

HISTORIC  
**LANDMARKS**  
OF ADVENTISM

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*Avenues  
of the Soul*

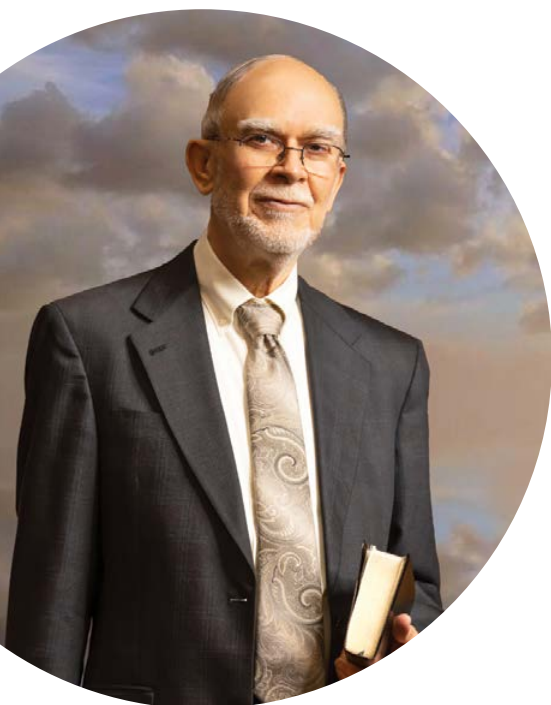
*Do you know the avenues  
by which the devil enters  
your soul?*

*p. 2*

*Our  
Violent  
World*

*p. 9*





## From the Editor

*John J. Grosboll*

# Come Before Winter

**D**uring his last imprisonment before his martyrdom, the apostle Paul wrote Timothy a second letter—the last letter written from his pen. He ended this letter to Timothy saying, “Do your utmost to come before winter.” 2 Timothy 4:21, *first part*

Paul made this request for several reasons.

- He knew that he was going to be martyred for the gospel, but he did not know when—that was up to the fickle-minded Nero.
- He had important things that he wanted to discuss with Timothy who was like a son to him, and if Timothy delayed until it was not possible to travel by ship because of winter, he might not see him at all.
- He had not been allowed any privileges at his second arrest and, therefore, had not been able to bring his outer coat with him. He would suffer cold in the winter without this garment.
- He wanted access to inspired writings for study that were not with him, and he wanted Timothy to bring them.
- Ellen White says that “The desire for love and sympathy was implanted in the heart by God himself. Christ in His hour of agony in

Gethsemane, while bearing the guilt of sinful men, longed for the sympathy of His disciples. And Paul, though almost indifferent to hardship and suffering, yearned for sympathy and companionship. God would have His people cherish love and sympathy for one another. Humanity, elevated, ennobled, and rendered Godlike, is worthy of respect and esteem. The sons and daughters of God will be tender-hearted, pitiful, courteous, to all men, ‘especially unto them who are of the household of faith.’” *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, 309

Is there someone that you are acquainted with or related to who needs you to come before winter? If you wait, you may be unable to minister to them at all. There comes a time when you cannot minister to your parents. There comes a time when you cannot minister to your children. There comes a time when you cannot witness to your neighbor, fellow worker, or relatives. Why is this? Because we are limited by time which comes to an end. Jesus said, “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.” John 9:4

Come before winter. **LM**

HISTORIC

# LANDMARKS

OF ADVENTISM

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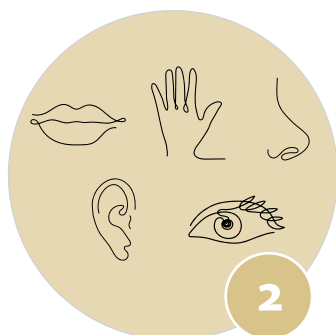
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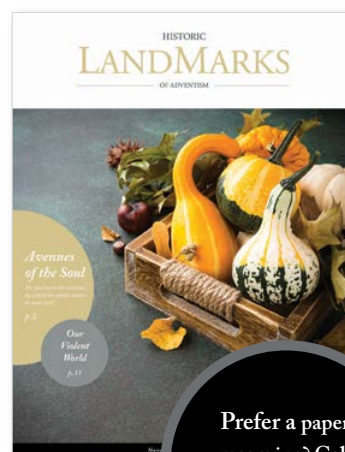
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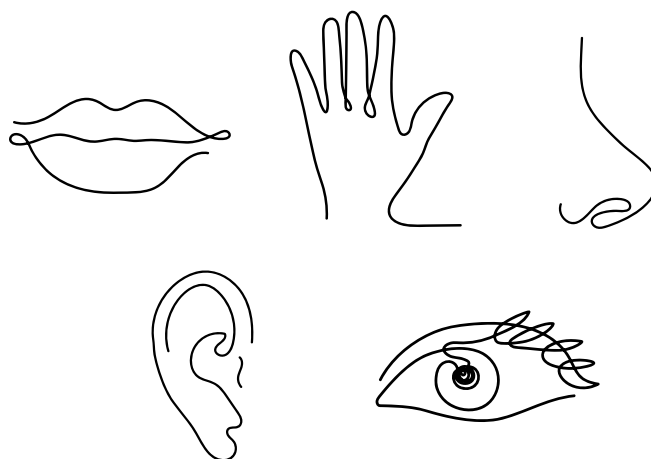
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All Bible texts, unless appearing in quoted references or otherwise identified, are from the New King James Version.



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# *Avenues of the Soul*

## *(Access Points for Satan)*

by John R. Pearson

**W**hen I first began reading the Spirit of Prophecy, I came across an interesting phrase that really piqued my interest. It appears in many places, and one where it is given fullest treatment is in *The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 518, 519:

“Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest. The heart must be faithfully sentinelled, or evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in darkness. ‘Gird up the loins

of your mind,’ Peter wrote, ‘be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ... not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.’”

The more I have contemplated this passage, the more value I have seen in it. The first thing that interested me was the admonition to “guard well the avenues of the soul.” My initial thought was “What are these avenues that I need to guard?”

Thankfully, a search of the Spirit of Prophecy gave an answer: “All should guard the senses, lest Satan gain victory

over them; for these are the avenues to the soul.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 507

If I had studied that initial paragraph from *The Acts of the Apostles* a bit more thoroughly, perhaps I would have understood what the avenues of the soul are, at least partially, for it says, “... avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts.” We read and see with our eyes. We hear with our ears. And sight and hearing are two senses that Satan has used successfully for thousands of years to lead folks astray.

We are given a similar warning in *Counsels for the Church*, 166:

“So far as in us lies, we should close every avenue by which the tempter may find access to us.

“Every Christian must stand on guard continually, watching every avenue of the soul where Satan might find access.”

Another warning is found in *Selected Messages*, Book 2, 324:

“Satan is watching every avenue whereby he can take advantage to enter with his specious temptations to spoil the soul.”

For over six thousand years, Satan has been studying the human race as a whole to determine how to most successfully use those avenues to cause its ruin. And since birth, he has been watching us individually to find ways to appeal to our senses so that we will think, speak, and act contrary to God’s will.

Think of how Satan appealed to our first mother to cause not only her downfall, but the downfall of the entire human race. “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.” Genesis 3:6. Sight, taste, and touch—three of the avenues skillfully used by Satan.

In commenting on this tragedy, Inspiration notes, “It seemed a small matter to our first parents, when tempted, to transgress the command of God in one small act and eat of a tree that was beautiful to the eye and pleasant to the taste. To the transgressors this was but a small act, but it destroyed their allegiance to God and opened a flood of woe and guilt which has deluged the world. Who can know, in the moment of temptation, the terrible consequences which will result from one wrong, hasty step! Our only safety is to be shielded by the grace of God every moment, and not put out our own spiritual eyesight so that we will call evil, good, and good, evil. Without hesitation or argument, we must close and guard the avenues of the soul against evil.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 324

Had Adam and Eve closed and guarded the avenues of the soul, mankind might still be living in the splendor of Eden.

Now let’s look at the second sentence in our opening paragraph:

“The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest.”

There are two things worth noting here. First, it is imperative that we exercise control over our thought process. 2 Corinthians 10:5 gives us this warning:

“Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ . . .”

What we think has such a profound effect on our character that there are many, many warnings in the Spirit of Prophecy about controlling our thinking.

The second caution this sentence provides is that Satan can indeed place thoughts in our minds. He cannot read our minds, but he can influence what we think about.

“The adversary of souls is not permitted to read the thoughts of men; but he is a keen observer, and he marks the words; he takes account of actions, and skillfully adapts his temptations to meet the cases of those who place themselves in his power. If we would labor to repress sinful thoughts and feelings, giving them no expression in words or actions, Satan would be defeated; for he could not prepare his specious temptations to meet the case.” *Selected Messages*, Book 1, 122, 123

An obvious question would be, “Who are those who place themselves in Satan’s power?” It is those who fail to repress sinful thoughts and feelings by giving them expression in words or actions. Satan could not tailor his efforts specifically to our character weaknesses and besetting sins if he does not know what those are as revealed by our words and actions.

Let’s now consider a few Bible characters who fell through a failure to guard these avenues that Satan uses so successfully.

We have already considered Adam and Eve. Think now of David. How did Satan get to David? “Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king’s house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold.” 2 Samuel 11:2

We don’t know how long David gazed at Bathsheba, but we do have some idea of what he was thinking, based on the record in 2 Samuel 11. The consequences of David’s failure, or even refusal, to guard the avenue of sight and reign in his thoughts made David guilty of not only breaking the seventh commandment, but ultimately the sixth as well. This story should be a powerful lesson to those who gaze unadvisedly at inappropriate scenes depicting immoral behavior.

Another familiar example we have of Satan’s use of our senses to bring about mankind’s destruction lies in the story of Sodom. In *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 476, we read, “The senses of many are benumbed by the indulgence of appetite and famil-

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ilarity with sin.” A few pages later, we read, “To indulge the taste at the expense of health is a wicked abuse of the senses. Those who engage in any species of intemperance, either in eating or drinking, waste their physical energies and weaken moral power. They will feel the retribution which follows the transgression of physical law.” Ibid., 486

That is exactly what happened in Sodom. Here is how Ezekiel makes note of it:

“Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw fit.” Ezekiel 16:49, 50

Indeed, their moral power was weakened and they felt “the retribution which follows the transgression of physical law.”

There is a very enlightening passage regarding the care we need to exercise in guarding the avenues of the soul:

“We have been bought with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish. What a price is this, unparalleled, infinite! But though Christ has bought us, and invites us to come to Him, still the world holds out its attractions to us, and strives for the mastery. Shall love for God, or love for the world, triumph in the conflict? Satan and his evil angels are watching at every avenue leading to the human heart, seeking to force souls to accept evil suggestions. The enemy presents bribes to win us to the world, as he presented bribes to Christ in the wilderness of temptation. Unless we depend upon a power out of and above ourselves, the enemy will succeed in accomplishing our ruin. But in looking to Jesus, by studying His life and character, by earnestly desiring to be like Him, our minds will be balanced in the right direction, that we may overcome selfishness, and choose a course of righteousness.” *The Youth's Instructor*, October 27, 1892

Notice that this counsel ends with the sobering conclusion that Satan's success is made possible because of our inherent selfishness. Truly, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately, incurably wicked!

“Now is the time to have every piece of the armor on. ‘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.’ Ephesians 6:12. Here is our work, and Satan will come in through every avenue that is left unguarded, to blind minds as to the true and vital interests that are at stake for this time.” *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, 930

“Let every soul be wide awake to close every avenue of the soul to the sophistry of Satan, as revealed in heaven and in Eden. Let us be armed with that vigilance that shall resist his enchantments.” *Loma Linda Messages*, 88

“Our only safety is in being shielded by the grace of God every moment, and not putting out our own spiritual eyesight so that we call evil good, and good, evil. Without hesitation or argument, we must close and guard the avenues of the soul against evil.” *Gospel Workers* (1892), 205

“Guard well the avenues of the soul. Place sentinels at the eyes, the ears, the lips. When prevarications and conjectures are brought before you, and your minds are disturbed, go to Jesus, and pray for help that you may not be ensnared by the wiles of Satan.” *The Review and Herald*, August 28, 1883

“Thoughts and meditations upon the goodness of God to us would close the avenues of the soul to Satan's suggestions.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, 222

If we are following the instructions that Paul gave to both the Colossians and the Corinthians to do all in the name of the Lord and to the glory of God, the avenues of the soul would remain beyond the reach of Satan and his emissaries. **LM**

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# *The Adoption of God*

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by Michael C. Wells

**O**ver six thousand years ago a terrible thing happened. Mankind, in the form of Adam and Eve, gave over their kingdom to Lucifer, the deceiver and liar called Satan and the devil. Adam was the first king of earth appointed by God. He gave him dominion over everything on earth. “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’”  
Genesis 1:26

What a wonderful place the world must have been. No disease or death, no hate or war. A place of peace and tranquility. Our little blue orb of a world, set far from the rest of the universe, was a place of goodness and virtue. God visited often, walking and talking with Adam and Eve in the garden. He gave them instruction and answered their questions. But because of Satan, our world took a turn toward destruction and disaster. When Eve was deceived by the wiles of Satan in the form of a serpent, she never imagined what her “little” sin would mean for the world. It seems little to us, but to God, it was a test of obedience, and selfishness was the true name of that sin.



“

*Selfishness has great repercussions, not only on ourselves, but on others around us.*

Selfishness is an invasive sin. We do not realize that our selfishness will have great repercussions, not only on ourselves but on others around us. It was selfishness that led Eve to take the fruit and eat it. She thought she would gain more than what God had already given them. She was not happy with all that God had given them, and like Satan, wanted more. After all, the fruit did look delicious. That fatal step caused a cascading affect that permeated the world with sin. God said, “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2:17. This truth was not believed by Eve. If it had, she would never have eaten the fruit of the tree.

She allowed her own thoughts and the promptings of Satan to sway her to follow her own way. She gave into unbelief and selfishness. As Eve did, how often do we allow our own desires and the promptings around us to turn us from the path of God onto the path of Satan?

We can see after all these years that God was true to His word. Billions of people have died over the centuries since Eve’s fateful encounter with Satan. Yet this truth has not yet been fully realized. God spoke not only of physical death, but of a spiritual death yet to take place when the judgment of God has been concluded.

People today are all mixed up about death and the afterlife. Many think that we will live on after physical death. They mistakenly believe that all are spiritually immortal, yet God said, “Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me. ... For I raise My hand to heaven, and say, ‘As I live forever.’” Deuteronomy 32:39, *first part*, 40

Paul writes, “I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, He who is

the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power.” 1 Timothy 6:13–16. If we all had eternal life, if we were all going to be saved, why would the rich young ruler ask Jesus, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” Matthew 19:16

No, the lie that Satan told from the beginning was that we would not die. There was not a single “good” thing the rich young ruler could do to inherit eternal life. There is no merit in any of our actions. This is why the ultimate plan of redemption had to be set into motion. From the beginning, God planned for every human being to be in heaven. Paul writes that we were “preordained” or “predestined” to be with God. Yet because of sin, not all will be with God in the end, only those who have been “conformed to the image” of Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.” Romans 8:29, 30

Every person must decide if he or she will be one of these predestined sons of God or if they will remain a son or daughter of Satan. God sees the end from the beginning, but we must move forward with our choice only seeing the beginning of the end. If we make that choice to be one of God’s people, we will become adopted by God as one of His own. “Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” Ephesians 1:5

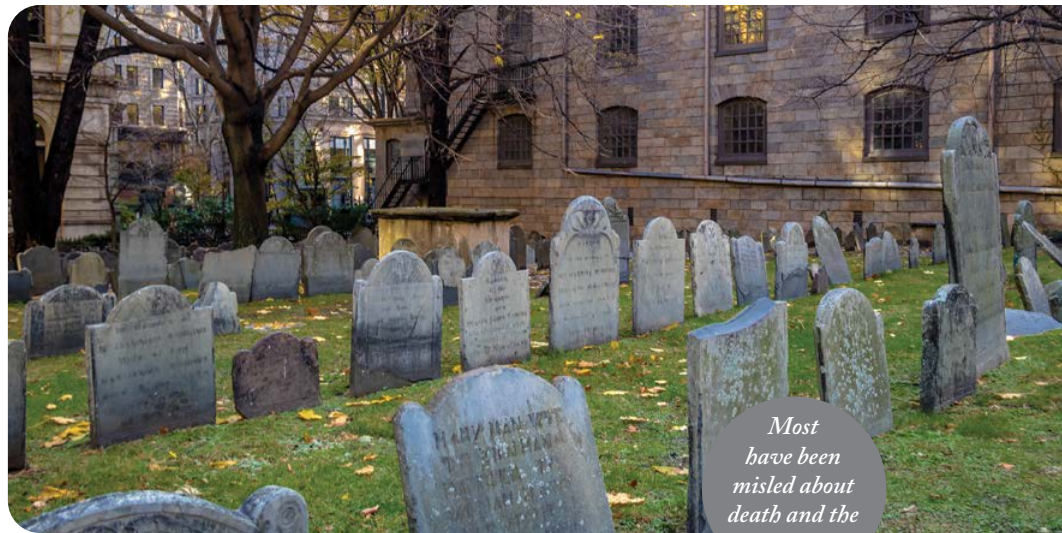
God wants every person to become one of His sons and daughters. God loved us so much that He sent His only Begotten Son. “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Galatians 4:4, 5



In the beginning, Adam and Eve needed no Saviour. They were created sinless, without blame. They were not “born under the law” since there was no law broken. But when sin had abounded, our first parents were now “under the law” of God and needed to be “re-deemed” as “those who were under the law” to be adopted back into the family of God. They gave away their citizenship to heaven and their dominion over earth when they fell for the temptations of Satan and sinned. As their descendants, we are born under the law of God since sin is in the world. We are not born as Jesus who was a blend of the divine and human. We are born fully human into the family of Satan, “among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.” Ephesians 2:3. Like all of us, Adam and Eve needed to be adopted back into God’s family as “sons of God.”

Mankind does not realize the peril they are in today. When born into the world, we are born under the condemnation of God’s law. We are born as sinners who need a Saviour. Like Adam and Eve, we, too, are a part of the wrong family and we must reject this family of Satan and sin if we are to join the family of God. Sin is pervasive. We inherit the degradation of sin in our bodies from the lineage of our parents. We are inundated with sinful acts, sinful scenes, and sinful talk all around us. Our minds are polluted by daily living, even if we are not partaking in sinful practices. This world has become so corrupted by Satan that even the most devout Christian struggles because of the onslaught of sin around them. How can we endure this terrible daily trial?

The answer is in Jesus. He had all our human traits. He understood human failings. Yet He was also the God of heaven. With this mixture of human and divine traits, He is well able to understand and sympathize with our



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weaknesses. When in the wilderness of temptation, He endured great hunger and thirst, given His divine nature, He could have stopped His suffering any time He desired, yet He suffered as any other human. This is the reason Jesus qualifies to be our High Priest who can remediate our sins. “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:14–16

To become part of God’s family, our actions, attitudes, speech, eating habits, and views must be like that of God. In heaven, when Lucifer sinned, it was because his views and attitudes changed. He let selfishness and pride dominate his character. This was opposite to the rest of the angels of God. Heaven was a happy, peaceful, busy place. All enjoyed their work and loved God and knew God loved them. But after pride raised its ugly head in Satan, dissatisfaction was felt in heaven. As Satan (Lucifer) nurtured these feelings, he began to entice other an-

gels with his dissatisfaction. Sin is like a noxious weed sowing its way through a garden. It only takes one weed to start, but that one weed produces more weeds until the whole garden is filled with them. That is how Satan worked in heaven and now works in us.

Jesus is different in character. He is like His Father in heaven. “I and My Father are One.” John 10:30. “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48. Jesus tells us we must be like the Father if we are to be adopted into His family. We must like the same things. We will enjoy the foods God gave us in the beginning of earth’s history. We will speak like God speaks with love and compassion. We will have attitudes that reflect the Spirit of God in all we do. If we have these traits, we will no longer be in bondage to sin. “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” Romans 8:15–17

If we accept Christ as our Advocate before the Father, we must first accept

“

*Let all bitterness, wrath,  
anger, clamor, and evil  
speaking be put away from  
you, with all malice.*

*Ephesians 4:31*

His grace that was given to us. As children of the devil, there is nothing good in us, but through Jesus Christ a new life can be nurtured. We do not have to stay children of the devil because through the sacrifice of Jesus we can claim the promises of the redeeming love of God.

“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1

Paul writes extensively about this “filthiness of the flesh” in his letters to the churches. “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.” Ephesians 4:31. Most people will recognize adultery, stealing, and other sins as traits we must overcome to be adopted into the family of God, but Paul lists the things of the heart that must be changed. He encourages us to replace them with virtues of godliness. “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.” Verse 32

The life that Jesus lived on this earth taught us that we must live to be like God in our thoughts, actions, and speech. It was not enough to just sacrifice His life for our sins; He also came to show us how to live by setting an example for us to follow. Adam and Eve knew the character of Jesus. They had talked with Him many times. After they sinned, they were crushed by their actions, and were deeply sorrowful. They would have done anything to once again enjoy the face-to-face fellowship with their holy God. Over time, we have lost spiritual fellowship with God. We do not see our sins in the same light as our first parents, but that does not make them any the less grievous.

The good news is we can regain that connection, that spiritual fellowship, if we put our trust in Jesus. He has made provision for us to know and to love His good will toward us.

We have something that ancient Israel did not have. We have the Bible complete

with the history of the mistakes of Israel on through the endurance and godliness of Joseph, Daniel, Elijah, and Moses. We have the writings of the prophecies of Amos, Habakkuk, Obadiah, and more. And to complete the fullness of God, we have the teachings of Jesus and the witness of His disciples who, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, wrote down for us the great wonders and works of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What more could God have done! Yet, He went even further.

To ensure that we who come to Jesus and claim His promises will not falter, He gave us the Helper of heaven. The Holy Spirit is given to every man, woman, and child that will commit to following Jesus with all their heart. The Spirit is only given to those who are dedicated to God. He cannot live in those who are double-minded. James admonishes us, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” James 4:8. Jesus promises we will never be alone. Prayer, the study of His promises, and active duty are the staple of a good Christian character.

Thousands of years have passed since the time of our first parents. They rest today in the grave awaiting the great day of deliverance. They committed their lives to be obedient to God and His law. Perfect obedience is the principle of the followers of Jesus. Many have turned back because of selfishness, and not all were, or will be, adopted into the family of God. But those who are called and will be called the “sons of God” are found to be in perfect obedience to His law and its principles.

Time is growing so short. The road may be rocky, and the trials may be many, but the reward of following through to the end is an everlasting life that we can hardly imagine. We must be ready for that great day of God, ready to meet Him in the clouds, ready to sing with the angels in adoration and thankfulness for the love of God. **LM**

*Michael C. Wells is the director of Anointing Oil Ministries.*

# *Our Violent World*

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by John J. Grosboll

**T**he subject of the growing and increasing violence all over the world today is dealt with extensively in Bible prophecy. For example, Paul writes: “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” 2 Timothy 3:1–5. Paul continues that evil men and seducers will become worse and worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves.





In reading about the condition of the world in the days of Noah as described in Genesis 6:11, we find that “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.”

Jesus described the last days of this world to His disciples, saying, “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. Violence was prevalent all over the world in the days of Noah.

The world also was a violent place during the time of the city of Sodom. The Bible records the following account of sexual assault in the days of Sodom:

“Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. And he said, ‘Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant’s house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.’ And they said, ‘No, but we will spend the night in the open square.’ But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

“Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.’ So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, and said, ‘Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you

wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof.’ And they said, ‘Stand back!’ Then they said, ‘This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them.’ So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door.” Genesis 19:1–11.

The next day, God sent fire from heaven and Sodom and Gomorrah were burned to the ground.

Jesus talked about Sodom, too. “Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.” Luke 17:28–30

The day and age we live in is as violent and sinful as it was before the flood and again at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Statistics show that in 2021, 2.55 million acts of violence were committed in the United States. Let’s look at some of the causes of violence today in America.

Substance abuse—the use of mind-altering drugs—is one of the main causes. There are several reasons why drug use is associated with violent behavior.

First of all, drugs, such as alcohol, have the effect of anesthetizing the higher control centers in the brain, damaging a person’s ability to make calm, rational judgments. Roughly 50 percent of the victims and perpetrators of assault violence are under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol is also strongly associated with domestic violence.

A second reason that the use of mind-altering drugs is associated with violence is because addicts commit crimes to obtain money to buy the drugs.

Third, confrontations occur among those who are involved in the manufac-

“

*But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.*

ture, sale, and distribution of these drugs, because millions or even billions of dollars are involved.

The Bible strictly prohibits the use of mind-altering drugs for pleasure. There are many texts in both the Old and New Testaments that address the use of alcohol and drugs, but let's look at just two.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise." Proverbs 20:1

"And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." Ephesians 5:18

The Greek word *asotia*, which is the word translated as "excess" or "dissipation," depending on which version of the Bible a person is reading, means "unsavedness, wastefulness, wantonness, profligacy, or prodigality."

The King James Version translates *asotia* as "excess," but this Greek word has never meant "excess." The New King James Version translates *asotia* as "dissipation" and is a much more accurate translation of the word. Paul is saying that if a person drinks wine and other alcoholic beverages, then he can do so to the point of wantonness and becoming utterly corrupted, beyond all hope, beyond saving. Harsh, but true words.

The Greek Lexicon translates the word *nepho* as "to be sober." But it also can be translated "not intoxicated" or "to abstain from wine." People seem to get stuck on the word *drunk* and in so doing, they excuse themselves from the consequences found in the Bible.

Someone will say, "I don't intend to get falling-down drunk. I'm not going to commit a mortal sin. I'm just going to get a little buzzed." The tragic last words, I'm sure, of every man and woman who is now addicted to alcohol and whose lives and those of their families have been ruined. It may be true that one man can drink a couple of drinks and go home. But too many in this world drink until they are unable to function normally.

### Alcohol in the United States in 2020:

**316,032**

Americans are arrested for drunkenness annually

**48%**

of homicide convicts were drinking before they committed murder

**244,000**

Americans are sent to prison annually for drug-related crimes

**26%**

of all arrests in America are related to drug offenses



Alcohol is absorbed very rapidly into the blood stream, so from the very first swallow, you are a little bit drunk, and with each subsequent swallow, you become increasingly drunk. A drinker may only have had two or three sips, but even this limited amount of alcohol consumption will have a damaging effect on the judgment center of the brain, and affect his ability to make sound judgments. Those who choose to drink liberally until they are in a completely drunken state will be unable to think clearly, see clearly, or to control their bodies.

The Bible says that the drunkard will not inherit the kingdom. *Drunkard* can be translated as "drinker." It is not necessary for a person to drink to excess to be prohibited from entering the kingdom. Choosing to be a drinker when God has given the admonition not to drink alcoholic beverages, has made drinking no less of an idol to the "casual" drinker than it would be to the drunkard.

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of

God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10

"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21

As with any sin, the first step—that first drink—starts a person down a path that makes it easier to continue to drink. We really have no idea, from one person to the next, how much a person can drink before they are drunk and no longer in control of their faculties and bodies.

If you want to go to heaven, then drinking alcoholic beverages, according to these verses, is a sin that needs to be



Violence  
was  
prevalent all  
over the world  
in the days of  
Noah.

repented of and forsaken. In heaven, there are no drinking establishments nor liquor stores, and there will be no drunkards. If you are really serious about having eternal life, you will give up those things which the Bible expressly prohibits and ask the Lord to show you the truth and how to live it.

If all the peoples of the world would live as Christ lived, there would be a natural decrease in violence in society.

Another cause of the increase in the violence that we see

today is the result of the callous disregard for human life to a degree that we have never before seen. Seemingly normal, sane people are participating in extreme acts of violence. Why?

There is a Bible principle that can clearly explain this tremendous increase in crime, and it is this: It is a law of the human mind that by beholding, by looking at something or allowing something to have a continual influence over our minds, we become changed into the image, into the character likeness, of that which we behold (see *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 91).

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18

But what happens if what we are looking at—consuming, listening to, reading, following—is not the glory of the Lord?

All around us, the world is filled with sinful enticements. The most attractive, alluring forms can be found in the entertainment industry—television, radio, movies, music, social media, internet, to name a few. We see God’s law broken in sinful acts of

violence performed in movies and television programs—shootings, stabbings, physical assaults, sexual abuse, kidnapping. Actors and actresses “pretending” to be people and things they are not, using the Lord’s name in vain, smoking, drinking, immodestly dressed, and promoting adultery, fornication, and promiscuity. We cannot hear the voice of the Holy Spirit while listening to music with its rhythm that so disturbs the natural cadence of the body, throwing the central nervous system into chaos as the artist also spews violent words describing murder, bigotry, abuse, drug and alcohol use, promiscuity, and other sinful acts.

Fewer than 15 percent of American homes had a television in 1950. By 1990, 93 percent of American homes had a television set. Within that period, the annual number of murders in America increased from 7,942 to 21,860. The murder rate more than doubled.

Consider what happens to infants and small children who are unable to judge whom they should look to as a role model. Research today shows that watching television, especially violent scenes, is most dangerous to the very young. Infants at 14 months of age will imitate behaviors they see on television.

American children today, ages two to five years, are watching over 27 hours of television per week. Remember, they cannot distinguish between fact and fantasy, even when they are being coached. Television exposure has been demonstrated to significantly increase children’s aggressiveness by 160 percent in two years, according to one study.

A 1982 report found that, as a result of watching television on a regular basis, children “may become less sensitive to the pain and suffering of others.” It also found that it made the children more fearful of the world around them.

A review performed in 2010 found that youth, ages 12–17, who play video games, exhibited “increased aggressive behavior, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, and decreased empathy and prosocial behavior.”

What, then, does television do to teenagers? Here are the results:



1. decreased interest in reading;
2. decreased interest in learning;
3. development of poor health habits;
4. development of poor or immoral attitudes;
5. increased sexual activity, with the first sexual encounter occurring at a younger age.

A study done in 2002 regarding the causal link between TV and aggressive behavior found: “Even after making statistical allowances for factors such as psychiatric disorders, economic status, and prior violent acts, ... they found that those who watched one to three hours of TV per day were about 60% more likely to get in a serious fight, threaten someone, or use a weapon to commit a crime than those who watched less than an hour a day. More than three hours of TV more than doubled the risk.”

Tragically, extensively watching violence on television, children become numb to the horror of violence. They begin to accept violence as a way to solve problems. They will imitate the violence they see on television and will identify with the television characters. Television has a powerful influence in developing children's value systems and shaping their behavior.

It has been estimated that the evil effects of television viewing are responsible for half of the current number of homicides, rapes, and assaults in the United States. If we did not have television in our society, we could expect that we would be having at least 10,000 fewer homicides, 70,000 fewer rapes, and 700,000 fewer injurious assaults every year.

A study was conducted from 1977–1979, with 557 participating six to ten-year-old children from five countries. Its purpose was to examine the “longitudinal relationship between early exposure to TV violence and adult aggressive behavior for both males and females.” A follow-up study was conducted in the late 1990s involving 329 of the original



*As  
the people  
did in the days  
before the flood, people  
today are engaged in  
lavish parties, drinking,  
marrying, divorcing,  
and pursuing worldly  
entertainments.*

participants who were, at that time, between the ages of 20–25. So, what did this study find? When exposed to TV violence in early childhood, aggressive behavior was predicted in both males and females and the test subjects identified with the aggressive TV characters. Research indicates that although exposure to media violence may have short-term effects on adults, its negative impact on children is long-lasting.

The internet and social media are just as addictive as television. Violence and pornography are available 24/7 on the worldwide web. People troll these medias in search of victims on a day-to-day basis, to rape, rob, or kidnap. Child pornography is readily available on the internet.

Games involving war, murder, robbery, as well as games that simply take up your time—time that could be spent in Bible study, witnessing, and prayer—are prevalent.

Sources: [washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1993/04/17/is-tv-to-blame-for-violence/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1993/04/17/is-tv-to-blame-for-violence/); [apa.org/topics/video-games/violence-harmful-effects](https://www.apa.org/topics/video-games/violence-harmful-effects); [drugabusesta-](https://www.drugabusestatistics.org/drug-related-crime-statistics)

[aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Facts\\_for\\_Families/FFF-Guide/Children\\_and\\_TV\\_Violence](https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children_and_TV_Violence); [science.org/content/article/does-tv-make-us-violent](https://www.science.org/content/article/does-tv-make-us-violent); [apa.org/pi/prevent-violence/resources/tv-violence](https://www.apa.org/pi/prevent-violence/resources/tv-violence)

Friend, it is a law of the human mind that by beholding we will be changed. We cannot escape it. Our Creator made us that way. What we behold, what we look at, goes into our minds and is stored in our memory banks. The sum total of what we have been watching becomes part of our characters.

The Bible has a great deal to say about what we should and should not listen to and watch.

“The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: ‘Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?’ He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, he who despises the gain of oppressions, who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil: He will dwell on high; his

place of defense will be the fortress of rocks; bread will be given him, his water will be sure." Isaiah 33:14-16

Isaiah is speaking about the last days, the days in which we are living right now. He describes a people who will escape the terrible trouble that is coming upon this world and be saved. Unlike most of the people who will profess to be Christians yet will be breaking God's law because they still find pleasure in sin, these people will be living a righteous life in harmony with God's law. (See 1 John 3 and 1 John 5.)

If I am to be delivered in the last days, I must be living a righteous life. This includes removing anything that I might see or hear that would influence me away from this righteous life, anything that would cause me to speak words or do things that would make my profession a lie. God holds me, and you, responsible for what we see, where we go, and what we listen to. We must be as soldiers guarding the avenues to the soul—our eyes, ears, and mouth. We must choose to do what is right at all times. We cannot blame someone else because they have the television or radio on. If we are not vigilant about what we allow ourselves to come into contact with, then we will have to answer to the Lord in the day of judgment for what we have done.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." Psalm 19:14

"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Luke 11:28

"Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me." Psalm 119:133

"I will set nothing wicked before my eyes." Psalm 101:3, *first part*

If you are addicted to alcohol, you cannot go to the places where it is sold or even hang out with the people you used to drink with, if you want to remain free from it. In the same way, if you are ad-

By the age of

# 18

young Americans have viewed an estimated

**200,000**

acts of violence, including

**40,000**

murders

Source: Report of the Council on Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association.



dicted to television, the internet, or social media, the only way you are going to get free from them is to get that television out of your house, remove access to the internet and social media platforms from your phone and computers.

If you are looking at sin, if you are listening to sin, you will not be found guiltless in the day of judgment.

Philippians 4:8 tells us where our focus should be, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble [uplifting or honorable], whatever things are just [not sinful], whatever things are pure [pure in dress and language], whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

Friend, no one will see Jesus if they lack holiness of character. "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." Matthew 7:13, 14

Many people today spend too much time filling their minds and hearts with the attractions and enticements of this world and so little time in God's word. And John tells us what will happen to these people when they continue to reject the pleading of the Holy Spirit.

"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them." John 12:40

He, meaning God, is looking for a people who study His word, obey His commandments, come to Him often in prayer, and who seek a transformation of character that will bring them face to face with Jesus and the Father on a soon-to-dawn morning. But for those who prefer the things of this world, continually rejecting His offer of salvation, He will harden their hearts, and the Spirit will leave them alone with their idols.

What decisions are you making? Each decision that you make right now will determine your eternal destiny. Are you seeking a righteous and holy life, obeying His commandments, keeping your mind pure and holy, filled with His word, and your body free from defilement? Make the right decision today. **LM**

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# *Heaven Came Down*

O what a wonderful, wonderful day, day I will never forget;  
After I'd wandered in darkness away, Jesus my Saviour I met.  
O what a tender, compassionate friend, He met the need of my heart;  
Shadows dispelling, with joy I am telling, He made all the darkness depart.

Born of the Spirit with life from above into God's family divine,  
Justified fully thru Calvary's love, O what a standing is mine!  
And the transaction so quickly was made, when as a sinner I came,  
Took of the offer, of grace He did proffer, He saved me, O praise His dear name!

Now I've a hope that will surely endure after the passing of time;  
I have a future in heaven for sure there in those mansions sublime.  
And it's because of that wonderful day, when at the cross I believed;  
Riches eternal and blessings supernal, from His precious hand I received.

Heaven came down and glory filled my soul,  
When at the cross the Saviour made me whole.  
My sins were washed away and my night was turned to day.  
Heaven came down and glory filled my soul!

*John W. Peterson*



# Christian Character

## Clues – KJV

### Across

- B7 Abraham fed angels with a \_\_\_\_\_ of bread. ....Genesis 18:5  
 C2 This is considered outrageous. ....Proverbs 27:4  
 C14 Keep your heart with \_\_\_\_\_. ....Proverbs 4:23  
 E4 A \_\_\_\_\_ spirit goes before a fall. ....Proverbs 16:18  
 G2 Who helped the man on the Jericho Road who fell among thieves? .....Luke 10:33  
 I18 Jesus healed those who were \_\_\_\_\_ by the devil. ....Acts 10:38  
 L8 Job was clothed in \_\_\_\_\_. ....Job 29:14  
 Q3 \_\_\_\_\_ the devil and he will flee. ....James 4:7  
 Q21 Sing of \_\_\_\_\_ and judgment. ....Psalm 101:1  
 S7 The \_\_\_\_\_ of Judah will be cut off. ....Isaiah 11:13  
 U4 The Lord turned the \_\_\_\_\_ of Job. ....Job 42:10  
 U15 Jesus said Lazarus' \_\_\_\_\_ was not unto death. ....John 11:4  
 W18 Behave \_\_\_\_\_ in a perfect way. ....Psalm 101:2  
 X5 Martha was \_\_\_\_\_ about many things. ....Luke 10:41  
 Y13 The fear of the Lord is to hate \_\_\_\_\_. ....Proverbs 8:13  
 Y20 What type of heart is the life of the flesh? ....Proverbs 14:30

### Down

- B2 Joseph took \_\_\_\_\_ to collect his family. ....Genesis 45:19  
 B9 Take Jesus' yoke and find \_\_\_\_\_. ....Matthew 11:29  
 C25 Mary \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord with ointment. ....John 11:2  
 E6 Walk \_\_\_\_\_. ....Psalm 15:2  
 F16 Make a difference and show \_\_\_\_\_. ....Jude 22  
 F18 The poor and maimed invited to a feast cannot \_\_\_\_\_. ....Luke 14:14  
 F20 The men of Sodom \_\_\_\_\_ around Lot's house. ....Genesis 19:4  
 H14 In the house of Lydia, Paul and Silas \_\_\_\_\_ the brethren. ....Acts 16:40  
 I10 Love your \_\_\_\_\_ as yourself. ....Romans 13:9  
 I12 A \_\_\_\_\_ answer turns away anger. ....Proverbs 15:1  
 N22 \_\_\_\_\_ words stir up anger. ....Proverbs 15:1  
 O3 What did Lydia sell? ....Acts 16:14  
 O5 Offer \_\_\_\_\_ without grumbling. ....1 Peter 4:9  
 O24 How did Joshua spy out Jericho? ....Joshua 2:1  
 Q13 Rahab hid the spies under \_\_\_\_\_ on the roof. ....Joshua 2:6  
 R11 To whom did Joseph reveal himself? ....Genesis 45:1  
 R16 Rahab \_\_\_\_\_ not because she helped the spies. ....Hebrews 11:31  
 R20 Many \_\_\_\_\_ were healed. ....Acts 28:9  
 U7 Those who overcome will sit with the Father on His \_\_\_\_\_. ....Revelation 3:21  
 V14 Where angels met Abraham. ....Genesis 18:1

A	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	A
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Answer Key:

Z	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	135	140	145	150	155	160	165	170	175	180	185	190	195	200	205	210	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250	255	260	265	270	275	280	285	290	295	300	305	310	315	320	325	330	335	340	345	350	355	360	365	370	375	380	385	390	395	400	405	410	415	420	425	430	435	440	445	450	455	460	465	470	475	480	485	490	495	500	505	510	515	520	525	530	535	540	545	550	555	560	565	570	575	580	585	590	595	600	605	610	615	620	625	630	635	640	645	650	655	660	665	670	675	680	685	690	695	700	705	710	715	720	725	730	735	740	745	750	755	760	765	770	775	780	785	790	795	800	805	810	815	820	825	830	835	840	845	850	855	860	865	870	875	880	885	890	895	900	905	910	915	920	925	930	935	940	945	950	955	960	965	970	975	980	985	990	995	1000
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## *How God Sent the Flour*

It was time for worship. Mother's dear friend Miss Clara was visiting with the family. Bobby proudly handed her his new Bible to use. After worship was over, Miss Clara said to Bobby, "What a beautiful copy of God's word you have!"

"Yes," answered Bobby. "It is the nicest Bible in the whole world, for God sent it right to me." Then he told her of his answer to prayer for a Bible of his very own.

"God always does above all we can ask or think," said Miss Clara. "He delights in 'going over the top' in good things."

"Did He ever supply your needs for something, too?" asked Howard.

Miss Clara laughed and said, "That means you want a story." When she had cuddled up the baby and gathered the boys around her, she went on. "I'm going to tell you a true story of how God sent us food. When I was a girl, my father was a minister. Once when he had to go to a meeting, he didn't have even one cent to leave Mother with which to buy food while he was gone. The people had not paid what they had promised. Father had just enough money to buy his ticket. He told Mother he would not go and leave us without money, but Mother quoted that beautiful verse that you have learned, 'My God shall supply



all your need,' and told Father he must go, that God would take care of us.

"We had some potatoes, a few cans of fruit, a little dried corn, and salt in the house, but the flour bin was empty. Mother did not believe in going in debt, and we bought only what we could pay for. Oh, yes, I forgot to say that we still had one loaf of bread when Father left. But when that was gone, there was no flour to make any more. Mother smiled and told us that God knew we needed flour, so we shouldn't worry. She had us all kneel with her while she asked our heavenly Father to send us a sack of flour. When she arose, she made the rising for bread, just as if the flour bin were full. Then she said, 'Now children, I've done all I can; God will do the rest.' We all went to bed strong in faith that God would answer our prayers. I almost expected to wake up in the morning and find a sack of flour in the kitchen. When my brother came downstairs, the first thing he asked was, 'Has God sent the flour yet?'"

"Mother lifted the lid from the bread bowl and let us see how light and foamy the rising was. All it needed was the flour. We ate a scant breakfast of potatoes and salt, and then Mother knelt by the empty flour bin and praised God because He had said His children would never need to beg for bread.

"Still no flour came. Mother and I washed the dishes, and Mother started to sing the old song, 'Oh for a faith that will not shrink.' My little brother, who was looking out of the window, said, 'Somebody is tying a horse to our fence.' We children all hurried to look out, fully expecting to see the woman carry in some flour. To our great disappointment she came up the path empty handed.

"Mother invited her in, and she sat down, acting rather embarrassed and strange. She was not a Christian and never had been to church, but her daughter had been converted during the revival Father had held; and I knew Father and Mother had been praying that she and her husband might know Jesus, too.

"She talked about the weather, and kept twisting her scarf. Finally she said, 'I want to tell you a strange thing that happened to

me this morning. As I was getting breakfast, I heard a voice say, 'Take Brother Hayden some flour.' I knew no one was in the kitchen but me, and I got scared. Then I heard it again. 'Go take Brother Hayden some flour.' I suppose I'm a fool, but do you need flour?'"

"By this time Mother was crying, and saying, 'Praise the Lord.' She told the woman of our prayers for flour, showed her the empty bin, and the crock of rising. The woman too then began to cry, and going to her buggy, she gave my brother a sack of flour, handed me a basket of potatoes, while the younger brother and sister carried in a jar of milk and a bucket of butter. 'I just thought if God was telling me to take you flour, like as not you needed the butter too, so I brought it along,' she told Mother.

"Mother kissed her, and said, 'You look like an angel to us.' Then she mixed her bread, put it to rise, and we held a real thanksgiving prayer meeting. Seeing how God had led her to help us so touched the woman that she gave her heart to Him that day in our house.

"She seemed to know Father had not been paid, so before he got home from the meeting, people came from all parts of his parish and paid Mother both in food and money a great deal more than they owed."

"Was that good bread?" asked Bobby as Miss Clara finished the story.

"Indeed it was," said Miss Clara, "it was like heavenly manna."

*My Favorite Prayer Stories*, Joe L. Wheeler,  
©2015, 65-67 LM



*Wheat  
and its flour  
have sustained  
humanity in the  
hardest times.*





# Our Only Safety

**T**he daily record of disasters shows that there is no safety anywhere. Even in our homes we are in danger; for storms, floods, and fire are sweeping off thousands, while earthquakes are destroying additional thousands. If there ever was a time when we should be sober and watch unto prayer, it is now. Our lives are safe only when hid with Christ in God. We need every day to purify ourselves even as He is pure. There is always hope for us in God. Faith is our defense, for it connects our human weakness with divine power. *The Review and Herald*, January 29, 1884 **LM**



# Longing to See the Light

**A**t the end of June 2018, a soccer coach and his 12 players in Thailand went into the Tham Luang Nang Non cave for an hour-long excursion after practice. They took a rope, a flashlight, and some batteries. The young men ranged in age from 11–16, and their coach was just 25 years old. Their adventure was meant to be of short duration so they did not prepare for a long trip. But as it turned out, it became an 18-day nightmare when the entrance to the cave unexpectedly flooded due to monsoon rains and they were trapped with no food or warm clothing. The oxygen in the cave began to run low and eventually the light from the flashlight went out. They kept themselves alive only by drinking fresh water that dripped from stalactites in the cave.

Ultimately, over the course of three days—July 8, 9, and 10—all of the boys and their coach were rescued. During their rescue each boy was led out of the cave by two experienced divers: one leading the way and the other following behind. They emerged from the cave hungry and cold, but safe and longing to see the light.

This brought to mind the scripture found in John 8:12, where Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

We live in a world of darkness and sin—a darkness so deep that sometimes it is impossible to believe that we will ever see the light again.

“A large number of precious souls are groping in darkness, yet longing and weeping and praying for light.” *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 65

“Light means revelation, and the light is to shine amid moral darkness. ... Apart from Christ there is no light at all. There need not be a cloud between the soul and Jesus. ... His great heart of love is longing to flood the soul with the bright beams of His righteousness.” *Lift Him Up*, 221

Dear Father, as Your people,  
You have given us great light  
and the opportunity to take  
truth and life to a world in  
darkness. Help us to be faithful  
to that charge. **LM**





## Your Letters

"Thank you for your ministry. The messages and the *LandMarks* magazine are so inspiring. God uses them in a mighty way to give us spiritual insight and comfort."

—KW, Virginia

"I am receiving the precious *LandMarks* magazine now. The articles, Sabbath School studies, crossword puzzle, mission reports are an enormous blessing to me."

—AC, England

"The *LandMarks* magazine is a blessing to me. 'Our Example,' by Harvey Steck was such a beautiful article."

—MP, Oregon

"I want you to know how very much I do appreciate and enjoy every part of the *LandMarks*. It is such a beautifully done magazine. I have a stack of older issues that must be shared. A good friend will take them to pass out in her small town."

—JA, Colorado

### November Sermon of the Month

## The Closest Test

By John J. Grosboll

Faith believes, obeys, and surrenders. Faith doesn't make things easy, just possible. The soul filled with faith becomes a conquering power. Faith saves. When God asks, faith answers yes.

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

## From the Desk of Pastor John J. Grosboll

### November 2023

Dear Friend,


In the following paragraphs, you will be able to find 10 ways that you can witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

"The redeemed will meet and recognize those whose attention they have directed to the uplifted Saviour. What blessed converse they will have with these souls! 'I was a sinner,' it will be said, 'without God and without hope in the world; and you came to me, and drew my attention to the precious Saviour as my only hope. And I believed in Him. I repented of my sins, and was made to sit together with His saints in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' ...

"Others will express their gratitude to those who fed the hungry and clothed the naked. 'When despair bound my soul in unbelief, the Lord sent you to me,' they say, 'to speak words of hope and comfort. You brought me food for my physical necessities, and you opened to me the word of God, awakening me to my spiritual needs. You treated me as a brother. You sympathized with me in my sorrows, and restored my bruised and wounded soul, so that I could grasp the hand of Christ that was reached out to save me. In my ignorance, you taught me patiently that I had a Father in heaven who cared for me. You read to me the precious promises of God's word. You inspired in me faith that He would save me. My heart was softened, subdued, broken, as I contemplated the sacrifice which Christ had made for me. I became hungry for the bread of life, and the truth was precious to my soul. I am here, saved, eternally saved, ever to live in His presence, and to praise Him who gave His life for me.'" *Gospel Workers*, 518, 519

"Christ regards all acts of mercy, benevolence, and thoughtful consideration for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the sick, the widow, and the orphan as done to Himself; and these works are preserved in the heavenly records and will be rewarded. On the other hand, a record will be written in the book against those who manifest the indifference of the priest and the Levite to the unfortunate, and those who take any advantage of the misfortunes of others and increase their affliction in order to selfishly advantage themselves. God will surely repay every act of injustice and every manifestation of careless indifference to and neglect of the afflicted among us. Everyone will finally be rewarded as his works have been." *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 512, 513

Your brother praying and working for a finished work,



Pastor John J. Grosboll

# Hot Foot Bath



Improves  
peripheral blood  
circulation



Provides general  
warming of the  
body



Helps to prevent  
cold or flu



Reduces fatigue



Increases white  
blood cell  
activity



Relieves  
congestive  
headaches, and  
head and chest  
congestion



Can help  
reduce pain and  
inflammation,  
particularly in  
the feet

## Equipment

- Basin deep enough to hold sufficient water to cover the feet and ankles
- Thermometer, if available. If not, test the water temperature with your elbow. Temperature should be between 39-43° C/103-110° F
- Washcloth (to use as a cold compress as needed), bath towel, and sheet
- Rubber sheet or plastic to protect the bed or floor around the chair
- Bowl of very cold water
- Pitcher or dipper to add hot water

## Some Precautions to Keep in Mind

It is best to determine first if a patient has a pre-existing condition or may be taking medications that would make the use of the hot foot bath unsafe, and consult with their physician before administering the treatment.

## Getting Started

The room should be warm and free of drafts. All necessary materials should be at hand. The patient can either lie on the bed or sit in a chair.

- Pour hot water, to tolerance, into the tub to the level that it will cover the feet and up to two inches above the ankles.
- Once the patient's feet are in the tub, drape the patient with the sheet, draping also around the tub.
- As the water in the tub begins to cool, add more hot water. The purpose is to maintain the water temperature at 39-43° C/103-110° F. This in essence gives the patient a fever. Continue this for 20-60 minutes.



- If the patient becomes too warm, begins to sweat, or has head congestion, wet the washcloth in the cold water, wring it out, and place it on the patient's forehead. Continue re-wetting the washcloth to keep the patient cool. If sweating continues, give the patient water through a straw.
- When finished, remove the washcloth from the patient's head, lift his/her feet above the tub, and pour the cold water over both the feet and ankles.
- Dry the feet thoroughly, including between the toes with the bath towel.
- The patient should rest for 30-60 minutes following the treatment.

Source: [traditionalhydrotherapy.com/Techniques/HotFootBath](http://traditionalhydrotherapy.com/Techniques/HotFootBath); [hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases-vascular-disease](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases-vascular-disease) **LM**

*from the*  
**Mission Fields**



## *Baptisms in Santa Cruz, Bolivia*

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by Pastor Domingo Nunez

Over a number of years we have diligently worked with the brethren and various groups in a number of countries in South America to establish churches based on the New Testament gospel order. By God's grace, one of those churches is in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. The new ministry building has been completed and is now fully operational as the church members there share the three angels' messages. They are working to develop an outreach program and are also able to publish Spirit of Prophecy books and other tracts and tabloids that are being distributed locally in Santa Cruz and other cities close around.





**Top left:** Sabbath evening service

**Top right:** Tania handing out literature

**Bottom left:** Belen's baptism

**Bottom middle:** Claudia's baptism

**Bottom right:** Jorge's baptism

In September, I traveled to Santa Cruz to conduct a 15-day seminar. Classes were conducted during the day to train the brethren in the operation and functions, and how to properly follow the established guidelines and protocols. I was happy to be a part of an outreach effort that saw the church members distribute posters—2,000 of them—on which the ten commandments were printed. They went out early in the morning, distributing these posters throughout the city and inviting the people of Santa Cruz to come to the meetings in the evening, and many showed an interest in studying the word of God and attended.

Before I headed back to the United States the following Monday, I participated in the Sabbath morning services and had the privilege of baptizing eight souls.

**Jorge**, a man who had struggled for many years to become a faithful believer in the Sabbath.

**Claudia**, who believed in the Catholic faith all of her life, but, with her entire family present to witness it, is now a baptized member of the Free Seventh-day Adventist Church. Her story is particularly precious. She lost her son to Covid-19 in 2022, and soon after, she accepted the invitation to receive Bible studies. Having been Catholic all her life, her home was filled with images and idols pertaining to the Catholic faith. But as she studied the word of God, she came to realize that she should be worshiping and praising the only wise and true God. Claudia accepted Jesus Christ as her Saviour, removed everything from her home that represented her previous life, and then committed her life completely to Him. What joy this was for me!

**Belen**, a young woman who had recently graduated from college.

How exciting it is to see the different backgrounds and age groups represented by those who love the Lord and are seeking to obey Him.

Please continue to pray for the work of our brothers and sisters in Santa Cruz, especially for the leaders and church board members, as they continue to work together on church organization and in implementing the principles that will help them to operate the church and its outreach programs efficiently and effectively according to the New Testament gospel. To donate to the continued work in Bolivia, mark your donation *Missions-Bolivia*.

I also want to ask that you will keep me in your prayers as I continue to assist our varied mission projects in the different parts of the world. **LM**

# The Lion

A large, powerful cat, second only in size to the tiger, the lion has been given the title, “king of beasts.” They can live in a variety of habitats, but they like grassland, savannah, and scrubland the most.

A full-grown male is six to seven feet long and stands about four feet high at the shoulder. They can weigh as much as 500 pounds. The female, called a lioness, is typically five feet long and stands about three feet at the shoulders. She can weigh up to 400 pounds.

The coat is short and can be a buff yellow, orange-brown, silvery gray, or dark brown. The males have the shaggy mane around the neck just behind the ears, but the females do not. The mane can make the males look larger and more intimidating to rivals and more impressive to a potential mate. However, the mane is a product of high hormone levels in the lion, and if the hormone level decreases, he will lose the mane.

Lions live in prides made up of several generations of lionesses, breeding males, and their cubs. One might find a pride with as many as 37 members, but the average is around 15. They live in well-defined territory. If prey is abundant, that territory can be about eight square miles, but if prey is sparse, the territory could expand to as much as 250 square miles. That involves a lot of walking to find some lunch. Lions lay stake to their territory by roaring and scent marking.

**Did you know?** A lion’s guttural roar can be heard five miles away.

Living in an open savannah, the lionesses of a pride will do most of the hunting, and the males will take their meal from the lionesses’ kill. But don’t let that fool you, or make you believe that the male lions are lazy. They are actually adept hunters and in the scrubland or wooded habitat, they will spend less

time with the pride and hunt their own food. Lions eat medium to large-sized animals such as zebra, antelope, and wildebeests, but you might find them taking on a hippo or elephant if the victim is young or sick. They often steal carrion or even fresh kills from hyenas.

A hunting pride is potentially nature’s most formidable predatory force on land. Once they have acquired their meal, they tend to gorge themselves and then rest for several days before hunting again. A male lion can consume more than 75 pounds of meat at a single meal and then rest for a week before resuming the hunt. If prey is abundant, both the lion and lioness will only hunt for two or three hours per day, spending the remaining hours of the day resting.

Lions are polygamous (meaning more than one lioness), but the lionesses typically stay with the one or two adult males in their pride. Breeding is a busy time, and once pregnant, a lioness will give birth in about 108 days, with a litter of one to six cubs.

Cubs are born helpless, blind, and wearing a thick coat marked with dark spots to provide camouflage. Once they reach maturity, the spots disappear. They begin to follow their mothers at three months, are weaned by the sixth or seventh month, and are participating in the hunt by 11 months. However, they probably cannot live on their own until about two years of age. They are considered fully mature at three to four years old.

Sources: *Britannica.com/animal/lion*



The Bible identifies both Jesus and Satan as lions, though with entirely different characteristics.

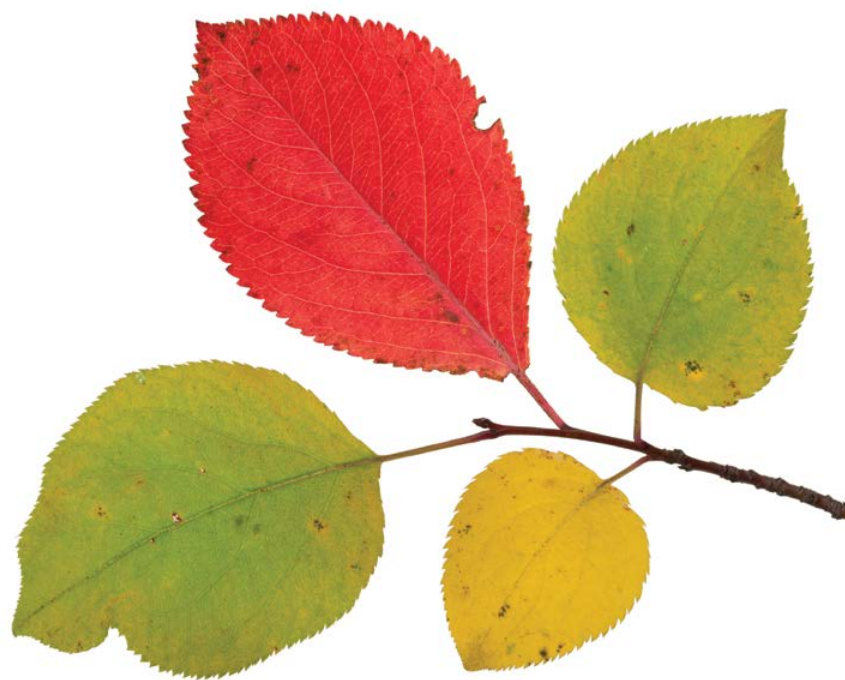
“We are approaching the end of this earth’s history, and Satan is working as never before. He is striving to act as director of the Christian world.

With an intensity that is marvelous he is working with his lying wonders. Satan is represented as walking about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He desires to embrace the whole world in his confederacy. Hiding his deformity under the garb of Christianity, he assumes the attributes of a Christian, and claims to be Christ Himself.”

*Last Day Events*, 155

“Once again the Saviour was presented to John, under the symbol of the ‘Lion of the tribe of Judah,’ and of ‘a Lamb as it had been slain.’ These symbols represent the union of omnipotent power and self-sacrificing love. As the Lion of Judah, Christ will defend His chosen ones and bring them off victorious, because they accepted Him as ‘the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.’ Christ the slain Lamb, who was despised, rejected, the victim of Satan’s wrath, of man’s abuse and cruelty—how tender His sympathy with His people who are in the world! And according to the infinite depths of His humiliation and sacrifice as the Lamb of God will be His power and glory as the Lion of Judah, for the deliverance of His people.” *The Home Missionary*, November 1, 1893

Christ’s representation as a lion ready to defend and protect His children should give us all comfort in times of difficulty, fear, and discouragement. **LM**



# Q: Why?

# A:

## “Why is it so hard?”

“There are thousands in the Christian age who have fallen into an error similar to that of the Jewish people. They feel that they must depend on their obedience to the law of God to recommend them to His favor. The nature and importance of faith have been lost sight of, and this is why it is so hard for many to believe in Christ as their personal Saviour.” *The General Conference Bulletin*, March 5, 1895

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

“Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7

“Be anxious for nothing . . .” Philippians 4:6, *first part*

## “Why am I left alone?”

“You may never be lonesome, never feel that you are alone, if you will take

Jesus as your Companion and your Everlasting Friend.” *Mind, Character, and Personality*, Vol. 2, 632

“Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid . . . for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.” Deuteronomy 31:6

## “Why do I suffer?”

“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.” 1 Peter 5:10

“To have strong faith, we must be placed in circumstances where our faith will be exercised. . . . It is our privilege to be strong in the strength of God under all circumstances and to glory in the cross of Christ.

“In this life we must meet fiery trials and make costly sacrifices, but the peace of Christ is the reward. . . .

“Persecution should bring joy to the disciples of Christ, for it is an evidence that they are following in the steps of their Master.” *God’s Amazing Grace*, 90

## “Why do I worry?”

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? . . . Therefore do not worry about tomorrow . . .” Matthew 6:25, 34, *first part*

“A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. . . . Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. . . .

“Commit the keeping of your soul to God, and trust in Him. . . . Rest in God.” *A New Life*, 39, 40

May we always remember that the whys of this world have but one answer, Jesus Christ. **LM**



# *Fallen, but Not Corrupted*

by John J. Grosboll

**T**hough the Bible enjoins us to gather together to worship God (Matthew 18:20), just going to church will not provide all you spiritually need to know. Bible study and prayer, outside of the church setting, is essential every day in order to develop your relationship with Jesus and strengthen your faith. Successful study of the many topics of the Bible is dependent upon being willing to allow the Holy Spirit to show you what truth is.

“An understanding of Bible truth depends not so much on the power of intellect brought to the search as on the singleness of purpose, the earnest longing after righteousness.

“The Bible should never be studied without prayer. The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension. ...

“We are living in the most solemn period of this world’s history. The destiny of earth’s teeming multitudes is about to be decided. Our own future well-being and also the salvation of other souls depend upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. ... We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose.” *Reflecting Christ*, 116

Too many, including Adventist ministers and laymen, while studying a particular subject, conclude and then doggedly dig in on what they believe to be true rather than on what the Holy Spirit might be trying to show them. It is essential that, before opening the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy to study a subject, that we ask the Holy Spirit to give us open minds and hearts to what He will show us.

Mrs. White addresses this determined refusal to accept evidence of something other than what a person, after their own study of a subject, has decided is truth. Let’s look at this in the context of our ongoing study of the nature of Christ.

The following is a well-known quotation, a favorite of revivalist Adventist preachers when speaking on Christ’s human nature.

“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam, He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations,

and to give us the example of a sinless life.” *The Desire of Ages*, 49

All will agree that, based on evidence found in the Bible and Inspiration, the Son of God took man’s nature. We have already studied that in relation to humanity, there are two different meanings to the word *nature*. Nature can be used to mean humanity in general, or it can be used to mean a single individual. When speaking of humanity, nature is referring to the physical aspects of man’s being. But if you are speaking of an individual, nature refers to the disposition or condition of his mind, therefore, his character.

When Mrs. White says that the Son of God took man’s nature, that He accepted humanity, she is speaking of humanity in general, therefore, the aspects of Christ’s nature under discussion in the above paragraph is His physical nature and not the disposition of His mind or His character. Jesus’ physical nature was “weakened by four thousand years of sin,” just as is the physical nature of all humans.

The word *weakened* means to “lessen the strength of or to deprive of strength or debilitate or to enfeeble.” This would be a common aspect of both man’s and Jesus’ physical nature.

“Sin is the cause of physical degeneration; sin has blighted the race, and introduced disease, misery, and death.” *Pacific Health Journal*, February 1, 1902

The word *degeneration* means “growing worse or losing good qualities from the virtue or worth of ancestors, a decay of the natural good qualities of the species, a falling from a more excellent state to one of less worth either in the natural or the moral world.” In the natural world, plants and animals degenerate when something grows to less its normal size or loses some of the valuable qualities that belongs to its species. In the moral world, man degenerates when he declines in virtue or other good qualities.

“Earthly treasures must pass away; but nobility of character, moral worth, will



*The Bible should never be studied without prayer.*

endure forever.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 69

Returning to the article found in the *Pacific Health Journal*, February 1, 1902, we find a detailed explanation of the effects of sin.

“Since the fall, the tendency of the race has been continually downward, the effects of sin becoming more marked with every successive generation. But so great was the vitality with which man was endowed that the patriarchs from Adam to Noah, with a few exceptions, lived nearly a thousand years. ...

“Since the flood, the average length of life has been decreasing. Had Adam possessed no greater physical force than men now have, the race would before this have become extinct.”

Each generation of man has physically degenerated more and more as a consequence of sin. When Jesus took on humanity and accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity, He accepted the physical degeneration, but He did not take on the condition of our moral (spiritual) nature, one that was defiled with sin.

“Christ who knew not the least moral taint or defilement of sin, took our

nature in its deteriorated condition.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, 115

Remember, when man sinned in the garden of Eden, his character was no longer governed by the principles of righteousness on which God’s laws are based. His character, instead, became subject to the principles of selfishness, which is the basis for everything the devil does. Jesus’ body and all the other physical aspects of humanity were subject to the degeneration caused by sin. Unlike man’s moral nature which is selfish, Christ’s moral nature is pure.

As a practical example, a person might have dark brown hair, but with a little help from their hairdresser, they can change the color to red. Now, is that person no longer a brown-haired person? What happens as the hair begins to grow out? While the part of the hair that was colored is still red, the new-growth hair is still dark brown. That’s the way it is with our nature and sin. We are selfish by nature, and we can do as many good things as we can, we can even repent and ask the Holy Spirit to transform us, however, being selfish is still what the natural man is inside. Except Jesus wasn’t. His moral

“

*Earthly treasures must pass away; but nobility of character, moral worth, will endure forever.*

nature, His character, was completely free from sin.

“By taking upon Himself man’s nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 17, 25. He took man’s ruined physical condition, his fallen nature (referring to man in general), but He did not in the least participate in the sin, nor was His moral nature (referring to an individual) selfish.

Remember, what we have studied previously regarding Christ’s nature. The foundation of Satan’s government is selfishness. “All sin is selfishness.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 3, 331. But Jesus came to this world as the embodiment, the physical representation, of God’s law. His every word, action, and thought were an outworking of God’s law. Jesus’ moral nature was righteous. God was with man in the person of His Son. Sin cannot exist where God is, so Jesus could not have had our selfish nature. And anyone who digs in and insists that Christ had our moral nature (referring to an individual), is saying He was selfish and sinful like us. Neither the Bible nor the Spirit of Prophecy supports this.

“He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was His own act, and by His own consent. He clothed His divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. . . . He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God . . . . He walked the earth as a man.

“He humbled Himself, and took mortality upon Him. As a member of the human family He was mortal, but as a God He was the Fountain of life to the world.” *The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887

“He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man’s nature.” *Ibid.*

“The divine nature, combined with the human, made Him capable of yielding to

Satan’s temptations. Here the test to Christ was far greater than that of Adam and Eve, for Christ took our nature, fallen but not corrupted, and would not be corrupted unless He received the words of Satan in the place of the words of God.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, 182, 183

He came to share our sorrows and temptations. Isaiah described Him as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. What is the cause of our sorrow? Sin is the source of our sorrow. Inspiration says that Jesus came with such a heredity, and, according to the 1828 dictionary, the word *such* means “the same as what has been mentioned.” He came as a member of the human race to show them how, though ruined by sin, to live a sinless life.

“The human nature of Christ was like unto ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience. How intense was the desire of the humanity of Christ to escape the displeasure of an offended God, how His soul longed for relief, is revealed in the words, ‘O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.’” *The Signs of the Times*, December 9, 1897

Take just a moment to consider this: Jesus came to this world in a body ruined by the effects of sin, all the while His moral nature was holy and righteous. Imagine how Jesus suffered! A holy gift, wrapped in a degraded package.

Jesus, for our sake, became a real man; one who could suffer our kinds of temptation, who sought relief from the suffering that was imposed upon Him because of our sins.

God’s prophet links the sorrows and temptations of Jesus to the expression “the likeness of sinful flesh,” thereby explaining more fully what Paul meant when he wrote Romans 8:3. “Christ, the second Adam came in the likeness of sinful flesh. In man’s behalf, he became subject to sorrow, to weariness, to hunger, and to thirst. He was subject to temptation, but he yielded not to sin. No taint of sin was upon Him.” *Selected Messages*, Book 3, 141, 142



The taint of sin is the natural selfishness of sin that the first Adam, the father of the race, entailed upon all his posterity. Yielding to temptation is committing sin. Jesus did not, by any word, action, or thought, commit sin nor was His spiritual nature tainted with sin.

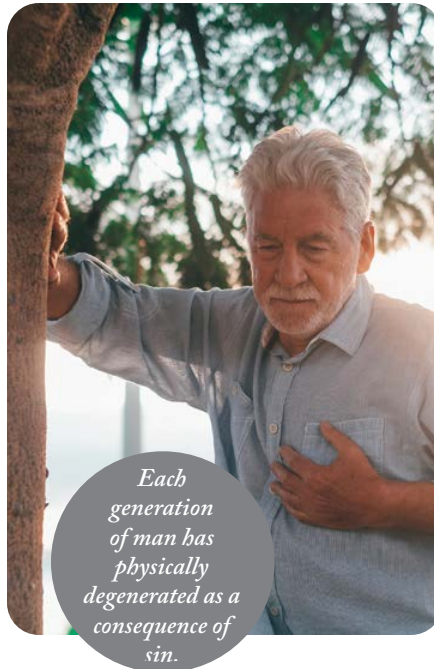
“In His earthly life, Jesus of Nazareth differed from all other men. His entire life was characterized by disinterested benevolence and the beauty of holiness. In His bosom existed the purest love, free from every taint of selfishness and sin. From the beginning of His ministry, men began more clearly to comprehend the character of God.” *The Signs of the Times*, September 23, 1908

After four thousand years of sin, Jesus took upon Himself the physical degeneration of the race that He might know what it is like to experience the sorrow that I experience, the weariness that I experience, the hunger that I experience, the thirst that I experience, and even the death that I will experience. And while suffering all these miserable things, He was tempted, in every way, like we are, yet He did not sin.

Paul discusses these things in detail in Hebrews. “Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.’” Hebrews 10:5

When God sent His Son into the world, He came in a body especially prepared in the likeness of sinful flesh—both physically and mentally. “So Christ was to come in ‘the body of our humiliation’ (Philippians 3:21, R. V.), ‘in the likeness of men.’ In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men.” *The Desire of Ages*, 23

This inspired reference “the likeness of men” is found in Philippians 2:7. The word *likeness* is the same word used in



Romans 8:3. His moral nature is also described in this short paragraph. Mrs. White also writes that Jesus was the incarnate God. The word *incarnate* means “in the flesh.” Jesus was God in the flesh. This is what Paul is talking about when he wrote, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh.” 1 Timothy 3:16, *first part*. Mrs. White is saying here that Jesus was still God even though He was a man. She describes the incarnate God as the light of heaven and earth. “I am the light of the world.” John 8:12

Jesus was first the light of heaven, but when He took man’s nature, His light, the outward manifestation of His glory, was veiled, completely hidden from man’s sight. Mrs. White wrote that it would have been an almost infinite humiliation for Christ to take man’s nature when Adam stood in innocence in Eden. (See *The Desire of Ages*, 49.) This has a special significance. “The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the

light of God, enshrouded the holy pair.” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 310, 311. Adam and Eve did not need physical clothing. The robe of light that surrounded them was a symbol of their spiritual nature: pure, holy, and righteous innocence.

“Had they remained true to God it would ever have continued to enshroud them.” *Ibid.*, 311. This robe of light that enshrouded the holy pair was a symbol of their inward spiritual condition of innocence. Jesus also wore this white robe, this garment of innocence, but it was veiled. He lived in perfect conformity to the will of His Father, just as Adam and Eve first did in the garden of Eden. All the strength of His affection was given to His heavenly Father.

What happened to the beautiful, soft light that enshrouded the holy pair when they sinned? “But when sin entered, they severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments . . .” *Ibid.* Interestingly, though they were able to fashion for themselves fig-leaf garments, they were still ashamed to appear before God. No longer enshrouded by their heavenly garments, they were naked, deprived of the godly dignity they had worn both inwardly and outwardly, they were humiliated, degraded, and ashamed.

The light that surrounded the holy pair prior to their fall was only a reflection of the far greater light that surrounded God. For Jesus to have taken even this garment of light would have been an infinite humiliation for He is the light of heaven, the source of all light, far surpassing every other light.

“With His divinity clothed with humanity, He stood before the people, presenting to them their true condition.” *The Review and Herald*, July 17, 1900

It is important that we read carefully what the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy say about Jesus’ nature. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, not in sinful flesh. Sinful flesh

represents the carnal mind. *Likeness* means “in the form of.” Likeness is not sameness. Jesus did not come with a carnal mind. He came in the likeness of the physical nature of man so that He would be able to suffer, as we do, misery and death while being tempted. However, it should be noted that the physical aspect of His human nature does not deny the reality of the part that His human mental and spiritual nature also played in His suffering.

“He had not taken on Him even the nature of the angels, but humanity, perfectly identical with our own nature, except without the taint of sin. A human body, a human mind, with all the peculiar properties, He was bone, brain, and muscle.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, 182. The taint of sin is the naturally carnal mind that we inherit from Adam. The human spiritual nature of Christ was free from every taint of sin, however, every single son and daughter of Adam inherits the carnal mind from him and the condition of the spiritual nature of the natural man is described as “By nature we are alienated from God.” *Steps to Christ*, 43. This is our natural nature.

Was Jesus by nature alienated from God? It would be blasphemy to say that.

“The Holy Spirit describes our condition in such words as these: ‘Dead in trespasses and sins;’ ‘the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;’ ‘no soundness in it.’ We are held fast in the snare of Satan, ‘taken captive by him at his will.’ God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him.” *Ibid.* That may sound harsh, but friends, there is no other way to be saved except to be completely transformed. Transformation comes only by an utterly complete surrender to God because He doesn’t use force.

Putting together everything we have studied to this point, we find that when God sent His own Son in the likeness,

the form of sinful flesh, He came in the body of our humiliation. He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity after four thousand years of sin. Sin is the cause of physical degeneration, misery, and death. He was found in the external condition of our nature in its deteriorated condition, able to share our sorrows and temptations.

There are many Adventist people who changed the words of scripture and substituted the word *same* for the word *likeness* in Romans 8:3. As a result, many Adventist ministers have said that Jesus came in sinful flesh. For more than 40 years, I have researched the Spirit of Prophecy to find even a single quotation by Mrs. White that says that Jesus came in sinful flesh. I have found not one scripture, not one statement of Inspiration that says He came in sinful flesh. Those who change the words of the Scriptures and say that Jesus took the same sinful flesh that we have, are unwittingly saying that Jesus took a carnal mind. This is blasphemy. Christ’s nature was “fallen, but not corrupted” mentally or spiritually. (See *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 16, 182.)

“Jesus Christ is our example in all things. He began life, passed through its experiences, and ended its record, with a sanctified human will. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet because He kept His will surrendered and sanctified, He never bent in the slightest degree toward the doing of evil, or toward manifesting rebellion against God.” *The Signs of the Times*, October 29, 1894

Jesus began life with a sanctified human will and kept it sanctified. He never had our natural bent to evil, no tendencies or propensities, inherent or cultivated, toward sin as some people have taught.

Friends, the plan of salvation is not just about forgiveness. Jesus Christ came to this world and became one flesh with us in order that we, by being united to Him, might become one spirit with

Him. That is the experience that everyone must have if they are going to be in the kingdom of heaven.

The apostle John wrote, “We know that when He appears we will be like Him.” 1 John 3:2

Peter wrote, “Unto us are given exceedingly great and precious promises, that you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4

Everyone who is taken to heaven will be a partaker of the divine nature. Everyone will reflect the light of Jesus’ character. Everyone will be wearing His robe of righteousness.

“The salvation of the human soul requires the will power to be subject to the divine will power, which will can’t be forced, but there must be cooperation of the human and divine agencies.

“Man cannot possibly work out his own salvation without the ordained divine power, and God will not do for man that which He requires man shall do for himself, through his own earnest willing cooperation. . . .

“The Lord has in His heavenly counsels set forth methods and agencies whereby His grace shall be at work through various influences for the saving of the soul of the sinner. But all these facilities will be ineffectual and powerless without the sinner’s consent . . . . It is a united work, a union of the divine and human, dependent upon grace, and concurring with grace in willing obedience.” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 10, 332

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18 **LM**

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November 26 – December 2, 2023

# God's Love in the Church—Hospitality

## Key Text

“Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.”  
1 Peter 4:9

**Study Help:** *Christian Service*, 191–193

## Introduction

“The Bible lays much stress upon the practice of hospitality. Not only does it enjoin hospitality as a duty, but it presents many beautiful pictures of the exercise of this grace and the blessings which it brings.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 6, 341

## Sunday

### 1 ENTERTAINING STRANGERS

1.a. What blessing does Paul mention regarding hospitality? Hebrews 13:2

**Note:** “‘Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels.’ Hebrews 13:2. These words have lost none of their force through the lapse of time. Our heavenly Father still continues to place in the pathway of His children opportunities that are blessings in disguise; and those who improve these opportunities find great joy. ‘If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.’ Isaiah 58:10, 11.” *Prophets and Kings*, 132

1.b. How else does Scripture promote hospitality?  
Matthew 7:12; Romans 13:9

**Note:** “All acts of injustice that tend to shorten life; the spirit of hatred and revenge, or the indulgence of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us even to wish them harm (for ‘whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer’); a selfish neglect of caring for the needy or suffering; all self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation or excessive labor that tends to injure health—all these are, to a greater or less degree, violations of the sixth commandment.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 308

## Monday

### 2 ABRAHAM AND LOT

2.a. At his home, how did Abraham receive “three men” who were strangers? Genesis 18:2–8. Who was among them? Genesis 18:1

**Note:** “It was Christ who spoke with Abraham under the oaks at Mamre.” *The Desire of Ages*, 290, 291

“Angels have appeared in human form to men of God. They have rested, as if weary, under the oaks at noon. They have accepted the hospitalities of human homes.” *The Great Controversy*, 631

2.b. What unique experience did Lot have with “two men”? Genesis 19:2–11. Who were those “men”? Genesis 19:1

**Note:** “In the twilight two strangers drew near to the city gate. They were apparently travelers coming in to tarry for the night. None could discern in those humble wayfarers the mighty heralds of divine judgment, and little dreamed the gay, careless multitude that in their treatment of these heavenly messengers that very night they would reach the climax of the guilt which doomed their proud city. But there was one man who manifested kindly attention toward the strangers and invited them to his home. Lot did not know their true character, but politeness and hospitality were habitual with him; they were a part of his religion—lessons that he had learned from the example of Abraham. Had he not cultivated a spirit of courtesy, he might have been left to perish with the rest of Sodom. Many a house-



hold, in closing its doors against a stranger, has shut out God's messenger, who would have brought blessing and hope and peace." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 158

**2.c. How does the experience of these patriarchs apply to us today?**

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**Note:** "The privilege granted Abraham and Lot is not denied to us. By showing hospitality to God's children we, too, may receive His angels into our dwellings. Even in our day, angels in human form enter the homes of men and are entertained by them. And Christians who live in the light of God's countenance are always accompanied by unseen angels, and these holy beings leave behind them a blessing in our homes." *Testimonies*, Vol. 6, 342

## Tuesday

### 3 JOSEPH AND PHARAOH

**3.a. How did Joseph receive his brothers in spite of their past cruelty toward him? Genesis 45:1–5**

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**Note:** "He [Joseph] had seen in his brothers the fruits of true repentance. Upon hearing Judah's noble offer he gave orders that all but these men should withdraw; then, weeping aloud, he cried, 'I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?'"

"His brothers stood motionless, dumb with fear and amazement. The ruler of Egypt their brother Joseph, whom they had envied and would have murdered, and finally sold as a slave! All their ill treatment of him passed before them. They remembered how they had despised his dreams and had labored to prevent their fulfillment. Yet they had acted their part in fulfilling these dreams; and now that they were completely in his power he would, no doubt, avenge the wrong that he had suffered.

"Seeing their confusion, he said kindly, 'Come near to me, I pray you;' and as they came near, he continued, 'I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.' Feeling that they

had already suffered enough for their cruelty toward him, he nobly sought to banish their fears and lessen the bitterness of their self-reproach. ...

"The news of what had taken place was quickly carried to the king, who, eager to manifest his gratitude to Joseph, confirmed the governor's invitation to his family, saying, 'The good of all the land of Egypt is yours.' The brothers were sent away abundantly supplied with provision and carriages and everything necessary for the removal of all their families and attendants to Egypt." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 230, 231

**3.b. How did Pharaoh deal with Jacob and his family at their arrival in Egypt? Genesis 45:16–20; 47:5–7 How was Pharaoh rewarded?**

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**Note:** "Joseph brought his father also to be presented to the king. The patriarch was a stranger in royal courts; but amid the sublime scenes of nature he had communed with a mightier Monarch; and now, in conscious superiority, he raised his hands and blessed Pharaoh." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 233

## Wednesday

### 4 RAHAB

**4.a. Who was Rahab, and what kindness did she show to the Israelite spies? Joshua 2:1–7**

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**Note:** "A few miles beyond the river, just opposite the place where the Israelites were encamped, was the large and strongly fortified city of Jericho. This city was virtually the key to the whole country, and it would present a formidable obstacle to the success of Israel. Joshua therefore sent two young men as spies to visit this city and ascertain something as to its population, its resources, and the strength of its fortifications. The inhabitants of the city, terrified and suspicious, were constantly on the alert, and the messengers were in great danger. They were, however, preserved by Rahab, a woman of Jericho, at the peril of her own life. In return for her kindness they gave her a promise of protection when the city should be taken." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 482, 483



4.b. How was Rahab's faith rewarded? Joshua 2:8–13; 6:25; Hebrews 11:31

**Note:** “God’s judgments were awakened against Jericho. It was a stronghold. But the Captain of the Lord’s host Himself came from heaven to lead the armies of heaven in an attack upon the city. Angels of God laid hold of the massive walls and brought them to the ground. God had said that the city of Jericho should be accursed and that all should perish except Rahab and her household. These should be saved because of the favor that Rahab showed the messengers of the Lord.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 3, 264

“All the inhabitants of the city, with every living thing that it contained, ‘both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass,’ were put to the sword. Only faithful Rahab, with her household, was spared, in fulfillment of the promise of the spies. The city itself was burned . . .” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 491

“Through the teaching of the sacrificial service, Christ was to be uplifted before the nations, and all who would look unto Him should live. All who, like Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabitess, turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God were to unite themselves with His chosen people.” *Prophets and Kings*, 19

## Thursday

### 5 JOB—AND US

5.a. How did Job treat the poor and the strangers, and how was his faith rewarded? Job 29:12–16; 31:32; 42:10–17

5.b. Why is hospitality required even of those who are not especially rich in this world's goods? Deuteronomy 26:12, 13

**Note:** “‘Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose to place His name there, the tithe of thy corn, or thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always.’ Deuteronomy 14:23, 29; 16:11–14. . .

“Every third year, however, this second tithe was to be used at home, in entertaining the Levite and the poor, as Moses said, ‘That they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.’ Deuteronomy 26:12. This tithe would provide a fund for the uses of charity and hospitality.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 530

“‘A lover of hospitality’ is among the specifications given by the Holy Spirit as marking one who is to bear responsibility in the church. And to the whole church is given the injunction: ‘Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.’ 1 Peter 4:9, 10

“These admonitions have been strangely neglected. Even among those who profess to be Christians, true hospitality is little exercised. Among our own people the opportunity of showing hospitality is not regarded as it should be, as a privilege and blessing. There is altogether too little sociability, too little of a disposition to make room for two or three more at the family board, without embarrassment or parade. Some plead that ‘it is too much trouble.’ It would not be if you would say: ‘We have made no special preparation, but you are welcome to what we have.’ By the unexpected guest a welcome is appreciated far more than is the most elaborate preparation.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 6, 342, 343

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How would you define hospitality?
- 2 List two examples of hospitality in the Old Testament.
- 3 Explain the experience of Joseph with his brothers.
- 4 Who were the only survivors of Jericho, and why?
- 5 Summarize Job’s experience in the welfare work, and explain how many more can imitate his example.

December 3 – 9, 2023

# God's Love in the Church—Hospitality

(continued)

## Key Text

"Distributing to the needs of saints, given to hospitality."  
Romans 12:13

**Study Help:** *The Desire of Ages*, 524–536; *Christ's Object Lessons*, 376–389

## Introduction

"Our work in this world is to live for others' good, to bless others, to be hospitable; and frequently it may be only at some inconvenience that we can entertain those who really need our care and the benefit of our society and our homes." *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 645

## Sunday

### 1 THE FAMILY AT BETHANY

1.a. When weary of His labors, where did Jesus often find rest? Luke 10:38–42

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**Note:** "At the home of Lazarus, Jesus had often found rest. The Saviour had no home of His own; He was dependent on the hospitality of His friends and disciples, and often, when weary, thirsting for human fellowship, He had been glad to escape to this peaceful household, away from the suspicion and jealousy of the angry Pharisees. Here He found a sincere welcome, and pure, holy friendship. Here He could speak with simplicity and perfect freedom, knowing that His words would be understood and treasured." *The Desire of Ages*, 524

1.b. How was Lazarus benefited by the greatest miracle of Jesus? John 11:1–5; 38–44

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**Note:** "It was for Lazarus that the greatest of Christ's miracles was performed. The Saviour blessed all who sought His help; He loves all the human family, but to some He is bound by peculiarly tender associations. His heart was knit by a strong bond of affection to the family at Bethany, and for one of them His most wonderful work was wrought." *The Desire of Ages*, 524

## Monday

### 2 LYDIA

2.a. Once Lydia had received the truth, how did she put her home to the service of the Lord? Acts 16:14, 15

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**Note:** "God opened the ears of Lydia, so that she attended to the message spoken by Paul. To declare the whole counsel of God and all that was essential for Lydia to receive—this was the part Paul was to act in her conversion; and then the God of all grace exercised His power, leading the soul in the right way." *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, 1062

2.b. After having suffered cruel persecution, where did Paul and Silas find relief? Acts 16:40

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**Note:** "Acting upon the instruction given by Christ, the apostles would not urge their presence where it was not desired. 'They went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.'" *The Acts of the Apostles*, 218

2.c. Lydia warmly welcomed the apostles. Whom else should we welcome as God's heritage in need of refuge? 1 Timothy 4:12, *first part*; Jude 21–23

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**Note:** “Our homes should be a place of refuge for the tempted youth. Many there are who stand at the parting of the ways. Every influence, every impression, is determining the choice that shapes their destiny both here and hereafter. Evil invites them. Its resorts are made bright and attractive. They have a welcome for every comer. All about us are youth who have no home, and many whose homes have no helpful, uplifting power, and the youth drift into evil. They are going down to ruin within the very shadow of our own doors.

“These youth need a hand stretched out to them in sympathy. Kind words simply spoken, little attentions simply bestowed, will sweep away the clouds of temptation which gather over the soul. The true expression of heaven-born sympathy has power to open the door of hearts that need the fragrance of Christlike words, and the simple, delicate touch of the spirit of Christ’s love. If we would show an interest in the youth, invite them to our homes, and surround them with cheering, helpful influences, there are many who would gladly turn their steps into the upward path.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 354, 355

## Tuesday

### 3 EXEMPLARY BARBARIANS

3.a. Being persecuted by his own countrymen, where did Paul find hospitality? Acts 28:1, 2, 7

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**Note:** “The shipwrecked crew were kindly received by the barbarous people of Melita. ... Paul was among those who were active in ministering to the comfort of others.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 445

3.b. How were all the company at Melita blessed by Paul’s stay? Acts 28:8–10

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**Note:** “During the three months that the ship’s company remained at Melita, Paul and his fellow laborers improved many opportunities to preach the gospel. In a remarkable manner the Lord wrought through them. For Paul’s sake the entire shipwrecked company were treated with great kindness; all their wants were supplied, and upon leaving Melita they were

liberally provided with everything needful for their voyage.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 446

3.c. How useful is hospitality for spreading the gospel? Luke 14:12–14

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**Note:** “Our social entertainments should not be governed by the dictates of worldly custom, but by the Spirit of Christ and the teaching of His word. ... How much such a welcome might do to cheer and encourage the missionary nurse or the teacher, the care-burdened, hard-working mother, or the feeble and aged, so often without a home, and struggling with poverty and many discouragements. ...

“These are guests whom it will lay on you no great burden to receive. You will not need to provide for them elaborate or expensive entertainment. You will need to make no effort at display. The warmth of a genial welcome, a place at your fireside, a seat at your home table, the privilege of sharing the blessing of the hour of prayer, would to many of these be like a glimpse of heaven.

“Our sympathies are to overflow the boundaries of self and the enclosure of family walls. There are precious opportunities for those who will make their homes a blessing to others. Social influence is a wonderful power. We can use it if we will as a means of helping those about us.” *The Ministry of Healing*, 352–354

## Wednesday

### 4 THE GOOD SAMARITAN

4.a. How did Christ answer a lawyer’s question about how to inherit eternal life? Luke 10:25–28

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**Note:** “The lawyer was not satisfied with the position and works of the Pharisees. He had been studying the scriptures with a desire to learn their real meaning. He had a vital interest in the matter, and he asked in sincerity, ‘What shall I do?’ In

his answer as to the requirements of the law, he passed by all the mass of ceremonial and ritualistic precepts. For these he claimed no value, but presented the two great principles on which hang all the law and the prophets. The Saviour's commendation of this answer placed Him on vantage ground with the rabbis. They could not condemn Him for sanctioning that which had been advanced by an expositor of the law.

"This do, and thou shalt live,' Christ said. In His teaching He ever presented the law as a divine unity, showing that it is impossible to keep one precept and break another; for the same principle runs through all. Man's destiny will be determined by his obedience to the whole law." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 377, 378

**4.b. What was the next question the lawyer presented to Jesus, and what answer did he receive? Luke 10:29–37**

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**Note:** "The lawyer knew that he had kept neither the first four nor the last six commandments. He was convicted under Christ's searching words, but instead of confessing his sin he tried to excuse it. Rather than acknowledge the truth, he endeavored to show how difficult of fulfillment the commandment is. Thus he hoped both to parry conviction and to vindicate himself in the eyes of the people. The Saviour's words had shown that his question was needless, since he was able to answer it himself. Yet he put another question, saying, 'Who is my neighbor?'"

"Again Christ refused to be drawn into controversy. He answered the question by relating an incident, the memory of which was fresh in the minds of His hearers. ...

"The priest and the Levite both professed piety, but the Samaritan showed that he was truly converted. It was no more agreeable for him to do the work than for the priest and the Levite, but in spirit and works he proved himself to be in harmony with God." *Christ's Object Lessons*, 378–380

## Thursday

### 5 CHRIST, THE GOOD SAMARITAN

**5.a. In what sense does the story of the good Samaritan illustrate the work of Christ on earth? Acts 10:38**

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**Note:** "In the story of the good Samaritan, Jesus gave a picture of Himself and His mission. Man had been deceived, bruised, robbed, and ruined by Satan, and left to perish; but the Saviour had compassion on our helpless condition. He left His glory, to come to our rescue. He found us ready to die, and He undertook our case. He healed our wounds. He covered us with His robe of righteousness. He opened to us a refuge of safety, and made complete provision for us at His own charges." *The Desire of Ages*, 503, 504

**5.b. How will the true followers of Christ act toward those who need help? Galatians 6:1, 2**

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**Note:** "Sin is the greatest of all evils, and it is ours to pity and help the sinner. There are many who err, and who feel their shame and their folly. They are hungry for words of encouragement. They look upon their mistakes and errors, until they are driven almost to desperation. These souls we are not to neglect. If we are Christians, we shall not pass by on the other side, keeping as far as possible from the very ones who most need our help. When we see human beings in distress, whether through affliction or through sin, we shall never say, 'This does not concern me.'

"Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.' Galatians 6:1. By faith and prayer press back the power of the enemy. Speak words of faith and courage that will be as a healing balsam to the bruised and wounded one. Many, many, have fainted and become discouraged in the great struggle of life, when one word of kindly cheer would have strengthened them to overcome. Never should we pass by one suffering soul without seeking to impart to him of the comfort where-with we are comforted of God." *The Desire of Ages*, 504, 505

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Who was Lydia?
- 2 In the parable of the good Samaritan, how did the Levite and the priest act?
- 3 How did the good Samaritan deal with the wounded stranger?
- 4 Whom does the good Samaritan represent, and in what practical ways can we follow His example?

December 10 – 16, 2023

# The Greatest Gift

## Key Text

“But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.” 1 Corinthians 12:31

**Study Help:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, 309–312; *Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 411–418

## Introduction

“True love for God carries with it true, reverential trust. And he who loves God will love his brother also.” *Sons and Daughters of God*, 193

## Sunday

### 1 GIFTS WITHOUT LOVE

1.a. What is the value of various gifts without love?  
1 Corinthians 13:1–3

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1.b. What is the first characteristic of true love?  
1 Corinthians 13:4

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**Note:** “The Christian who manifests patience and cheerfulness under bereavement and suffering, who meets even death itself with the peace and calmness of an unwavering faith, may accomplish for the gospel more than he could have effected by a long life of faithful labor.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 465

1.c. What will kindness do when associated with true love? Ephesians 4:32

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**Note:** “Love should be revealed in action. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. From a worldly point of view, money is power; but from a Christian standpoint, love is power. Wealth is often an influence to corrupt and destroy; force is strong to do hurt; but pure love has special efficacy. It prevents discord and misery, and brings the truest happiness. It gives intellectual and spiritual strength, and truth and goodness are its properties.” *The Bible Echo*, December 15, 1893

## Monday

### 2 LOVE DOES NOT ENVY

2.a. What are the fruits of envy? Job 5:2; Proverbs 14:30; 27:4

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**Note:** “Envy, malice, evil thinking, evilspeaking, covetousness—these are weights that the Christian must lay aside if he would run successfully the race for immortality. Every habit or practice that leads into sin and brings dishonor upon Christ must be put away, whatever the sacrifice. The blessing of heaven cannot attend any man in violating the eternal principles of right. One sin cherished is sufficient to work degradation of character and to mislead others.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 312

2.b. What condition will the remnant people of God reach before they can receive the latter rain?  
Acts 3:19; Isaiah 52:11; 2 Timothy 2:19–22

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**Note:** “The cross of Christ is the pledge of our fellowship and union. The time must come when the watchmen shall see eye to eye; when the trumpet shall give a certain sound; when ‘Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim’ anymore.” *The Review and Herald*, January 3, 1899  
“Oh, that all might repent and do their first works. When the churches do this they will love God supremely and their neighbors as themselves. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. Divisions will then be healed, the harsh sounds of strife will no more be heard in the borders of Israel. Through the grace freely given them of God, all will



seek to answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples shall be one, even as He and the Father are one. Peace, love, mercy, and benevolence will be the abiding principles of the soul. The love of Christ will be the theme of every tongue, and it will no more be said by the True Witness, 'I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' The people of God will be abiding in Christ, and the love of Jesus will be revealed, and one Spirit will animate all hearts, regenerating and renewing in the image of Christ, fashioning all hearts alike. As living branches of the True Vine, all will be united to Christ the living Head. Christ will abide in every heart, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, and presenting to the world the unity of the followers of Jesus, thus bearing testimony that the heavenly credentials are supplied to the remnant church. In the oneness of Christ's church it will be proved that God sent His only begotten Son into the world." *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 5, 51, 52

## Tuesday

### 3 LOVE IS NOT BOASTFUL

3.a. How does God consider human pride and arrogance? Proverbs 8:13; 11:2; 16:18

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**Note:** "Cain was willing to offer the fruit of his ground, but refused to connect with his offering the blood of beasts. His heart refused to show his repentance for sin, and his faith in a Saviour, by offering the blood of beasts. He refused to acknowledge his need of a Redeemer. This, to his proud heart, was dependence and humiliation." *Confrontation*, 22, 23

3.b. What was King David's attitude toward a proud heart? Psalm 101:5

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**Note:** "The vows of David, recorded in the 101st psalm, should be the vows of all upon whom rest the responsibilities of guarding the influences of the home." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 119

3.c. What quality must we be especially careful to cultivate? Matthew 11:29; 1 Peter 5:6

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**Note:** "Humility is a characteristic of those who have true wisdom, and, no matter what may be their attainments, they will not be self-confident and boastful." *Sabbath School Worker*, March 1, 1892

"Truly great men are invariably modest. Humility is a grace which sits naturally upon them as a garment. Those who have stored their minds with useful knowledge, and who possess genuine attainments and refinement, are the ones who will be most willing to admit the weakness of their own understanding. They are not self-confident nor boastful; but in view of the higher attainments to which they might rise in intellectual greatness, they seem to themselves to have but just begun the ascent. It is the superficial thinker, the one who has but a beginning or smattering of knowledge, who deems himself wise and who takes on disgusting airs of importance." *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, 338, 339

"It is the superficial thinker who deems himself wise. Men of solid worth, of high attainments, are the most ready to admit the weakness of their own understanding. God wants everyone who claims to be His disciple to be a learner, to be more inclined to learn than to teach." *Ibid.*, 361

## Wednesday

### 4 LOVE IS NOT RUDE

4.a. What is the effect of grievous words? On the other hand, what will kind words do? Proverbs 15:1; 16:24; 25:15

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**Note:** "Love, lifted out of the realm of passion and impulse, becomes spiritualized, and is revealed in words and acts. A Christian must have a sanctified tenderness and love in which there is no impatience of fretfulness; the rude, harsh manners must be softened by the grace of Christ." *The Adventist Home*, 51

"Courtesy, even in little things, should be manifested by the parents toward each other. Universal kindness should be the

law of the house. No rude language should be indulged; no bitter words should be spoken.

“All may possess a cheerful countenance, a gentle voice, a courteous manner; and these are elements of power. Children are attracted by a cheerful, sunny demeanor. Show them kindness and courtesy, and they will manifest the same spirit toward you and toward one another.” *Ibid.*, 421

**4.b. What should we learn from the way kind words settled a great difficulty in the time of Joshua?**  
**Joshua 22:10–31; 1 Corinthians 13:5**

**Note:** “Had the men of Gad and Reuben retorted in the same spirit, war would have been the result. While it is important on the one hand that laxness in dealing with sin be avoided, it is equally important on the other to shun harsh judgment and groundless suspicion.

“While very sensitive to the least blame in regard to their own course, many are too severe in dealing with those whom they suppose to be in error. No one was ever reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many are thus driven further from the right path and led to harden their hearts against conviction. A spirit of kindness, a courteous, forbearing deportment may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins.

“The wisdom displayed by the Reubenites and their companions is worthy of imitation. While honestly seeking to promote the cause of true religion, they were misjudged and severely censured; yet they manifested no resentment. They listened with courtesy and patience to the charges of their brethren before attempting to make their defense, and then fully explained their motives and showed their innocence. Thus the difficulty which had threatened such serious consequences was amicably settled.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 519, 520

## Thursday

### 5 LOVE “SEEKETH NOT HER OWN” ADVANTAGE

**5.a. What is included in the eighth commandment?**  
**Exodus 20:15**



**Note:** “Both public and private sins are included in this prohibition. The eighth commandment condemns manstealing and slave dealing, and forbids wars of conquest. It condemns theft and robbery. It demands strict integrity in the minutest details of the affairs of life. It forbids overreaching in trade, and requires the payment of just debts or wages. It declares that every attempt to advantage oneself by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another is registered as fraud in the books of heaven.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 309

**5.b. What will characterize the life of true Christians, and why? Matthew 5:37; Hebrews 13:5**

**Note:** “Everything that Christians do should be as transparent as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan; and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Yet it is not a light or an easy thing to speak the exact truth. We cannot speak the truth unless we know the truth; and how often preconceived opinions, mental bias, imperfect knowledge, errors of judgment, prevent a right understanding of matters with which we have to do! We cannot speak the truth unless our minds are continually guided by Him who is truth.” *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 68

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 How much are our gifts worth without love?
- 2 How do you explain envy?
- 3 How does God deal with spiritually proud people?
- 4 Explain Christian courtesy.
- 5 Explain the eighth commandment.

December 17 – 23, 2023

# The Greatest Gift

(continued)

## Key Text

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” Deuteronomy 6:5

**Study Help:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 303–314

## Introduction

“The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to ‘the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, 9

## Sunday

### 1 LOVE IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED

1.a. What is the only way to control our temper?  
James 4:7, 8

**Note:** “In the daily life you will meet with sudden surprises, disappointments, and temptations. What saith the word? ‘Resist the devil.’ By firm reliance upon God, ‘and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.’ ‘Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.’ Look unto Jesus at all times and in all places, offering a silent prayer from a sincere heart that you may know how to do His will. Then when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard for you against the enemy. When you are almost ready to yield, to lose patience and self-control, to be hard and denunciatory, to find fault and accuse—this is the time for you to send to heaven the prayer, ‘Help me, O God, to resist temptation, to put all bitterness and wrath and evilspeaking out of my heart. Give me Thy meekness, Thy lowliness, Thy long-suffering, and Thy love. Leave me not to dishonor my Redeemer, to misinterpret the words and motives of my wife, my children,

and my brethren and sisters in the faith. Help me that I may be kind, pitiful, tenderhearted, forgiving. Help me to be a real house-band in my home and to represent the character of Christ to others.’” *The Adventist Home*, 214, 215

1.b. How can our sinful inclinations be subdued?  
John 15:5; Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 10:3–5;  
Philippians 3:21

## Monday

### 2 LOVE THINKS NO EVIL

2.a. Where do evil thoughts originate? Proverbs 4:23;  
Matthew 15:19, 20

**Note:** “As a man thinketh, so is he. From within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts inspired by Satan. He begins to quibble at technicalities and manners. The spirit of Satan links him up with the enemy to bear a word of criticism on less important themes. The truth becomes of less and still less value to him. He becomes an accuser of his brethren, etc., and changes leaders. The outside world has a greater weight with him than has the flood of light that God has poured in upon the world in messages that he has given, and which he once rejoiced in.” *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 408, 409

2.b. What things should be kept in mind if we will ever see God? Matthew 5:8; Psalms 15:1–5; 24:3, 4

**Note:** “Charity ‘doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.’ Christlike love places the most favorable construction on the motives and acts of others. It does not needlessly expose their faults; it



does not listen eagerly to unfavorable reports, but seeks rather to bring to mind the good qualities of others." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 319

"Into the city of God there will enter nothing that defiles. All who are to be dwellers there will here have become pure in heart. In one who is learning of Jesus, there will be manifest a growing distaste for careless manners, unseemly language, and coarse thought. When Christ abides in the heart, there will be purity and refinement of thought and manner." *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 24, 25

## 2.c. How can we attain to purity in heart? Psalm 119:9–11

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**Note:** "The words of Jesus, 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' have a deeper meaning—not merely pure in the sense in which the world understands purity, free from that which is sensual, pure from lust, but true in the hidden purposes and motives of the soul, free from pride and self-seeking, humble, unselfish, child-like." *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, 25

## Tuesday

### 3 SEEING THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY

#### 3.a. According to Isaiah, who will see the King in His beauty? Isaiah 33:14–17

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**Note:** "The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for 'when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,' God will be to His church 'a refuge from the storm.'" Isaiah 25:4

"In that day only the righteous are promised deliverance." *Prophets and Kings*, 725

#### 3.b. What example must parents set so that their children may not be lost? Psalm 101:1–3

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**Note:** "From their infancy the youth need to have a firm barrier built up between them and the world, that its corrupting influence may not affect them. Parents must exercise unceasing watchfulness, that their children be not lost to God. The vows of David, recorded in the 101st Psalm, should be the vows of all upon whom rest the responsibilities of guarding the influences of the home. ...

"The youth should not be left to learn good and evil indiscriminately, the parents thinking that at some future time the good will predominate and the evil lose its influence. The evil will increase faster than the good. It is possible that the evil which children learn may be eradicated after many years, but who would trust to this? Whatever else they neglect, parents should never leave their children free to wander in the paths of sin." *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, 119

#### 3.c. Instead of fig leaves, what kind of dress should we seek to obtain? Genesis 3:7, 21; Isaiah 61:10

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**Note:** "Mothers, as well as youth and children, need to pray, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me' [Psalm 51:10]. This purity of heart and loveliness of spirit are more precious than gold, both for time and for eternity. Only the pure in heart shall see God." *Child Guidance*, 418

## Wednesday

### 4 PROMISES TO THE FAITHFUL

#### 4.a. What is promised to Christ's faithful followers? Psalm 91:1; Isaiah 26:20, 21

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**Note:** "When tempted to sin, let us remember that Jesus is pleading for us in the heavenly sanctuary. When we put away our sins and come to Him in faith, He takes our names on His lips and presents them to His Father, saying, 'I have graven them upon the palms of My hands; I know them by name.' And the command goes forth to the angels to protect them. Then in the day of fierce trial He will say, 'Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee:

hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.' What are the chambers in which they are to hide? They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Everyone must stand the test for himself." *The Review and Herald*, November 19, 1908

4.b. What promise belongs to the overcomers in the Laodicean period? Revelation 3:21. In what sense is this also an appeal to us?

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**Note:** "The one who stands nearest to Christ will be he who has drunk most deeply of His spirit of self-sacrificing love—love that 'vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ... seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil' (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5)—love that moves the disciple, as it moved our Lord, to give all, to live and labor and sacrifice even unto death, for the saving of humanity." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 543

"Are you ready to make the surrender now? You are to put away your sin right now when you see it, but do not make leeway [that] you are going to overcome by degrees; you are going to try little by little to give up sin. Now, while it is called today, heed the invitation and harden not your hearts.

"Oh my soul, why not leave the cursed thing today? Sin crucified my Lord. Why not turn from it with loathing? Why not love the things that Christ loved, and hate the things that Christ hated? He has made provision ample enough for you that you can through Him be more—yea, more—than overcomers. Then what do you want? Do you want a second crucifixion of Christ? You cannot have that. You must look to Calvary. You must take the blood by faith and apply it. You must wash in it. You must be cleansed by the already shed blood of Jesus Christ. It can cleanse you to the utmost." *Sermons and Talks*, Vol. 1, 188

## Thursday

### 5 LOVE "REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY"

5.a. What will be avoided by those who possess true love? 1 Corinthians 13:6

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**Note:** " 'Rejoiceth not in iniquity.' Mark it. The apostle meant where there is a cultivation of genuine love for precious souls, it will be exhibited for those most in need of that patience which suffereth long and is kind, and will not be ready to magnify a small indiscretion or direct wrong into large unpardonable offenses, and will not make capital of others' misdoings." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 279

5.b. What spirit should control those who sit in church administrative meetings? 1 Corinthians 13:5–7

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**Note:** "Our every thought, word, and action should be subject to the will of Christ. Levity is not appropriate in meetings where the solemn work and word of God are under consideration. The prayer has been offered that Christ shall preside in the assembly, and impart His wisdom, His grace, and righteousness. Is it consistent to take a course that will be grievous to His Spirit and contrary to His work? Let us bear in mind that Jesus is in our midst. Then an elevating, controlling influence from the Spirit of God will pervade the assembly. There will be manifested that wisdom which is from above, that is first pure, then peaceable, full of mercy and good fruits, which cannot err. In all the plans and decisions there will be that charity that 'seeketh not her own,' which is 'not easily provoked,' that 'thinketh no evil,' that 'rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth,' that 'beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' [1 Corinthians 13:5–7.] Self must be hid in Jesus, then the judgment will not be one-sided and warped, so that there can be no dispassionate and righteous decisions." *Gospel Workers* (1892), 231

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What fundamental principle do we need to understand about self-control?
- 2 How can we obtain clean hearts?
- 3 Who will see "the King in His beauty"?
- 4 What is promised to the remnant of Laodicea?
- 5 How do we feel when our enemies suffer?

December 24 – 30, 2023

# "I Will Come Again"

## Key Text

"For the Son of man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works." Matthew 16:27

**Study Help:** *The Great Controversy*, 299–316

## Introduction

"Those who have loved Him and waited for Him, He will crown with glory and honor and immortality. The righteous dead will come forth from their graves, and those who are alive will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 34

## Sunday

### 1 PROPHECIES OF THE SECOND COMING

1.a. What prophetic hope was expressed by both Job and Enoch? Job 19:25–27; Jude 14, 15

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1.b. How does the psalmist describe the Lord's return, and what should it make us pause to consider? Psalms 50:1–6; 96:11, 13

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**Note:** "The coming of Christ to usher in the reign of righteousness has inspired the most sublime and impassioned utterances of the sacred writers. The poets and prophets of the Bible have dwelt upon it in words glowing with celestial fire." *The Great Controversy*, 300

"Do we believe with all the heart that Christ is soon coming and that we are now having the last message of mercy that is ever to be given to a guilty world? Is our example what it

should be? Do we, by our lives and holy conversation, show to those around us that we are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body? I fear that we do not believe and realize these things as we should. Those who believe the important truths that we profess, should act out their faith. There is too much seeking after amusements and things to take the attention in this world; the mind is left to run too much upon dress, and the tongue is engaged too often in light and trifling conversation, which gives the lie to our profession, for our conversation is not in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour." *Early Writings*, III

## Monday

### 2 "THY DEAD MEN SHALL LIVE"

2.a. In Old Testament times, what was the hope of the true believers in connection with the second coming of Jesus? Isaiah 26:19; 25:8, 9

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2.b. What did Paul write about the same hope? 1 Corinthians 15:51–55; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

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**Note:** "When the Thessalonian Christians were filled with grief as they buried their loved ones, who had hoped to live to witness the coming of the Lord, Paul, their teacher, pointed them to the resurrection, to take place at the Saviour's advent." *The Great Controversy*, 302

2.c. What did Paul call the hope of Christ's return, and what appeal is included with it? Titus 2:11–14

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**Note:** "The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. The Saviour's parting promise upon Olivet, that He would come again, lighted up the future for His dis-



ciples, filling their hearts with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, the 'appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ' was the 'blessed hope.'" *The Great Controversy*, 302

"We are pilgrims and strangers who are waiting, hoping, and praying for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If we believe this and bring it into our practical life, what vigorous action would this faith and hope inspire; what fervent love one for another; what careful holy living for the glory of God; and in our respect for the recompense of the reward, what distinct lines of demarcation would be evidenced between us and the world."

*Evangelism*, 220

"The church of God is required to fulfill her night watch, however perilous, whether long or short. Sorrow is no excuse for her to be less watchful. Tribulation should not lead to carelessness, but to double vigilance. Christ has directed the church by His own example to the Source of their strength in times of need, distress, and peril. The attitude of watching is to designate the church as God's people indeed. By this sign the waiting ones are distinguished from the world and show that they are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth."

*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, 205

## Tuesday

### 3 THE MANNER OF HIS COMING

- 3.a. With what message did the angels comfort the disciples at Christ's ascension, and how is this confirmed in other scriptures? Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16

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- 3.b. What further descriptions do we have of Christ's return? Matthew 24:27; Mark 13:26; Revelation 1:7

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**Note:** "Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud.

The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, 'Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?' Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: 'Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you.' At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth.

"Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, 'Awake! awake! awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise.' Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, 'Alleluia!' as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.

"We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square." *Early Writings*, 15, 16

## Wednesday

### 4 THE NEW JERUSALEM

- 4.a. How does John describe the New Jerusalem? Revelation 21:9–26

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- 4.b. Who will be there and who will not be there? Revelation 21:27; 22:14, 15

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**Note:** "The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. ...

"It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death. The wicked see what they have forfeited by their life of rebellion. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory was despised when offered them; but how desirable it now appears. 'All this,' cries the lost soul, 'I might have had; but I chose to put these things far from me. Oh, strange infatuation! I have exchanged peace, happiness, and honor for wretchedness, infamy, and despair.' All see that their exclusion from heaven is just. By their lives they have declared: 'We will not have this Man [Jesus] to reign over us.'" *The Great Controversy*, 668

**4.c. What should be our constant prayer in view of Christ's promise to come again soon to gather His faithful, final remnant? Revelation 22:16–20**

**Note:** "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. ... He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

"We see from these words the necessity of sacredly cherishing every ray of light that the Lord Jesus sends to His church on the earth. The efficiency of any church depends upon its entire consecration. The church is not to conform to any one man's mind or judgment or will, or depart in the slightest particular from the teachings of the Word." *Australasian Union Conference Record*, October 7, 1907

"On rocky Patmos the beloved disciple hears the promise, 'Surely I come quickly,' and his longing response voices the prayer of the church in all her pilgrimage, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' Revelation 22:20." *The Faith I Live By*, 348

## Thursday

### 5 THE WORK TAKING PLACE NOW

**5.a. Whom did John see holding the seal of the living God, and for what purpose? Revelation 7:2–4**

**5.b. Who will—and who will not—be ready for Christ's appearing? Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21**

**Note:** "We are not to rest in the idea that because we are church members we are saved, while we give no evidence that we are conformed to the image of Christ, while we cling to our old habits, and weave our fabric with the threads of worldly ideas and customs." *Maranatha*, 54

"We need a thorough reformation in all our churches. The converting power of God must come into the church. Seek the Lord most earnestly, put away your sins, and tarry in Jerusalem till ye be endowed with power from on high." *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, 443

"If you harbor pride, self-esteem, a love for the supremacy, vainglory, unholy ambition, murmuring, discontent, bitterness, evil speaking, lying, deception, slandering, you have not Christ abiding in your heart, and the evidence shows that you have the mind and character of Satan, not of Jesus Christ, who was meek and lowly of heart. You must have a Christian character that will stand. ...

"There must be thorough conversions among those who claim to believe the truth, or they will fall in the day of trial. God's people must reach a high standard. They must be a holy nation, a peculiar people, a chosen generation—zealous of good works." *Ibid.*, 441

## Friday

### PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 Who was the first to prophesy about the second coming of Jesus?
- 2 Who will take part in the first resurrection?
- 3 Who will see Christ at His glorious return?
- 4 How is the manner of Christ's return described?
- 5 Describe the New Jerusalem, and explain how we can be there.
- 6 How can I get ready for Christ's return?

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# Some Facts About Apples

**O**riginating in central Asia, there are 75,000 varieties grown worldwide. If a person ate one a day, it would take more than 20 years to try every variety.

Some apple varieties have red flesh instead of white. Varieties such as Pink Pearl and Kissabel have flesh that ranges from pink or orange to bright red. Some of these apples are even yellow or green on the outside and red on the inside.

A real-life Granny Smith discovered the apple that now bears her name. Back in the late 1800s, Mary Ann Smith from Australia discovered the apple tree in her backyard and began cultivating the now-popular variety.

The Red Delicious apple tree was discovered in Iowa. It might be the most commonly known out of all the North America 2,500 varieties.


Crabapple trees are native to North America and Asia. They were once called common apples and actually belong to the rose family.

It took over 30 years to develop the Honeycrisp apple. This sweet, aromatic apple is grown in Minnesota, and has soared in popularity over the last decade. The Honeycrisp apple became a parent (along with the Enterprise apple) to the Cosmic Crisp. Breeding between the varieties began at Washington State University in 1997, and 20 years later, the

Cosmic Crisp was born. It is characterized by its dark-red skin, dense firm flesh, and expanded shelf life. First available in 2019, it has become a favorite of consumers.

**Did you know?** It takes the energy from 50 leaves to produce one apple. And that one apple makes about 1/3 cup of apple juice.

The average American eats close to 20 pounds of fresh apples per year—and even more when factoring in applesauce, apple juice, and other apple products.

Sources: [minnetonkaorchards.com/apple-facts](https://minnetonkaorchards.com/apple-facts); [britannica.com/plant/crabapple](https://britannica.com/plant/crabapple); [wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmic\\_Crisp](https://wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmic_Crisp) 

Fruit

Vegetables

Legumes

Nuts/Seeds

Grains



## APPLE OAT BRAN MUFFINS

### Ingredients

1 ½ cups Golden Delicious apple(s), cut into chunks  
¼ cup apple juice concentrate or water  
1 cup smashed banana  
¼ cup light honey or maple syrup  
1 tsp. orange zest  
¼ cup almond or cashew butter  
1 cup quick oats  
1 cup oat bran  
½ cup shredded coconut, unsweetened  
½ cup walnuts or pecans, chopped  
1 cup dates, finely chopped

### Process

In a saucepan, lightly cook the apple chunks in apple juice or water until just wilted. Transfer to a mixing bowl. Add next 4 ingredients and mix together. Add the oats, bran, coconut, nuts, and dates; stir to combine. Spoon into paper-lined or prepared muffin tin ¾ full. Bake at 375° F for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Makes approximately 8 muffins.





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