy for the sinner which endeavors to excuse his sin. It is the effect of sin to deaden the moral perceptions, so that the wrongdoer does not realize the enormity of transgression, and without the convicting power of the Holy Spirit he remains in partial blindness to his sin. It is the duty of Christ's servants to show these erring ones their peril." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 361

"To defy the words of the Lord, spoken through His chosen instruments, will only provoke His anger and eventually bring certain ruin upon the offender. Indignation often kindles in the heart of the sinner against the agent whom God chooses to deliver His reproofs." *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, 180

"Ministers should be faithful watchmen, seeing the evil and warning the people. Their dangers must be set before them continually and pressed home upon them." *Ibid.*, 515

3.b. What will be the fate of unfaithful leaders if they refuse to correct the evils committed by the members of the church? Ezekiel 3:17, 18; 33:6

Note: "The rebuke of God is upon every minister and every medical missionary leader who has been asleep on the walls of Zion, when as vigilant watchmen they should have warned the people of the Lord against the dangers threatening them." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 19, 357

"The watchmen anciently placed on the walls of the cities occupied a most important position. Upon their faithfulness depended the safety of all within the walls. When danger was apprehended, they were not to sleep day or night. Every few minutes they were required to call to one another, to see that all were awake and that no harm had come to any." *The Review and Herald*, April 15, 1902

"I saw that it was time that the watchmen upon the walls of Zion understood the responsibility and sacredness of their mission. They should feel that a woe is upon them if they do not perform the work God has committed to them. If they become unfaithful, they are endangering the safety of the flock of God, endangering the cause of truth, and exposing it to the ridicule of our enemies. Oh, what a work is this! It will surely meet its reward." *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4b, 124, 125

Wednesday

4 CHASTISEMENT WITH LOVE

4.a. How does the Lord mold His erring people for the spiritual building? Revelation 3:19; Hebrew 12:6–11; 1 Peter 2:4, 5

Note: "The Lord estimates as of supreme importance the holiness of His people; and He permits reverses to come upon individuals, upon families, and upon churches, that His people may see their danger, and humble their hearts before Him in repentance. He chastens His children in the hope of saving their souls. Those who return to Him, He receives with tenderness and love. He speaks pardon to them and clothes them with the garments of Christ's righteousness." *The Review and Herald*, September 24, 1903

"When the heart is full of self-sufficiency and preoccupied with the superficial things of earth, the Lord Jesus rebukes and chastens in order that men may awake to a realization of their true condition." *The Signs of the Times*, August 1, 1895

"Take with you those who are spiritually minded, and talk with the one in error in regard to the wrong. He may yield to the united appeals of his brethren. As he sees their agreement in the matter, his mind may be enlightened." *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 262

- 4.b. When parents or ministers try to correct the erring ones, what should they always keep in mind? 2 Timothy 4:2; Colossians 3:12–14

Note: “Sin should be faithfully reproofed, and right discipline promptly and firmly enforced. Yet harsh dealing will not help the wrongdoer to see his error or to reform. Let all needed reproof or correction be given in the spirit which actuated our Saviour. Let firmness and decision be blended with sympathy and love. By wise management, the wayward, stubborn youth may be transformed. Parents, to accomplish such work, you need Christlike patience and self-command. Do not irritate by a sharp word or an angry look. Be calm; and let your heart often ascend in prayer to God for grace and wisdom. Angels will come to your side, and help you to raise up a standard against the enemy.” *The Review and Herald*, June 13, 1882

“In every instance where discipline is necessary, the tenderness and patience that God manifests toward us, is to be revealed.” *Ibid.*, July 12, 1906

Thursday

5 MAINTAINING CHURCH PURITY

- 5.a. What should be done to the stubborn ones who refuse to yield to correction and persist instead in sin? 1 Corinthians 5:11–13. How can we distinguish loyal from disloyal leaders? Revelation 2:2

Note: “Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 71

“Sin and sinners in the church must be promptly dealt with, that others may not be contaminated. Truth and purity require that we make more thorough work to cleanse the camp from Achans. Let those in responsible positions not suffer sin in a brother. Show him that he must either put away his sins or be separated from the church.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, 147

“If men close their eyes to the testimonies God has been pleased to give, and think it wisdom to walk in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, it will spoil the church. Such men are not qualified to become either ministers or presidents.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 327



Whatever the church does in accordance with the directions given in God’s word, will be ratified in heaven.

- 5.b. How will God bless the church after all evils have been removed? Ephesians 5:27

Note: “There is nothing that Satan fears so much as that the people of God shall clear the way by removing every hindrance, so that the Lord can pour out His Spirit upon a languishing church and an impenitent congregation.” *Messages to Young People*, 133

“Whenever the church at any period have forsaken their sins, and believed and walked in the truth, they have been honored of God.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, 484

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 In what ways do we often neglect to carry out Matthew 18:15–18?
- 2 What consequences result from a failure to correct evils in the church?
- 3 What aspects of true leadership do church officers often overlook?
- 4 Why is discipline a God-given mandate to Christ’s church on earth?
- 5 What is Satan’s greatest fear regarding the church, and why?

October 16 – 22, 2022

Our Attitude Toward Secular Authorities

Key Text

“Let every soul be subject to the governing authority. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.” Romans 13:1

Study Help: *Testimonies*, Vol. 6, 394–397; *The Great Controversy*, 603–612

Introduction

“David’s power had been given him by God, but to be exercised only in harmony with the divine law. When he commanded that which was contrary to God’s law, it became sin to obey. ‘The powers that be are ordained of God’ (Romans 13:1), but we are not to obey them contrary to God’s law.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 719

Sunday

1 THE PURPOSE OF HAVING AUTHORITIES

1.a. What is the purpose of earthy authorities? Romans 13:3, 4. How far should we obey the laws of the land?

Note: “He who obeys the divine law will most truly respect and obey the laws of his country. He who fears God will honor the king in the exercise of all just and legitimate authority.” *The Great Controversy*, 278

1.b. We should always be the best law-abiding citizens. What are the good laws of the land that we should obey? Matthew 22:17–21; Romans 13:6, 7

Note: “The ten precepts of Jehovah are the foundation of all righteous and good laws. Those who love God’s commandments will conform to every good law of the land. But if the requirements of the rulers are such as conflict with the laws of God, the only question to be settled is: Shall we obey God, or man?” *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, 361, 362

Monday

2 OBEY GOD’S LAW OR THE LAWS OF THE LAND?

2.a. From the experience of the early church, what important lesson can we learn through the words of Peter and John? Acts 4:15–20; Acts 5:29

Note: “It is our duty in every case to obey the laws of our land, unless they conflict with the higher law which God spoke with an audible voice from Sinai, and afterward engraved on stone with His own finger.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, 361

“We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God’s word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A ‘Thus saith the Lord’ is not to be set aside for a ‘Thus saith the church’ or a ‘Thus saith the state.’ The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates.

“We are not required to defy authorities. Our words, whether spoken or written, should be carefully considered, lest we place ourselves on record as uttering that which would make us appear antagonistic to law and order. We are not to say or do anything that would unnecessarily close up our way. We are to go forward in Christ’s name, advocating the truths committed to us.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 69

2.b. Which commandments of God’s law will we be required to transgress? Exodus 20:8–11, 13

Note: “God’s people, who are His peculiar treasure, cannot engage in this perplexing [American] war [between the states, which brought about the end of slavery], for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers. There would be a continual violation of conscience.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, 361

“As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration.” *The Great Controversy*, 615

Tuesday

3 GOOD LAWS

- 3.a. What is the purpose of the good laws of the land?
1 Peter 2:13, 14. What are differences between the law of God and laws of the land? Psalm 19:7, 8

Note: “Worldly men are governed by worldly principles. They can appreciate no other. Worldly policy and public opinion comprise the principle of action that governs them and leads them to practice the form of rightdoing. But God’s people cannot be governed by these motives. The words and commands of God, written in the soul, are spirit and life, and there is power in them to bring into subjection and enforce obedience. The ten precepts of Jehovah are the foundation of all righteous and good laws.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 1, 361

“Where shall we find laws more noble, pure, and just, than are exhibited on the statute books wherein is recorded the instruction given to Moses for the children of Israel? Through all time these laws are to be perpetuated, that the character of God’s people may be formed after the divine similitude. The law is a wall of protection to those who are obedient to God’s precepts. From what other source can we gather such strength, or learn such noble science? What other book will teach men to love, fear, and obey God as does the Bible?” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 393, 394

- 3.b. What was given to Israel, as a nation, to be their guide and rule? Deuteronomy 4:5–8; Nehemiah 9:13



Note: “The Holy One of Israel has made known to us the statutes and laws which are to govern all human intelligences. These precepts, which have been pronounced ‘holy, and just, and good,’ are to form the standard of action in the home. There can be no departure from them without sin, for they are the foundation of the Christian religion.” *Child Guidance*, 506, 507

“He [God] designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man.

“God’s law must be exalted, His authority maintained; and to the house of Israel was given this great and noble work. God separated them from the world, that He might commit to them a sacred trust. He made them the depositaries of His law, and He purposed through them to preserve among men the knowledge of Himself.” *Prophets and Kings*, 16

Wednesday

4 THE LAWS OF THE LAND AGAINST US

- 4.a. What argument was used by the enemies of God’s people for the purpose of exterminating them? How will this soon be repeated in our day? Esther 3:8, 9; Revelation 12:17

Note: “The trying experiences that came to God’s people in the days of Esther were not peculiar to that age alone. ... The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God. Even now preparations are being made for this last great conflict.

“The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mordecai at the gate. The reverence of God’s people for His law is a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling on His Sabbath. ...

“To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws. But those who fear God, cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Today, as in the days of Esther and Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.” *Prophets and Kings*, 605, 606

“The world is against us, the popular churches are against us, the laws of the land will soon be against us. If there was ever a time when the people of God should press together, it is now.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, 236

4.b. What will be the culminating act of the powers of the earth against those who keep the commandments of God? Revelation 13:15–17

Note: “A decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. Romanism in the Old World and apostate Protestantism in the New will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts.” *The Great Controversy*, 615, 616

Thursday

5 UNDER THE DEATH DECREE

5.a. What will be the conviction of those who persecute and try to kill God’s people? John 16:2; Matthew 24:9, 10

Note: “[John 16:2 quoted.] These words come sounding down along the line to our time. A deception is upon those who oppress their fellowmen because they do not believe the same form of doctrine that their oppressors believe.” *The Review and Herald*, April 19, 1898

“With what zeal will the workers of iniquity pursue their satanic purpose! They will put light for darkness, and darkness for light, until they will sincerely believe they are servants of God, and doing Him service by persecuting His children.” *Ibid.*, May 8, 1888

5.b. What will the wicked try to do, and how will God intervene in favor of His people? Psalms 50:15; 91:3–7, 10

Note: “The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that ‘all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond’ (Revelation 13:16), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death.” *The Great Controversy*, 604

“The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus’ coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth. ... And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honored God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory.” *Ibid.*, 640

Friday

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What obligation do we have toward secular authorities?
- 2 Describe the attitude of Peter and John when forbidden to preach the gospel of Christ.
- 3 Why does the Bible record statutes in addition to the moral law?
- 4 Why is it important that Christians understand the true Sabbath?
- 5 Describe the deliverance soon to be wrought for faithful Sabbathkeepers.

October 23 – 29, 2022

The State of the Dead

Key Text

“For the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.” Ecclesiastes 9:5

Study Help: *The Great Controversy*, 531–562

Introduction

“Upon the fundamental error of natural immortality rests the doctrine of consciousness in death—a doctrine, like eternal torment, opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures, to the dictates of reason, and to our feelings of humanity.” *The Great Controversy*, 545

Sunday

1 THE FIRST GREAT LIE

1.a. When God created man and commanded him to dress and keep the Garden of Eden, what specific instruction was given to him? Genesis 2:15–17

Note: “A compassionate God gave no severe test, no strong temptation that would tax human endurance beyond the power to resist. The fruit itself was harmless. If God had not forbidden Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, their action in taking it would not have been sinful. Up to the moment of God’s prohibition, Adam might have eaten of the fruit of that tree without realizing any harm. But after God had said, Thou shalt not eat, the act became a crime of great magnitude. Adam had disobeyed God. In this was his sin. The very fact that Adam’s trial was small, made his sin exceeding great.” *The Signs of the Times*, January 23, 1879

1.b. What words were used by Satan, “the old serpent,” to defy God’s simple and explicit command? Genesis 3:4, 5

Note: “God said that sinners would die. Satan declares that they will not die.” *The Bible Echo*, February 1, 1897

Monday

2 THE DEAD KNOW NOT ANYTHING

2.a. Where do all living creatures go when they die? Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20; 9:10. What happens to the memory of the dead? Psalm 146:3, 4

Note: “Nowhere in the Sacred Scriptures is found the statement that the righteous go to their reward or the wicked to their punishment at death. The patriarchs and prophets have left no such assurance. Christ and His apostles have given no hint of it. The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken, man’s thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence.” *The Great Controversy*, 549, 550

2.b. What did God say would be man’s fate because of disobedience? Genesis 3:19. What did Solomon say about the mental condition of the dead? Ecclesiastes 9:5

Note: “God declared that as a penalty for his sin, man should return to the ground whence he was taken: ‘Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’ Verse 19. The words of Satan, ‘Your

eyes shall be opened,' proved to be true in this sense only: After Adam and Eve had disobeyed God, their eyes were opened to discern their folly; they did know evil, and they tasted the bitter fruit of transgression." *The Great Controversy*, 532

2.c. Why do many people disbelieve what God has said about the state of man at death? Isaiah 5:20, 21; 30:9, 10

Note: "The theory of the immortality of the soul was one of those false doctrines that Rome, borrowing from paganism, incorporated into the religion of Christendom. Martin Luther classed it with the 'monstrous fables that form part of the Roman dunghill of decretals.' Commenting on the words of Solomon in Ecclesiastes, that the dead know not anything, the reformer says: 'Another place proving that the dead have no ... feeling. There is, saith he, no duty, no science, no knowledge, no wisdom there. Solomon judgeth that the dead are asleep, and feel nothing at all. For the dead lie there, accounting neither days nor years, but when they are awaked, they shall seem to have slept scarce one minute.'" *The Great Controversy*, 549

Tuesday

3 DEATH REIGNED UNTIL MOSES

3.a. What happened to Moses because of his sin at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh? Deuteronomy 32:50, 51; 34:5, 6

Note: "Satan had exulted at his success in causing Moses to sin against God, and thus come under the dominion of death. The great adversary declared that the divine sentence—'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return' (Genesis 3:19)—gave him possession of the dead. The power of the grave had never been broken, and all who were in the tomb he claimed as his captives, never to be released from his dark prison house." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 478

3.b. How long will the dominion of death keep those who have died since Adam in the grave? Romans 5:14. What happened to Moses after his death? Jude 1:9

Note: "The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken, man's thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence." *The Faith I live By*, 181

"Satan railed bitterly against God, denouncing Him as unjust in permitting his prey [Moses] to be taken from him; but Christ did not rebuke His adversary, though it was through his temptation that the servant of God had fallen." *Early Writings*, 164

"This act [of the resurrection of Moses] was a great victory over the powers of darkness. This display of power was an incontrovertible testimony to the supremacy of the Son of God. Satan had not expected that the body would be raised to life after death. He had concluded that the sentence, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return' gave him undisputed possession of the bodies of the dead. Now he saw that he would be despoiled of his prey, that mortals would live again after death." *Christ Triumphant*, 130

"In consequence of sin Moses had come under the power of Satan. In his own merits he was death's lawful captive; but he was raised to immortal life, holding his title in the name of the Redeemer. Moses came forth from the tomb glorified, and ascended with his Deliverer to the City of God." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 479

Wednesday

4 RESURRECTION PROMISED

4.a. What does the Bible say about the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust? John 5:28, 29

Note: "In consequence of Adam's sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be

brought forth from their graves. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; 'for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth. 'All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' They who have been 'accounted worthy' of the resurrection of life, are 'blessed and holy.' 'On such the second death hath no power.' But those who have not, through repentance and faith, secured pardon, must receive the penalty of transgression." *The Great Controversy*, 544

4.b. When will the general resurrection of the righteous take place? 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Revelation 20:4, 5, *last part*, 6. When will the wicked be raised? Revelation 20:5, *first part*

Note: "At His [Christ's] coming the righteous dead will be raised, and the righteous living will be changed.

"Man in his present state is mortal, corruptible; but the kingdom of God will be incorruptible, enduring forever. Therefore man in his present state cannot enter into the kingdom of God. But when Jesus comes, He confers immortality upon His people; and then He calls them to inherit the kingdom of which they have hitherto been only heirs." *The Great Controversy*, 322, 323

"At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed and attended by a retinue of angels. As He descends in terrific majesty He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked bear the traces of disease and death." *Ibid.*, 662

Thursday

5 DEATH – A SLEEP

5.a. When Jesus received news that Lazarus was sick, He waited for a while. After that, what did He say to the disciples? John 11:11-14

Note: "Christ represents death as a sleep to His believing children. Their life is hid with Christ in God, and until the last trump shall sound those who die will sleep in Him." *The Desire of Ages*, 527

5.b. The Scriptures compare the state of those who die in the Lord to what? Acts 7:59, 60; 1 Corinthians 15:6, 16-18

Note: "They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. Job 14:21. Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious immortality." *The Great Controversy*, 550

"Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: 'Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!' Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live." *Ibid.*, 644

Friday

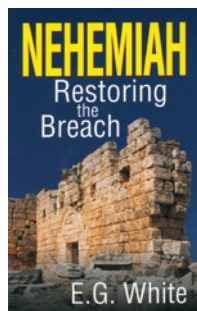
PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the first lie told to Eve?
- 2 What is death?
- 3 In what sense is the resurrection of Moses an exception to the general rule?
- 4 Explain the differences between the first and second resurrections.
- 5 What lessons are demonstrated in the raising of Lazarus?

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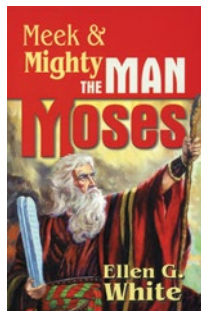
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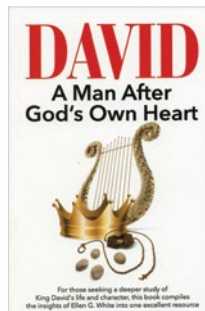
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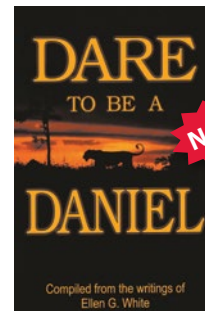
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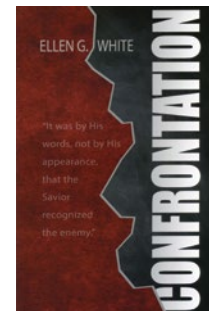
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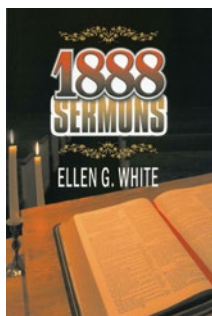
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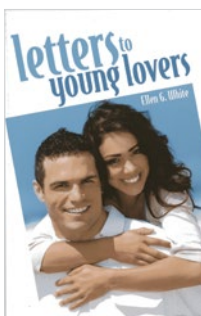
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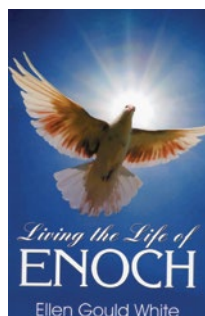
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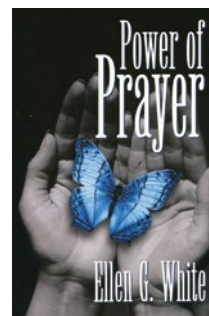
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Bell peppers come in a rainbow of shades—green, red, white, yellow, orange, purple, brown, and even black. Powerful, disease-fighting phytochemicals called carotenoids give the bell pepper its vibrant colors. Members of the nightshade family, which includes eggplants, tomatoes, and chili peppers, bell peppers may be eaten at any stage of growth, though their vitamin and

nutrient content peaks at full ripeness. These fruits are bursting with vitamins: a one-cup serving boasts 317 percent Daily Value (DV) of the antioxidant vitamin C—more than twice that of an orange! That same serving contains a host of vitamins, including 93 percent DV of vitamin A, 22 percent DV of vitamin B6, and 12 percent DV of vitamin E.

Bell peppers contain more than 30 different carotenoids, including beta-carotene and zeaxanthin, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory benefits. Reduced oxidative stress helps lower cancer risk. Increased consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables rich in carotenoids is associated with

long-term reduced risk of age-related macular degeneration. Eat bell peppers raw or gently cooked to maintain optimal health properties.

<https://tribunecontentagency.com/article/environmental-nutrition-bring-in-the-bell-peppers>

**Fruit**

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



CREAMY VEGETABLE NOODLE SOUP

Ingredients

1-2 Tbsp. olive oil, coconut oil, or water	1 ¼ tsp. salt, or to taste
1 medium yellow onion, diced	1 15-oz. can garbanzos, drained
2 ribs celery, diced	2 cups unsweetened, unflavored dairy free milk of choice (save aside ½ cup)
3 carrots, diced	½ cup cashews, blended in 1 ½ cups milk
1 red bell pepper, seeded, diced	4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
12 oz. baby red potatoes	2 Tbsp. nutritional yeast
3 cloves garlic, minced	8 oz. package pasta of choice
2 tsp. dried oregano	
1 tsp. dried rosemary	
1 tsp. dried thyme	

Process

Cook pasta according to directions. Drain, set aside.

Heat oil or water in soup pot over medium heat. Add onion and celery; sauté until soft and translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add carrots, bell pepper, potatoes and garlic; sauté until starting to soften. Add oregano, rosemary, thyme and salt. Stir in garbanzos.

Pour in ½ cup milk, vegetable broth, and nutritional yeast. Stir. Bring to a boil. Then simmer until vegetables are tender. Add blended cashew/milk mixture; heat through. Adjust seasonings to taste. May use fresh herbs if available. Add desired amount of pasta to soup bowl. Ladle in soup.



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Health Benefits of Bell Pepper

- *eye health*
- *anemia prevention*
- *vitamins B6, K1, E, A*
- *potassium, folate*
- *healthy compounds: capsanthin, violaxanthin, lutein, quercetin, luteolin*

www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods/bell-peppers#vitamins-and-minerals

