

the
REFORMATION

Vol. 52, No. 4

herald

OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER
THAN THEY APPEAR

**YOU KNOW NOT
THE HOUR**

The Seventh Day Sabbath / Delay No Longer / A Time and a Season

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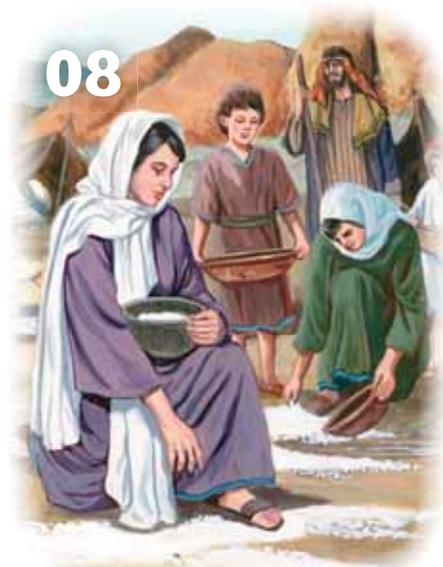
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“The age in which we live calls for reformatory action.”
—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 488.

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Numbering Our Days

The psalmist prayed, “Teach us to **number our days**, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:12, emphasis supplied).

The counting of days, hours, and minutes is an essential part of life. Accurate timing is one of God’s specialties. Consider the message of the Son of Man when He began His earthly ministry: “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14, 15). This “time” that was “fulfilled” is a reference to the prophecy of Daniel 9:25—an essential truth for those who were studying and preparing to meet the Promised One. It was designed to help them recognize their Lord for who He really was—the prophesied Saviour of the world.

What about today?

God cares about time just as much now as He ever has. The prophecies revealing our current age as the “end-time” are clear and precise. This is one reason why punctuality is a vital character quality for Christians to develop, as it harmonizes with God’s character in the commandment not to bear false witness against our neighbor when promising a certain time for an appointment—and also to avoid stealing the valuable time of others by tardiness. We also find that orderly scheduling is important in the

home life, for it promotes smoothness of activity to help the household hum along as well-oiled machinery.

A word to the wise

We are cautioned, however, in these last days:

“Should we advance in spiritual knowledge, we would see the truth developing and expanding in lines of which we have little dreamed, but it will never develop in any line that will lead us to imagine that we may know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. Again and again have I been warned in regard to time setting. **There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ. . . .**

“The Lord showed me that the message must go, and that it must not be hung on time; for time will never be a test again. I saw that some were getting a false excitement, arising from preaching time, that **the third angel’s message can stand on its own foundation, and that it needs not time to strengthen it**, and that it will go with mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness.”¹

“The Lord showed me that time had not been a test since 1844, and that **time will never again be a test.**”²

What is the danger of time-setting? We are warned that at some point, man-made calculations will end up

setting vital prophecies too far in the future—leaving multitudes unprepared for the final, decisive hour.

“[Jesus] weeded all vanity from life, and by His own example taught that **every moment of time is fraught with eternal results**; that it is to be cherished as a treasure, and to be employed for holy purposes.”³

Therefore, as our time of probation lingers a little longer, may our prayer echo that of the psalmist: “Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am” (Psalm 39:4). Only as we realize our frailty will we spend our precious probationary time measuring our attitudes and actions against the Model in order to come up to the full stature of men and women in Christ—that stature necessary for entrance into the kingdom of heaven. *R*

References

- ¹ *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 188. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ² *The Review and Herald*, November 1, 1850. [Emphasis supplied.]
- ³ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 91.





THE ORDER OF FINAL EVENTS IN PROPHECY

Part Two in a Series

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy,
compilation with comments
by A. C. Sas*

In the previous issue of the *Reformation Herald*, we considered the prophesied shaking that began among believers in the three angels' messages. The work of purification or perfecting the character is to continue until either the goal of moral perfection is accomplished in the soul or the individual is left behind in spiritual darkness. The shaking continues until no more "careless" and "indifferent" will be found among God's final remnant.

Preparation, reformation, purification

The purpose of the counsel to Laodicea is to purify and prepare a people for the latter rain. We read:

"The heart must be purified from sins which have so long shut out Jesus. This fearful message will do its work. . . . I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. It is designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings and to lead to zealous repentance, that they may be favored with the presence of Jesus and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel. As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God. . . .

"Said the angel: 'God is weighing His people.' If the message had been of as

“It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us.”

short duration as many of us supposed, there would have been no time for them to develop character. . . .

“Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation.”¹

This is the work we have to undertake today: A preparation for the outpouring of the latter rain. The testimony states clearly that we have to be reformed before the latter rain comes.

“It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost.”²

“Today you are to have your vessel purified, that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement. It is our work today to yield our souls to Christ, that we may be fitted for the time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—fitted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.”³

The question may be asked: “Will God pour our His Spirit on a mixed multitude, or must the church as a whole be pure before the outpouring of the latter rain?”

It is most important we understand that the shaking or sifting will be going on until no “careless” and “indifferent” ones are found any more in the company. God will have a clean and pure church. The Spirit of Prophecy states:

“God is sifting His people. He will have a clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But the Lord has provided means to keep the church pure.”⁴

“The days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the

strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor.”⁵

“God’s love for His church is infinite, His care over His heritage is unceasing. He suffers no affliction to come upon the church but such as is essential for her purification, her present and eternal good. He will purify His church even as He purified the temple at the beginning and close of His ministry on earth.”⁶

“The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife.”⁷

The latter rain

There is no doubt that the church of God will be a clean, pure, and holy church. The time will come when there will be no more discordant spirits in God’s remnant church. This must take place before the latter rain. The Holy Spirit cannot be poured out while this condition is not reached. This is clear from the following testimonies:

“God’s displeasure is upon His people, and He will not manifest His power in the midst of them while sins exist among them and are fostered by those in responsible positions.”⁸

“In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation.”⁹

“If our people continue in the listless attitude in which they have been, God cannot pour upon them His Spirit.”¹⁰

“For the outpouring of the Spirit every lover of the cause of truth should pray. And as far as lies in our power, we are to remove every hindrance to His working. The Spirit can never be poured out while variance and bitterness toward one another are cherished by the

members of the church. Envy, jealousy, evil surmising, and evilspeaking are of Satan, and they effectually bar the way against the Holy Spirit’s working.”¹¹

“Notice that it was after the disciples had come into perfect unity, when they were no longer striving for the highest place, that the Spirit was poured out. They were of one accord. All differences had been put away. And the testimony borne of them after the Spirit had been given is the same. Mark the word: ‘The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul’ (Acts 4:32). The Spirit of Him who died that sinners might live animated the entire congregation of believers.”¹²

The work of preparation must come first, and then we should pray and wait for the fulfillment of God’s promise, the outpouring of His Holy Spirit. The work of preparation must be done today, now. Those who are waiting to be purified after the outpouring of the latter rain will be disappointed. They will never receive the promised blessing. The Spirit of Prophecy says:

“I was shown that if God’s people make no effort on their part, but wait for the refreshing to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct their errors; if they depend upon that to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”¹³

“I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of ‘refreshing’ and the ‘latter rain’ to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight

of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. . . . I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord."¹⁴

The step to be taken after the separation is the work of preparation, or reformation, or purification, so that we may be partakers of the outpouring of the latter rain.

The former rain on the day of Pentecost was not poured out upon the disciples while they were striving among themselves.

Their heart and mind were one. So it will be now.

"The people of God

will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest. . . .

"Thus will the truth be brought into practical life, and thus will be answered the prayer of Christ, uttered just before His humiliation and death: 'That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me' (John 17:21). The love of Christ, the love of our brethren, will testify to the world that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him. Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord."¹⁵

Here we see this prophecy about unity fulfilled. Jesus' prayer will be answered. The people of God will be united as the apostles were on the day of Pentecost. When this condition will be reached, the Holy Spirit will be poured out. The lukewarm, the indifferent, and the careless will have been shaken out and their places will be filled by others. The church will be a pure, victorious church. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Revelation 3:11).

The loud cry

Once the people of God have received the latter rain, they will proclaim the message in a loud cry. The final warning will be given and this will awaken the people in all Christian churches. Some will be touched by

the message and will gladly accept it, while others will be enraged against those who proclaim it. The Spirit of Prophecy describes that event as follows:

"The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven. As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so? the ministers present fables, prophecy smooth things, to soothe their fears and quiet the awakened conscience. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the mere authority of men and demand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord,' the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it.

"As the controversy extends into new fields and the minds of the people are called to God's downtrodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will put forth almost superhuman efforts to shut away the light lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions."¹⁶

"Great power was with these chosen ones [who had been hungering and thirsting for truth which was dearer and

"Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God."

more precious than life]. Said the angel, 'Look ye!' My attention was turned to the wicked, or unbelievers. They were all astir. The zeal and power with the people of God had aroused and enraged them. Confusion, confusion, was on every side."¹⁷

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides."¹⁸

"Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, 'blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,' will 'shine as lights in the world' (Revelation 13:16; Philippians 2:15)."¹⁹

The universal Sunday decree

As the churches cannot stop the proclamation of the final warning and the light of the Sabbath truth, Satan is astir because the sincere people of God will be led to leave the fallen churches and accept the message. The enemy will use human instruments to fulfill his purpose. Religious leaders cannot issue a law enforcing Sundaykeeping. By uniting with the state government, they will persuade the civil power to issue a law enforcing the keeping of the spurious sabbath.

The unification of the churches among themselves is taking place now, but at that time (when the message is given in a loud cry) the churches will unite with the civil power, and all of them will have the same aim: To work against the proclamation of the Sabbath. The reason why the churches will unite with the state is to enforce Sunday-keeping. The Spirit of Prophecy says:

"The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work, papists and Protestants unite. As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment keepers."²⁰

"In the issue of the contest, all Christendom will be divided into two great classes—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond' (Revelation 13:16), to receive 'the mark of the beast,' yet the people of God will not receive it."²¹

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the

people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example."²² *R*

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- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 186, 187.
- ² *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 214.
- ³ *Evangelism*, p. 702.
- ⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 99.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 80.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 228.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 251.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 270.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 265.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 714.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 42.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 20, 21.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 619.
- ¹⁴ *Early Writings*, p. 71.
- ¹⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 401.
- ¹⁶ *The Great Controversy*, pp. 606, 607.
- ¹⁷ *Early Writings*, p. 272.
- ¹⁸ *The Great Controversy*, p. 612.
- ¹⁹ *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 188, 189.
- ²⁰ *The Great Controversy*, p. 607.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 450.
- ²² *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 18.



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THE GOSPEL OF *Restoration*

PART 3

The Seventh Day Sabbath

A compilation from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, with comments by D. P. Silva

At creation

“On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And **God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested** from all his work which God created and made” (Genesis 2:2, 3, emphasis supplied).

Before Sinai

“When the children of Israel saw [a small round thing, as small as the hard frost], they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given

you to eat. This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe;

SATURDAY

“Every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer.”

and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to day; for today is a sabbath unto the Lord: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day” (Exodus 16:15–30).

“Every week during their long sojourn in the wilderness the Israelites witnessed a threefold miracle, designed to impress their minds with the sacredness of the Sabbath: a double quantity of manna fell on the sixth day, none on the seventh, and the portion needed for the Sabbath was preserved sweet and pure, when if any were kept over at any other time it became unfit for use.

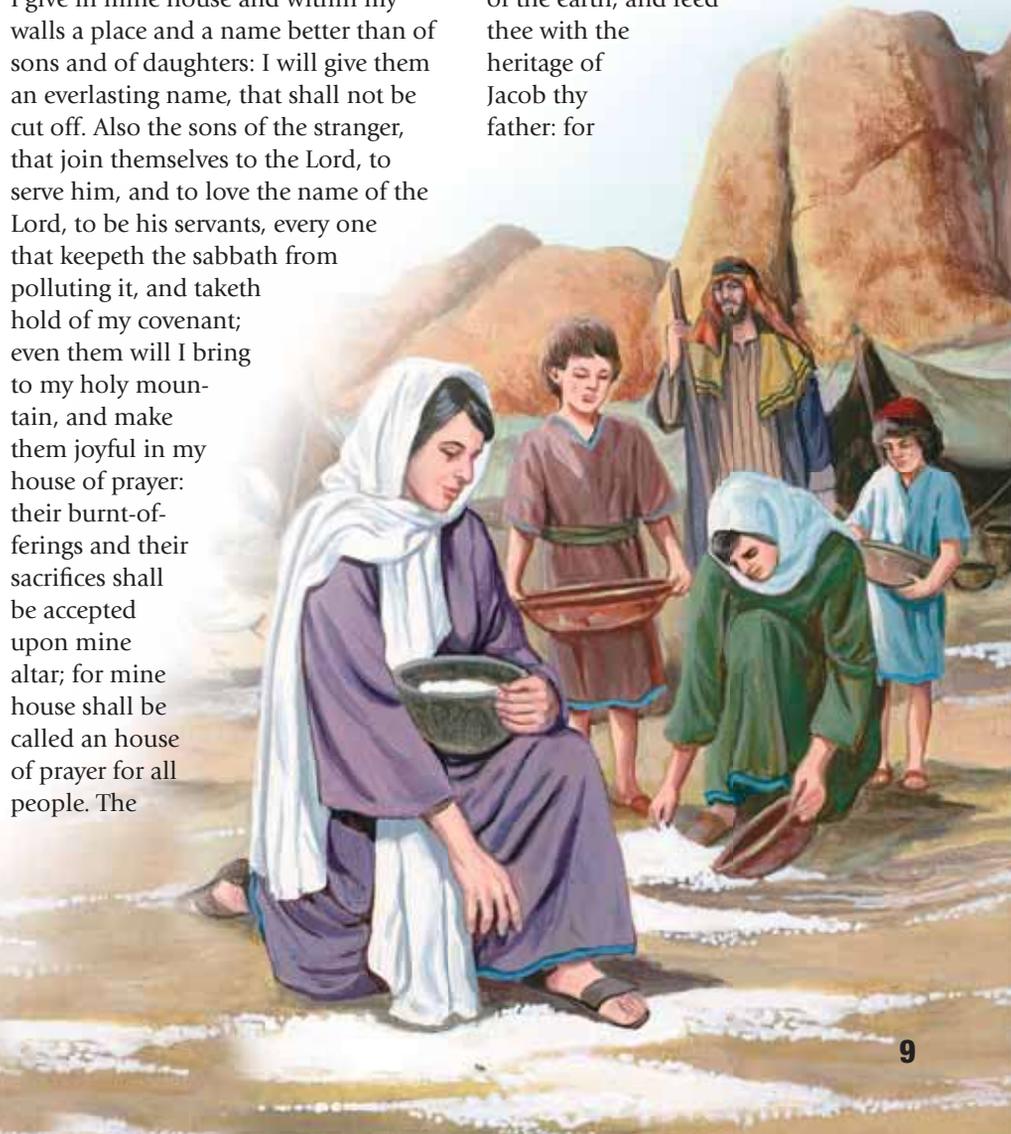
“In the circumstances connected with the giving of the manna, we have conclusive evidence that the Sabbath was not instituted, as many claim, when the law was given at Sinai. Before the Israelites came to Sinai they understood the Sabbath to be obligatory upon them. In being obliged to gather every Friday a double portion of manna in preparation for the Sabbath, when none would fall, the sacred nature of the day of rest was continually impressed upon them. And when some of the people went out on the Sabbath to gather manna, the Lord asked, ‘How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?’ ”¹

The Sabbath today: A time of gathering

“Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The

Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him” (Isaiah 56:1–8).

“And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for



the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58:12-14).

The Sabbath on the new earth

"Month by month at the new moon, week by week on the sabbath, all mankind shall come to bow down before me, says the Lord" (Isaiah 66:23, NEB).

Elijah, God's messenger

"And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (1 Kings 17:1).

"Among the mountains of Gilead, east of the Jordan, there dwelt in the days of Ahab a man of faith and prayer whose fearless ministry was destined to check the rapid spread of apostasy in Israel. Far removed from any city of renown, and occupying no high station in life, Elijah the Tishbite nevertheless entered upon his mission confident in God's purpose to prepare the way before him and to give him abundant success. **The word of faith and power was upon his lips, and his whole life was devoted to the work of reform.** His was the voice of one crying in the wilderness to rebuke sin and press back the tide of evil. **And while he came to the people as a reprover of sin, his message offered the balm of Gilead to the sin-sick souls of all who desired to be healed.**"²

John the Baptist: The second Elijah

After the transfiguration of Jesus, when Moses and Elijah came to talk to Jesus about His suffering and death, the disciples came to Him with a very important question:

"Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, **Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed.** Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. **Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist**" (Matthew 17:10-13, emphasis supplied).

John the Baptist and the marriage question

"Herod himself had listened to the preaching of [John] the Baptist. The dissolute king had trembled under the call to repentance. 'Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy; . . . and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly' (Mark 6:20). John dealt with him faithfully, denouncing his iniquitous alliance with Herodias, his brother's wife. For a time Herod feebly sought to break the chain of lust that bound him; but Herodias fastened him the more firmly in her toils, and found revenge upon the Baptist by inducing Herod to cast him into prison."³

"Herod was affected as he listened to the powerful, pointed testimonies of John, and with deep interest he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. John was acquainted with the fact that he was about to marry his brother's wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that this was not lawful. Herod was unwilling to make any sacrifice. He married his brother's wife, and through her influence, seized John and put him in prison, intending however to release him. While there confined, John heard through his disciples of the mighty works of Jesus. He could not listen to His gracious words; but the disciples informed him and comforted him with what they had heard. Soon John was beheaded, through the influence of Herod's wife. I saw that the humblest disciples who followed Jesus, witnessed His miracles, and heard the comforting words which fell from His lips, were greater than John the Baptist; that is, they were more exalted and honored, and had more pleasure in their lives.

"John came in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the first advent of Jesus. I was pointed down to the last days and saw that John represented those who should go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah to herald the day of wrath and the second advent of Jesus."⁴

John the Baptist and health reform

"John the Baptist was a reformer. To him was committed a great work

for the people of his time. And in preparation for that work, all his habits were carefully regulated, even from his birth. The angel Gabriel was sent from heaven to instruct the parents of John in the principles of health reform. He "shall drink neither wine nor strong drink," said the heavenly messenger; "and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost." [Luke 1:15.]

John separated himself from his friends and from the luxuries of life, dwelling alone in the wilderness, and subsisting upon a purely vegetable diet. The simplicity of his dress—a garment woven of camel's hair—was a rebuke to the extravagance and display of the people of his generation, especially of the Jewish priests. His diet also, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the gluttony that everywhere prevailed.

"The work of John was foretold by the prophet Malachi: 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers' (Malachi 4:5, 6). John the Baptist went forth in the spirit and power of Elijah, to prepare the way of the Lord, and to turn the people to the wisdom of the just. He was a representative of those living in the last days, to whom God has entrusted sacred truths to present before the people, to prepare the way for the second appearing of Christ. And the same principles of temperance which John practiced should be observed by those who in our day are to warn the world of the coming of the Son of man."⁵

God's church today: The third Elijah

The prophet Malachi foretold the mission of Elijah before the second coming of Christ: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:5, 6).

"In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare

40 FACTS ABOUT THE SABBATH

1. After working the first six days of the week in creating this earth, the great God rested on the seventh day. Genesis 2:1-3.
2. This stamped that day as God's rest day, or Sabbath day, as Sabbath day means rest day. To illustrate: When a person is born on a certain day, that day thus becomes his or her birthday. So when God rested upon the seventh day, that day became His rest, or Sabbath day.
3. Therefore the seventh day must always be God's Sabbath day. Can you change your birthday from the day on which you were born to one on which you were not born? No. Neither can you change God's rest day to a day on which He did not rest. Hence the seventh day is still God's Sabbath day.
4. The Creator blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:11.
5. He made it the Sabbath day in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:1-3.
6. It was made before the Fall; hence it is not a type, for types were not introduced till after the Fall.
7. Jesus says it was made for man (Mark 2:27); that is, for the race, as the word man is here unlimited; hence, for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews.
8. It is a memorial of creation. Exodus 20:11; 31:17. Every time we rest upon the seventh day, as God did at creation, we commemorate that grand event.
9. It was given to Adam, the head of the human race. Mark 2:27; Genesis 2:1-3.
10. Hence through him, as our representative, to all nations. Acts 17:26.
11. It is not a Jewish institution, for it was made 2,300 years before ever there was a Jew. The Bible never calls it the Jewish Sabbath but always "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."
12. Evident reference is made to the Sabbath all through the patriarchal age. Genesis 2:1-3; 8:10,12; 29:27, 28, and others.
13. It was a part of God's law before Sinai. Exodus 16:4, 27-29.
14. Then God placed it in the heart of His moral law. Exodus 20:1-17, Why did He place it there if it was not like the other nine precepts, which all admit to be immutable?
15. The seventh-day Sabbath was commanded by the voice of the living God. Deuteronomy 4:12, 13, and He wrote the commandment with His own finger. Exodus 31:18.
16. He engraved it in the enduring stone, indicating its imperishable nature. Deuteronomy 5:22.
17. It was sacredly preserved in the ark. Deuteronomy 10:1-5.
18. God forbade work upon the Sabbath, even in the most hurrying times. Exodus 34:21.
19. God destroyed the Israelites in the wilderness because they profaned the Sabbath. Ezekiel 20:12,13.
20. It is the sign of the true God, by which we are to distinguish Him from false gods. Ezekiel 20:20.
21. God has pronounced a special blessing on all the Gentiles who would keep it in the Christian dispensation. Isaiah 56:6, 7; 58:12, 13.
22. The Lord requires us to call it "honourable." Isaiah 58:13. Beware, ye who take delight in calling it the "old Jewish Sabbath," "a yoke of bondage," etc.
23. When the Son of God came, He kept the seventh day all His life. Luke 4:16; John 15:10. Thus He followed His Father's example at creation. Shall we not be safe in following the example of both the Father and the Son?
24. The seventh day is the Lord's day. See Revelation 1:10; Mark 2:28; Isaiah 58:13; Exodus 20:10.
25. Jesus was the Lord of the Sabbath, and He vindicated the Sabbath as a merciful institution designed for humanity's good. Mark 2:23-28.
26. Instead of abolishing the Sabbath, He carefully taught how it should be observed. Matthew 12:1-13.
27. He taught His disciples that they should do nothing upon the Sabbath day but what was "lawful." Matthew 12:12.
28. He instructed His apostles that the Sabbath should be prayerfully regarded 40 years after His resurrection. Matthew 24:20.
29. The pious women who had been with Jesus carefully kept the seventh day after His death. Luke 23:56.
30. Thirty years after Christ's resurrection, the Holy Spirit expressly calls it "the sabbath day." Acts 13:14.
31. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, called it "the sabbath day" in A.D. 45. Acts 13:27. Did not Paul know? Or shall we believe modern teachers, who affirm that it ceased to be the Sabbath at the resurrection of Christ?
32. Luke, the inspired Christian historian, writing as late as A.D. 62, calls it "the . . . sabbath day." Acts 13:44.
33. The Gentile converts called it the Sabbath. Acts 13:42.
34. In the great Christian council, A.D. 52, in the presence of the apostles and thousands of disciples, James calls it the "sabbath day." Acts 15:21.
35. It was customary to hold prayer meetings upon that day. Acts 16:13.
36. Paul read the Scriptures in public meetings on that day. Acts 17:2, 3.
37. The book of Acts alone gives a record of his holding 84 meetings upon that day. See Acts 13:14, 44; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4, 11.
38. As the Sabbath was kept in Eden before the Fall, so it will be observed eternally in the new earth after the restitution. Isaiah 66:22, 23.
39. The seventh-day Sabbath was an important part of the law of God, as it came from His own mouth, and was written by His own finger upon stone at Sinai. See Exodus 20. When Jesus began His work, He expressly declared that He had not come to destroy the law. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets." Matthew 5:17.
40. Jesus severely condemned the Pharisees as hypocrites for pretending to love God, while at the same time they made void one of the Ten Commandments by their tradition. The keeping of Sunday is only a tradition of men.

a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. Just such a work as that which John did, is to be carried on in these last days. The Lord is giving messages to His people, through the instruments He has chosen, and He would have all heed the admonitions and warnings He sends. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was, Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; 'for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matthew 4:17). Our message is not to be one of peace and safety. As a people who believe

in Christ's soon appearing, we have a definite message to bear— 'Prepare to meet thy God' (Amos 4:12). . . .

"In this time of well-nigh universal apostasy, God calls upon His messengers to proclaim His law in the spirit and power of Elias. As John the Baptist, in preparing a people for Christ's first advent, called their attention to the Ten Commandments, so we are to give, with no uncertain sound, the message: 'Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come' (Revelation 14:7). With the earnestness

that characterized Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ's second advent."⁶ *R*

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- ² *Prophets and Kings*, p. 119. [Emphasis supplied.]
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A Challenging Walk

A study from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, with comments by Michel-Ange Ducheine

This letter is truly the most important piece in the New Testament. It is purest Gospel." Thus wrote Martin Luther about the book whose reading helped to launch the reformation of the 16th century. The Epistle of Paul to the Romans—and especially the seventh chapter—has been the subject of many studies. Theologians and preachers have expressed their ideas and penned many pages regarding the book that I believe could be well (re-)named the *Gospel of Jesus Christ According to Paul*. As we take a closer look at the seventh chapter of Romans, may the Lord help us to understand the essence of the gospel.

Perfection

The law of God is perfect, eternal and immutable, holy, just, good, and spiritual (Psalm 19:7; 111:7, 8; Romans 7:12, 14). "The law of God is the expression of His character. God possesses absolute, invariable, and immutable independence, and His law is without variableness, unalterable, eternal, because it is the transcript of His character. No event can take place that will in any sense make it necessary to declare a law of a contrary nature. 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul' (Psalm 19:7).

“Every day should come to us as the last day in which we may be privileged to work for God, and much of it must be given to prayer that we may work in the strength of Christ.”

Any change in the law would mar its perfection. The slightest variance in its precepts would give reason to the hosts of heaven and to unfallen worlds to think that God’s counsels and declarations are not to be relied upon but need to be remodeled, because they are of a faulty character. Should any change be made in the law of God, Satan would gain that for which he had instituted controversy.”¹

Sin and its consequences

The Bible teaches us that “all unrighteousness is sin” (1 John 5:17). Sin is the transgression of God’s law (1 John 3:4); it is the neglect of any known duty (James 4:17). Sin entered the world through the disobedience of the first human being (Romans 5:12, 19).

The results and consequences of sin are:

1. Separation from God (Isaiah 59:1, 2).
2. Disease (Psalm 38:1–10).
3. Death (Romans 6:23).

“It is the nature of sin to spread and increase. Since the first sin of Adam, from generation to generation it has spread like a contagious disease. While the world was yet in its infancy, sin became fearful in its proportions. Hatred of God’s law, and, as the sure result, hatred of all goodness, became universal.”²

Human nature

Adam and Eve were created perfect, but after the Fall, people became “carnal, sold under sin” (Romans 7:14) and incapable of doing any good (Jeremiah 13:23; 17:9). “It is impossible for us, of ourselves, to escape from the pit of sin in which we are sunken. Our hearts are evil, and we cannot change them. ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one;’ ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be’ (Job 14:4; Romans 8:7). Education, culture,

the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life.”³

But in spite of the sinful nature of men and women, God expects perfection (Matthew 5:48) and holiness (Hebrews 12:14) from every one of us. “What does God require? Perfection; nothing less than perfection.”⁴

The Christian experience

As a beautiful butterfly comes out of its cocoon transformed, so does the newborn Christian become a new creation by the power of Christ (John 3:1–3; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Born of water and of the Spirit, the newly born receives a new heart from the Chief Surgeon (Romans 6:3–6, 10–14; Ezekiel 36:25–28; Psalm 51:10). And this is good news (the Gospel).

The life of the newborn is characterized by faith in the Son of God; that person is “crucified with Christ;” therefore Christ lives/abides in him or her (Galatians 2:20; 6:14), and he or she does not practice sin any more (1 John 3:6, 9), having “escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” and partaken of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

The Spirit of Prophecy states: “God’s law is immutable and eternal; for it is the transcript of His character, and by it God designs to bring the family on earth into harmony with the family in heaven. God has made it possible for men to obey His requirements, by making it possible for them to be partakers of the divine nature. Thus our characters may be molded in accordance with the law of God. And by willing obedience to this law our characters are conformed to the character of God.”⁵

Conflicting natures

There is, in the life of every believer, an ongoing warfare between the carnal and spiritual natures (Galatians 5:1, 16–18, 24–26). “The life of the Christian is not all smooth. He has stern conflicts to meet. Severe temptations assail him. ‘The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh’ (Galatians 5:17). The nearer we come to the close of this earth’s history, the more delusive and ensnaring will be the attacks of the enemy. His attacks will grow fiercer and more frequent. Those who resist light and truth will become more hardened and unimpressible and more bitter against those who love God and keep His commandments.”⁶

Paul eloquently wrote: “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I



would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Romans 7:15–22).

"It is not enough to perceive the loving-kindness of God, to see the benevolence, the fatherly tenderness, of His character. It is not enough to discern the wisdom and justice of His law, to see that it is founded upon the eternal principle of love. Paul the apostle saw all this when he exclaimed, 'I consent unto the law that it is good.' The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' But he added, in the bitterness of his soul-anguish and despair, 'I am carnal, sold under sin' (Romans 7:16, 12, 14). He longed for the purity, the righteousness, to which in himself he was powerless to attain, and cried out, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' (Romans 7:24, margin). Such is the cry that has gone up from burdened hearts in all lands and in all ages. To all, there is but one answer, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1:29)."⁷

Our only hope

Our only hope is outlined in the following verses: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the

shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Hebrews 12:1–4).

"Nothing but a deep personal experience will enable us to stand the test of the trials and temptations we shall meet in the Christian warfare. Too often we feel well when everything goes smoothly; but when doubts assail the soul, and Satan whispers his suggestions, our defense is gone, and we yield quickly to the arts of the tempter, with scarcely an effort to resist and repulse him. It is not enough to have good impulses. The soul must be barricaded by prayer and study of the Scriptures. Armed with these weapons, Jesus encountered our wily foe on the field of battle and overcame him. We may all conquer in His strength; but it will not answer for us to suppose that we can dispense with His help. He says, 'Without me ye can do nothing' (John 15:5). But no truly humble soul who walks in the light as Christ is in the light, will be ensnared by Satan's deceptive devices."⁸

"We should now consider that our life is swiftly passing away, that we are not safe one moment unless our life is hid with Christ in God."

Paul's experience: A good illustration

"The apostle Paul, in relating his experi-

ence [in Romans 7:5–14], presents an important truth concerning the work to be wrought in conversion. He says, 'I was alive without the law once'—he felt no condemnation; 'but when the commandment came,' when the law of God was urged upon his conscience, 'sin revived, and I died.' Then he saw himself a sinner, condemned by the divine law. Mark, it was Paul, and not the law, that died."¹⁰

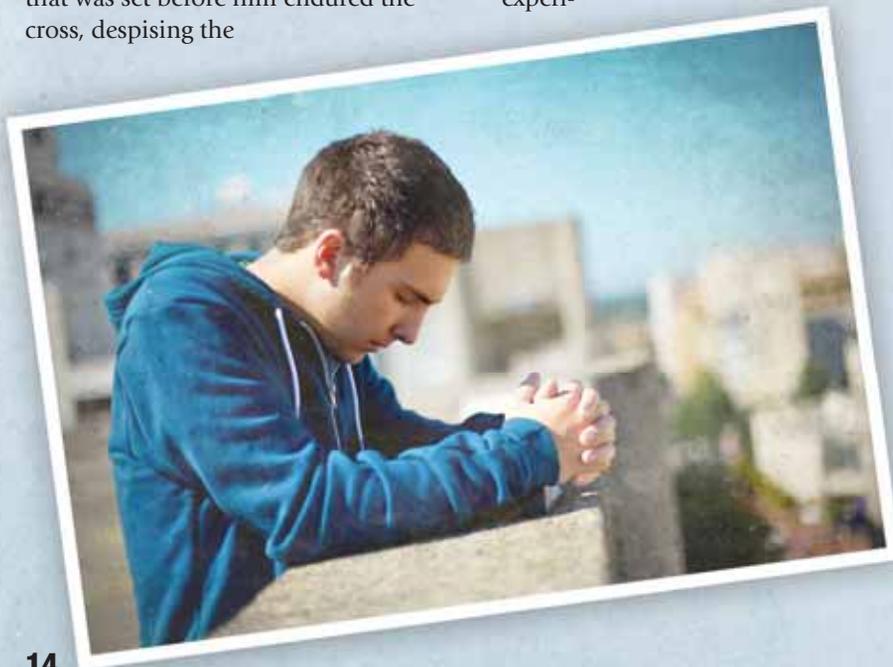
How did Paul deal with the problem? We read about this in Philippians 3:3–17.

"Paul says that 'as touching the law'—as far as outward acts were concerned—he was 'blameless,' but when the spiritual character of the law was discerned, when he looked into the holy mirror, he saw himself a sinner. Judged by a human standard, he had abstained from sin, but when he looked into the depths of God's law and saw himself as God saw him, he bowed in humiliation and confessed his guilt. He did not go away from the mirror and forget what manner of man he was, but he exercised genuine repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He was washed, he was cleansed."¹¹

"I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily**" (1 Corinthians 15:31, emphasis supplied).

"The Lord requires us to be submissive to His will, subdued by His Spirit, and sanctified to His service. Selfishness must be put away, and we must overcome every defect in our characters as Christ overcame. In order to accomplish this work, we must die daily to self. Said Paul: 'I die daily.' **He had a new conversion every day, took an advance step toward heaven.** To gain daily victories in the divine life is the only course that God approves. The Lord is gracious, of tender pity, and plenteous in mercy. He knows our needs and weaknesses, and He will help our infirmities if we only trust in Him and believe that He will bless us and do great things for us."¹²

"It is the daily dying to self in the little transactions of life that makes us overcomers. We should forget self in the desire to do good to others."¹³



"Paul's sanctification was the result of a constant conflict with self. . . . His will and his desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did God's will, however crucifying to his own nature.

"God leads His people on step by step. The Christian life is a battle and a march. In this warfare there is no release; the effort must be continuous and persevering. It is by unceasing endeavor that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. Christian integrity must be sought with resistless energy and maintained with a resolute fixedness of purpose.

"No one will be borne upward without stern, persevering effort in his own behalf. All must engage in this warfare for themselves. Individually we are responsible for the issue of the struggle; though Noah, Job, and Daniel were in the land, they could deliver neither son nor daughter by their righteousness."¹⁴

Did Paul gain the final victory?

Yes, according to Philippians 4:13 and 2 Timothy 4:6-8, he did.

"Avoid running into temptation. When temptations surround you, and you cannot control the circumstances which expose you to them, then you may claim the promise of God and with confidence and conscious power exclaim, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me' (Philippians 4:13). There is strength for you all in God. But you will never feel your need of that strength which alone is able to save you unless you feel your weakness and sinfulness."¹⁵

What godly advice did the apostle leave for us?

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:10, 11).

"Everyone who has enlisted under the bloodstained banner of Christ has entered upon a warfare that demands constant vigilance. Satan is determined to keep up the warfare to the end. Coming as an angel of light, claiming to be the Christ, he will deceive the

world. But his triumph will be short. No storm or tempest can move those whose feet are planted on the principles of eternal truth.

They will be able to stand in this time of almost universal apostasy."¹⁶

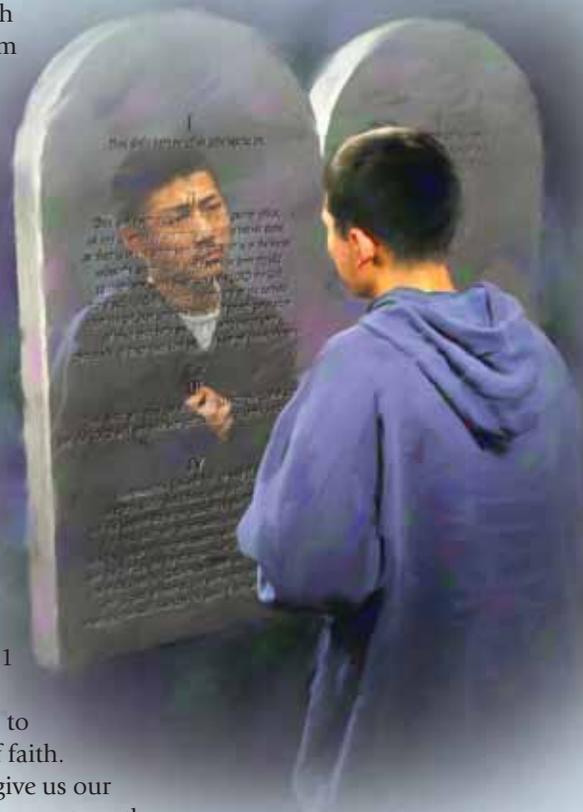
"But thou, O man of God, flee these things [the pursuit of riches]; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (1 Timothy 6:11).

"Day by day we are to fight the good fight of faith. Day by day God will give us our work; and though we cannot see the end from the beginning, we are to examine ourselves daily to see if we are in the path of righteousness. We must strive to overcome, looking unto Jesus; for in every temptation He will be at our side to give us the victory. Every day should come to us as the last day in which we may be privileged to work for God, and much of it must be given to prayer that we may work in the strength of Christ. This is the way in which Enoch walked with God, warning and condemning the world by manifesting before them a righteous character."¹⁷

Conclusion

"Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 24, 25).

"Our only safety is to watch and pray and depart from all iniquity. If we would stand in the day of the Lord, we must search carefully our own hearts and know whether we are in the love of God. Says the apostle: 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith;



prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2 Corinthians 13:5)." This close self-examination must go forward day by day and hour by hour."¹⁸

Always remember that "you are unsafe unless you hold the hand of Christ."¹⁹ R

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The first of two articles

By Jeff Grimaldi



When I was growing up in the 1950s and 60s, there was a lot of music dealing with the issue of time. One group had a song that said, “Time is on my side.” Of course, these musicians were young then. I wonder if they feel the same way now! Another group had a song that said, “Time has come today.” They hit sticks together to imitate the beating of a clock, but at the end of the song they slowed it down to an eventual stop indicating that our time does not last forever. “Does anybody really know what time it is, does anybody really care, about time?” That is the question asked by another group from one of their many songs in the 70s and 80s. Inherent in the question is: Do we really know the time, how late it is for us, as far as the grand scheme of things?

Every Revelation Seminar brochure I have ever seen has the famous hourglass with the sand running out on the cover, showing us the lateness of the hour.

Discerning the hour

The Pharisees and the Sadducees in Jesus’ day had similar questions about

whether the time in which they lived was significant. They wanted to see a sign from heaven.

“The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?” (Matthew 16:1–3).

Christ revealed them as being unable to discern the signs of the times. Can we be charged with the same thing? Do we sometimes have trouble discerning the signs of our times?

Does time matter?

I retired from the fire department in 2004 and at first had some time on my hands. (But now I think that I should go back to work so that I can get some rest!) In the fire department we had a chief by the name of Jon. He had told me he wanted to be a New Age minister upon his retirement. Some time later we had a philosophical discussion

and he said, "Time is an illusion." But if he was an hour late to work every day and his pay would be docked for that amount of time, that would not be any illusion—that's real.

Does God care about time?

When I was still working in the fire station on a fire truck, for a six-month period the person who continued my particular duty on the next shift was Natasha, a young black female. When my 24-hour shift was over, I was ready to go home, but she was constantly late for her shift. It was a common courtesy, practiced by everyone, to hold over and work for those persons until they arrived so that they would not be docked in pay for that period of time, which was usually less than half an hour. But she was late practically every shift! I decided with great apprehension that I was really not doing her any favors by enabling her lateness. Why the apprehension? This was 1985 and females in the department were a relatively new occurrence. (I believe that she was also the first black female.) The department was very sensitive to any kind of interaction on the squad that could be misconstrued in any way as savoring of suspected discrimination or harassment based on sexual or ethnic prejudices. Such a way of thinking was certainly not my motive, so I went ahead and risked speaking to Natasha about the problem. When she showed up late one day, I explained to her gently but firmly that she was a rookie, and that this was no way to start her career, and that I was not going to hold for her any longer. Fortunately, she took it well and began showing up on time, but this is not the end of the story—I'll share that at the conclusion.

Is your time valuable? I know mine is—at least to me. I am one of those people who hates to be late. How many of you are like that? So only part of this

article is for you. Now to the rest of you, did you know that people who are on time are penalized by those who are late? "Penalized, Brother Jeff?" How are they penalized? We constantly have to wait for you to show up before whatever function we are at begins. To those of you that are constantly late: It is not right the way you make us wait for you. Now I am saying this good-naturedly, but I hope you get this message.

Does God care about time?

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

Does God really care about time?

I think so. God has set for us times and seasons. When there is the death of a loved one, is that a time for laughter? No, of course not—but at a wedding, yes, of course.

Again to those of you who are late to almost everything: Have you ever made an appointment and not kept it or been very late for that appointment? Don't answer that, you know who you are. Did you know that God makes appointments?

"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come" (Job 14:13, 14).

This tells us that we have an appointed time for the resurrection. Would you want God to be as late as you sometimes are in keeping your appointments? No, I don't think so, especially if we are to be alive when Jesus comes to redeem those who are asleep. This is one appointment we don't want to put off or reschedule! Do you want the Lord to be late while you are going through the time of trouble? Maybe cold and hungry or in a prison somewhere? No, you won't want the Lord to be late. You want Him to be right on time; you don't want to endure the hardships any longer than necessary.

What about you who like that bed, who are always hitting that snooze button again and again? What if you are asleep in the ground at the special resurrection—are you going to tell the Lord, "Five minutes Lord, just five minutes more?" Well, guess what? You'll missed the boat and won't be back for a thousand years. Some need to buy an

"Punctuality and decision in the work and cause of God are highly essential. Delays are virtually defeats."



alarm clock without that snooze button. You're on time for work everyday, aren't you? Why can't you be on time for church service? Maybe it's not that important to you; it probably doesn't hit you in the pocketbook like it would at work.

Let me ask you: Is it important to be punctual? Does punctuality have anything to do with your Christian character?

"Punctuality and decision in the work and cause of God are highly essential. *Delays are virtually defeats*. Minutes are golden and should be improved to the very best account. Earthly relations and personal interests should ever be secondary. Never should the cause of God be left to suffer, in a single particular, because of our earthly friends or dearest relatives."¹

Punctuality in the work of God

The Lord's messenger tells us *highly essential* and that *delays are virtually defeats*. This should help us to see the necessity of making the necessary changes in our life. But you may think that this is a small matter and not very important.

"These [selfish devisings and practices that depart from righteousness, strict integrity, and honesty] may be regarded by men as little things, but was it a little thing for Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit which God had forbidden them to eat? The smallness of the act did not avert the consequences. It was disobedience to God's commandments, and the floodgates of woe were opened upon

our world. . . . God requires every man to be punctual, just, and without guilt in his lips or in his heart. Be righteous in all dealings with your fellow men if you would have not only the name but the character of a Christian."²

So punctuality is necessary for Christian character to be developed. Otherwise we just have the name without the spirit.

When we are not punctual, what does it teach our children to be?

"Those whose duty it is to select teachers should be guarded, and not urge those into the school who are not fitted to exert a good influence. How is the teacher's behavior? *Is he punctual?* Is he cleanly and neat? This should have attention; for *these qualities are essential* in a teacher. How can he enjoin these necessary acquirements upon the class unless they have an example of punctuality, of neatness, composure, and order? If the teacher is not in his place, and the class are left to amuse themselves, and the teacher comes rushing in breathless, behind time, the influence is leading to non-punctuality and disorder."³

See what this can lead to in our children? *Nonpunctuality and disorder*. And if this is true for teachers, how much more is it true for parents? Look at some of the other qualifications for a teacher.

"Experience in practical life is indispensable. Order, thoroughness, punctuality, self-control, a sunny temper, evenness of disposition, self-sacrifice, integrity, and courtesy are *essential qualifications*."⁴

There is again that pesky little word "essential," which means that it is "vital, indispensable, allimportant, crucial, critical." Brethren and sisters, we need to be punctual.

A happy result

Now to finish the story about Natasha: A few years later, Natasha became a Special Assistant to the Fire Chief. We both worked at the headquarters building, and we would see each other occasionally in the building and at different functions. One day at a chance meeting we bumped into each other at a restaurant at lunchtime. So we joined each other and ate and talked. When the bill came, she snatched mine out of my hand and said, "I'm buying you lunch." I looked at her quizzically, and she went on to tell me that I had saved her job those 15 years before by forcing her to make changes. Her husband is a musician, and she would stay up late with him. She appreciated what I had done. So that was one of those days I call a "Pay Day," when something we have done produces unexpectedly a really satisfying experience.

Yes, Natasha was able to overcome—and to those who struggle with chronic tardiness—with the help of God, so can you! *R*

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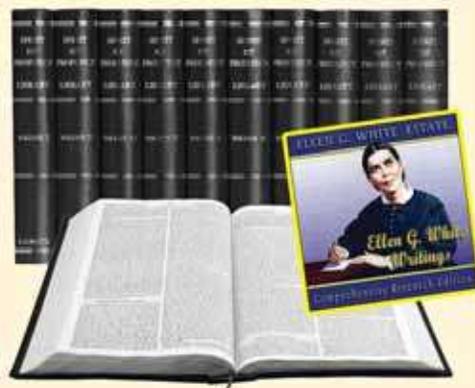
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YOU KNOW NOT THE HOUR

OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER
THAN THEY APPEAR

By Jackson Zamy

While unveiling some events that would occur at the time of the end, Christ said: “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matthew 24:42). We find in the Bible many predictions about the signs that would occur prior to our Lord’s return. In Revelation 6:12, 13, we read about three events that would take place, after which the heaven would depart as a scroll, indicating the second coming of Christ. John the Revelator describes: “I beheld when [the Lamb] had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sack-

cloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.” These are the events which Jesus referred to in Matthew 24:29. And according to history, the earthquake mentioned above took place in 1755, the darkening of the sun in 1780, and the falling of the stars in 1833. Then Jesus spoke of other events that would take place upon the earth right before His coming (see Matthew 24:6–8).

The apostle Paul warned of the covetousness, pride, rebellion, ingratitude, pleasure-seeking, and hollow formality that would exist in the last days (see

2 Timothy 3:1–5.) These things are happening around us just as predicted. Jesus said that before the end would come, the everlasting gospel—that is, the three angels’ messages—would have to be proclaimed throughout the whole world (see Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6–13). The mark of the beast is still to come (Revelation 13:11, 16, 17). Then will come the seven plagues (Revelation 16) after the close of probation.

But the coming of Jesus has another connotation that seems to be taken lightly or even ignored by many today. This is actually the very point that should engross our mind the most as we are living in this time. How do we

understand the implications of Christ's return? The Word of God will answer:

The work of Jesus in heaven

When Jesus ascended to heaven, He entered the heavenly sanctuary to perform His work as a High Priest (Hebrews 8:1; 1 Timothy 2:5). Those things that were a shadow of things to come had to be fulfilled, not only by His death on the cross but also by His ministration in heaven. In the past, the high priest would enter the most holy place once a year for the purification of the sanctuary from sin (Hebrews 9:7). This is the very work that Jesus is now doing on our behalf in heaven. Paul says: "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24).

But there is another phase included in the work of Christ in heaven. His position in heaven as our Advocate (1 John 2:1) indicates that there is a work of judgment now being carried out. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after" (1 Peter 4:17; 1 Timothy 5:24).

This work of judgment was revealed to the prophet Daniel in vision. We read: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: *the judgment was set, and the books were opened*" (Daniel 7:9, 10, emphasis supplied).

"For eighteen centuries this work of ministration continued in the first apartment of the sanctuary. The blood of Christ, pleaded in behalf of penitent believers, secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father, yet their sins still remained upon the books of record. As in the typical service there was a work of atonement at the close of the year, so before Christ's work for

the redemption of men is completed there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary. This is the service which began when the 2300 days ended. At that time, as foretold by Daniel the prophet, our High Priest entered the most holy, to perform the last division of His solemn work—to cleanse the sanctuary."¹

A crucial work

It is very important for us to understand what the work of Jesus in heaven consists of, in order that we may know how we must live during this time. We have just considered that there is a work of judgment in heaven. In fact, if we are now being judged, what are the things that we should always bear in mind? Regarding the judgment, we read: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14, emphasis supplied). And Jesus Himself declared: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:36, 37). Here we see that our words and actions will determine whether or not we will be condemned. Let us now see what is being taken into account during this judgment time.

"Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every *wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel. . . .*

"As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive genera-

tion, and closes with the living. *Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected.* When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, *unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance.*"²

"In the judgment the use made of every *talent* will be scrutinized. How have we employed the capital lent us of Heaven? Will the Lord at His coming receive His own with usury? Have we improved the *powers entrusted us*, in hand and heart and brain, to the glory of God and the blessing of the world? How have we used our *time*, our *pen*, our *voice*, our *money*, our *influence*? What have we done for Christ, *in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, or the widow*? God has made us the depositaries of His holy word; what have we done with the light and truth given us to make men wise unto salvation? . . . Money, time, and strength are sacrificed for display and self-indulgence; but few are the moments devoted to prayer, to the searching of the Scriptures, to humiliation of soul and confession of sin."³

Many do not realize the solemnity of the work being accomplished in heaven. They are living a careless life and, in some respects, are conforming to the world. In their words and actions, they are denying Christ—not considering that there is a record of all their deeds in the books in heaven. I would say, if there is a time when we have to consider our ways and purify our souls, it is now.

Watch and pray—When?

There will come a time when the Father will reveal the time of the second coming of Jesus. After the ministration of Christ is finished in the second apartment of the sanctuary, He will declare: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22:11). At that time, the case of every soul will be decided for life or death. There will be no mediator to plead on behalf of the transgressors

of God's law. Here is what the servant of the Lord saw in a vision regarding that time: "As Jesus moved out of the most holy place, I heard the tinkling of the bells upon His garment; and as He left, a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. There was then no mediator between guilty man and an offended God. . . . Every case was decided, every jewel numbered."⁴

Furthermore, she added: "The last tear for sinners had been shed, the last agonizing prayer offered, the last burden borne, the last warning given. The sweet voice of mercy was no more to invite them. When the saints, and all heaven, were interested for their salvation, they had no interest for themselves. Life and death had been set before them. Many desired life, but made no effort to obtain it. They did not choose life, and now there was no atoning blood to cleanse the guilty, no compassionate Saviour to plead for them, and cry, 'Spare, spare the sinner a little longer.' All heaven had united with Jesus, as they heard the fearful words, 'It is done. It is finished.' The plan of salvation had been accomplished, but few had chosen to accept it. And as mercy's sweet voice died away, fear and horror seized the wicked. With terrible distinctness they heard the words, 'Too late! too late!'"⁵

After these words are uttered, the plagues will be poured out on the earth where the wicked will have to drink of the cup of the wrath of God. A short period after the end of the plagues, the Father will then reveal to the just the day of the coming of Jesus. The inspired pen says: "The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people."⁶

If the Father will reveal the day and hour of Jesus' coming to the just at a time when watching and praying will no longer be a help for any wicked person—or anyone who did not already sanctify himself or herself by obedience to the truth, one thing becomes quite clear: The time that we need to watch and pray is now, while Jesus is still pleading on our behalf, while He is still a Mediator between God and us, and before the time of probation comes to

an end. For the time of His coming—and before then, the time when our individual case will be examined will never be made known to us. It may occur when we die, because after death, no damage can be repaired. Yet because of the shortness of time before the Master's return, it may be before then.

"The opportune time for us to work is now, just now, while the day lasts. But there is no command for anyone to search the Scripture in order to ascertain, if possible, when probation will close. God has no such message for any mortal lips. He would have no mortal tongue declare that which He has hidden in His secret councils."⁷

An unknown coming

"The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. *Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living.* In the awful presence of God *our lives are to come up in review.* At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour's admonition, 'Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is' (Mark 13:33). 'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee' (Revelation 3:3)."⁸

"While the man of business is absorbed in the *pursuit of gain*, while the *pleasure lover* is seeking indulgence, while the *daughter of fashion* is arranging her *adornments*—it may be in that hour the Judge of all the earth will pronounce the sentence: 'Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting' (Daniel 5:27)."⁹

"When the scorner, the rejecter of truth, has become presumptuous; when the routine of work in the various money-making lines is carried on without regard to principle; *when the student is eagerly seeking knowledge of everything but his Bible, Christ comes as a thief.*"¹⁰

Conclusion

"We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of

sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, *afflict their souls* before God by sorrow for sin and *true repentance*. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. *The light, frivolous spirit* indulged by so many professed Christians *must be put away*. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found *without spot or wrinkle* or any such thing."¹¹

Dear brethren and sisters, let us seek the Lord while we may find Him (Isaiah 55:6). Let us live a life of repentance and humility (Acts 3:19; Proverbs 28:13; James 4:9). Then, let us put our trust in the power of Christ that we may finally have salvation (2 Corinthians 12:9). Because "all who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life."¹² *R*

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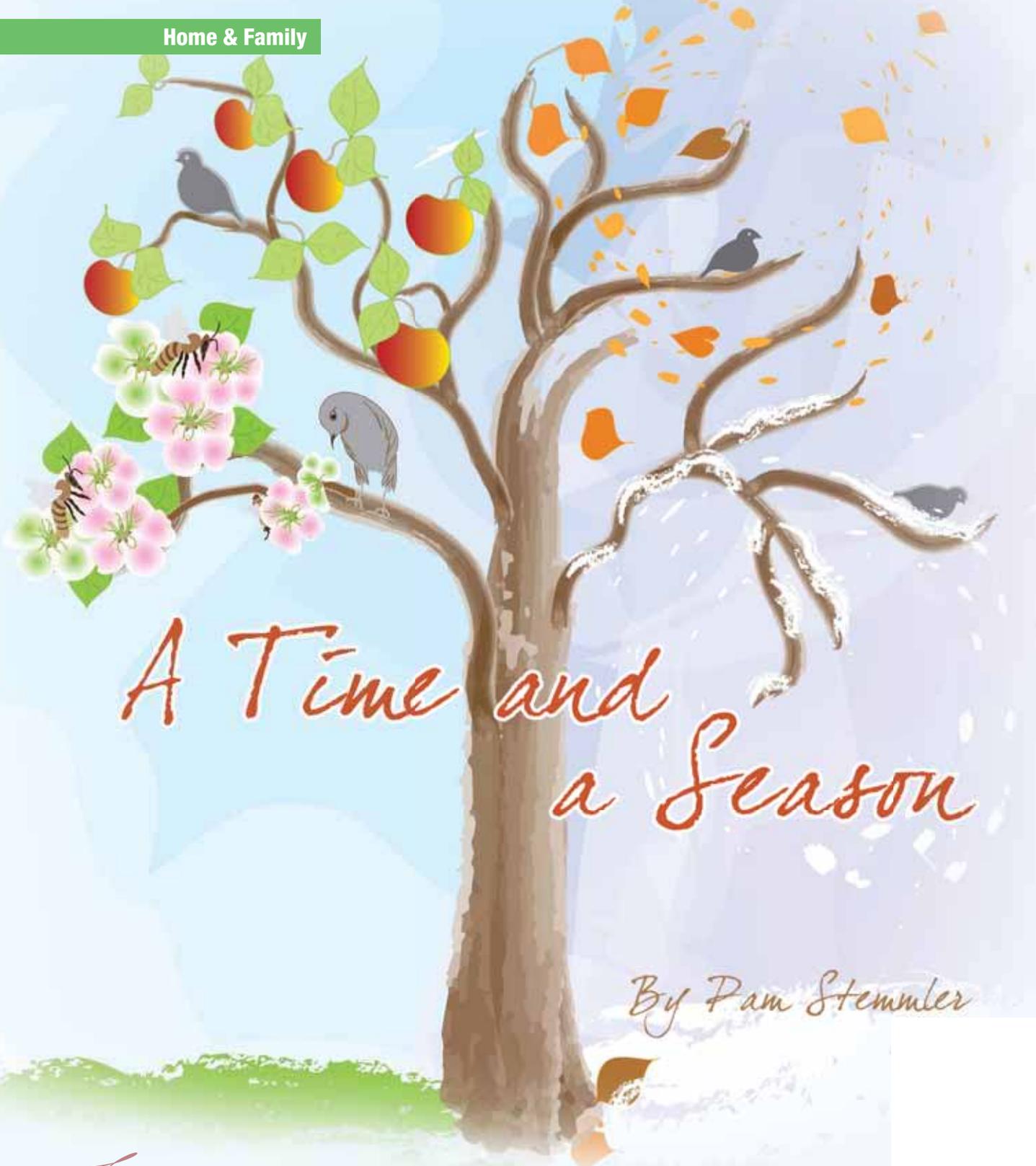
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A Time and a Season

By Pam Stemmler

In the past few issues of *The Reformation Herald*, we have considered the tremendous blessing that results from an orderly home centered around love. Now we're ready for some practical tips on how to achieve this goal:

In order to keep order you will need to establish routines for getting and keeping

things the way that you want and to have the time to do the necessary things of life.

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

Order begins with routine. Men and women will benefit from establishing their own schedule for themselves and for their family.

Thinking about your objectives will help you to know what you want to include in your schedule. If worshipping the Lord and making Him the foundation of all that you say and do is important, then He must be first and last in the day's schedule. There is no way that I can express the importance of family worship in your daily routine.

Eating, sleeping, studying, exercising, and cleaning all need their regular times, and the blessings will be noticed by everyone. Simple routine tasks allotted to each family member will make life a lot simpler for all involved and will develop positive character qualities.

You will be able to remember the concept of order by giving attention to order demonstrated in all the details of life. Even in teaching—the mathematical formulas, the laws of science, the spelling of words, and so forth—make it a point to show order. In nature itself, we can notice many, many examples to use in developing those traits that we desire to see in ourselves and in our children.

Another important factor in seeing order implemented is to teach and practice the biblical concept, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much” (Luke 16:10).

Teach yourself and your children to be careful in all the little details of life. If these are faithfully done, the child and/or yourself can be trusted with larger responsibilities and more complicated tasks. (When my children were young, I couldn’t understand the importance of this concept, but now as they get older, the lesson is so clear.)

Some may be tempted to think that this really isn’t as important as it is made out to be, but let’s think about something. Take a blade of grass or a flower and look it with a magnifying glass. Can you see more detail? Now look it under a microscope. Can you see more detail? Now if you had access to very powerful microscopes, what would you find if you could look even deeper into that item? More detail! The smaller the object you look at, the more detail you will find in God’s creation. He is concerned with little things.

If individuals will not be careful in their penmanship or their bed-making, they will not be so careful in their attitude, or their studies, or their doing of tasks allotted to them. What is the greatest concern I hear from employers today? It is hard to get good, reliable, responsible help these days. Why? Because the adults were not taught to be responsible and reliable as children.

It is our responsibility to take this very seriously and be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

Make up your schedule, realizing that you may need to make some adjustments down the road. But include these vital principles:

Regularity

“The importance of regularity in the time for eating and sleeping should not be overlooked. Since the work of building up the body takes place during the hours of rest, it is essential, especially in youth, that sleep should be regular and abundant.

“In regulating the hours for sleep, there should be no haphazard work. Students should not form the habit of burning the midnight oil and taking the hours of the day for sleep. If they have been accustomed to doing this at home, they should correct the habit, going to bed at a seasonable hour. They will then rise in the morning refreshed for the duties of the day.”¹

Our God is a God of order. Remember, we can time sunsets and sunrises, the phases of the moon, the journeys of stars, of comets and planets to the minute. God is punctual and so should we be. Again, this needs to be taught to our children, in our homes, in our practice.

Developing routine in the home

How do we develop routine in our homes? It takes some planning, some preparation, and some perseverance. Following is a sample schedule for you to read over. Of course, each one will make his or her own adjustments, but this can provide you with something with which to start. The first is a daily schedule; the second is a weekly schedule. You will notice that the weekly schedule does not itemize the daily routine, but simply inserts some of the common duties into a regulated system so they are not overwhelming you all at once.



How do we develop routine in our homes? It takes some planning, some preparation, and some perseverance.

Sample daily schedule

• **Rising Time**—Try to be regular with this. It gets easier as children get older. You will also find this dependent upon a regular time to go to sleep. We were raised with an old saying, “Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy and wealthy and wise.”

• **Devotional Time**—We need regular time for reading for yourself and/or with your child, depending on the age. If we want our days to go well, we need the blessing of God’s instruction and presence with us.

• **Breakfast**—Meals should always be at a regular time, preceded by routine tasks such as washing the hands, setting the table, putting the bib, and so forth. A simple but important sidenote: Sit down to eat. Many young children have a hard time sitting still, mainly because they notice that mom doesn’t either. Plan to have all that you need already set out, so you don’t need to jump up and down. Make mealtime enjoyable and take enough time—don’t rush.

• **Clean-up**—Clear the table, do the dishes, sweep the floor. As the children

grow older, have them help. Next do the bedrooms. Clothes away, bed made and ready for another day. It only takes a few minutes, but now you're prepared.

- **Outside**—Fresh air is an important factor in good health and good attitude. Take a walk, play outside, do something for even a short time (if there are other tasks awaiting you).

- **Task Time**—You can slot here your weekly task, planning for a specific amount of time to do it. If you have a small baby, he or she can rest, or lay on a blanket and watch, or as they get older, they can help in some small way.

- **Break Time**—Even a few minutes to play with the baby, get a drink of water, a few minutes of reading your Bible, maybe a breath of fresh air and then see what there is to do next.

- **Food Preparation Time**—Have a menu plan. If you need ideas, please ask—we have a few weeks planned. If you will spend 30 to 60 minutes each day, you can prepare your main entrées for your 2 meals with no trouble, and then all you are left with is to add the finishing touches like the salad, or the fruit.

- **Lunch**

- **Clean-up**—Again do it right afterwards.

- **Walk**

- **Nap**—Children need naps and maybe mom too. It won't hurt you, and you'll be more patient.

- **Task Time Again**—Pick what needs to be done.

- **Ready for Supper**—The main entrée is already made.

- **Clean-up**

- **Relax for the Evening**—or help with one of the family projects.

- **Devotional Time**—Take time to read with your child and unwind before bedtime.

- **Bedtime**—Make it regular and earlier is better than later.

The importance of time

"You should realize the value of time. You are not excusable for leaving the most important, though unpleasant work, hoping to get rid of doing it altogether or thinking that it will become less unpleasant, while you occupy your time upon pleasant mat-

ters not really taxing. You should first do the work which must be done and which involves the vital interests of the cause, and only take up the less important matters after the more essential are accomplished."²

"The Bible gives no endorsement to idleness. It is the greatest curse that afflicts our world. . . .

"Upon the right improvement of our time depends our success in acquiring knowledge and mental culture. The cultivation of the intellect need not be prevented by poverty, humble origin, or unfavorable surroundings. Only let the moments be treasured. A few moments here and a few there, that might be frittered away in aimless talk; the morning hours so often wasted in bed; the time spent in traveling on trams or railway cars, or waiting at the station; the moments of waiting for meals, waiting for those who are tardy in keeping an appointment—if a book were kept at hand, and these fragments of time were improved in study, reading, or careful thought, what might not be accomplished. **A resolute purpose, persistent industry, and careful economy of time, will enable men to acquire knowledge and mental discipline which will qualify them for almost any position of influence and usefulness.**"³

Use time well:

"By tact and method, some will accomplish as much in five hours as others do in ten."⁴

"Take a book with you to read when traveling on the cars or waiting in the depot. Employ every spare moment in doing something. In this way an effectual door will be closed against a thousand temptations."⁵

"Pupils should learn tact and system; they should learn to economize time and to make every move count. They should not only be taught the best methods, but be inspired with ambition constantly to improve. Let it be their aim to make their work as nearly perfect as human brains and hands can make it."⁶

"If you are under the control of slow, dilatory movements, if your habits are of a lazy order, you will make a long job out of a short one; and it is the duty of those who are slow, to

reform, and to become more expeditious. If they will, they can overcome their fussy, lingering habits."⁷

Prioritize it:

- Set a goal
- Prepare a task list
- Divide the task list
- Prioritize the task list
- Delete unnecessary tasks (Simplify your life)
- Delegate some tasks to others
- Schedule the important tasks (Now and Then)

"As far as possible, it is well to consider what is to be accomplished through the day. Make a memorandum of the different duties that await your attention, and set apart a certain time for the doing of each duty. Let everything be done with thoroughness, neatness, and dispatch. . . .

"Give yourself a number of minutes to do the work, and do not stop to read papers and books that take your eye, but say to yourself, 'No, I have just so many minutes in which to do my work, and I must accomplish my task in the given time.' . . . Let those who are naturally slow of movement, seek to become active, quick, energetic, remembering the words of the apostle, 'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord' (Romans 12:11)."⁸

I think of Christ, even as He was raised from the dead, with all the very important events to take place on that day, He took the time to fold the grave clothes. What an example! Think of why He gave it. Oh, if we could teach our children to be careful, to be thoughtful, what a difference it will make in attitudes, in homes, in families, in society! May the Lord help us to be faithful in all things in our homes! *R*

References

¹ *Child Guidance*, pp. 363, 364.

² *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 598.

³ *Christ Object Lessons*, pp. 343, 344. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 412.

⁶ *Education*, p. 222.

⁷ *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 114.

⁸ *Ibid.*

“Created He Them...”



Introduction

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26, 27).

To be made in the “image of God”! What an awe-inspiring thought this is, that we as men and women were created by God to be a part of His universe, to be blessed and loved by Him, to bear His image! He was so very thorough and meticulous in His formation of every part of the human body systems that everything was designed to work perfectly together and in unison. This structure, inwardly and outwardly, is what we know today as “anatomy.” After God breathed into

the man His breath of life, the man became alive, he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7); every organ began to function to properly carry on its work of maintaining life and health. This functioning of the different components of the human body is what we today term “physiology.”

Our study

Many times when we give a study outlining the ways to maintain good health we may find that the people listening do not fully grasp the full meaning of what is being presented because of their lack of understanding of the basic anatomy and physiology of the human body. It is the purpose of this article to give a few basics regarding this subject. So vast are the wonders of the workings of the body that space here will not allow us to mention every detail, but perhaps a desire to learn more will be awakened within everyone.

The first of the two articles

By Kay Clark



Human inventions

The human race has made much wonderful machinery with which to perform many tasks, but this knowledge has been borrowed from the study of the function, or physiology, of the human body, which was designed by the master Inventor. All systems must work together and in perfect harmony for the designated amount of work to be done in a timely manner. Each individual component must receive its stimulus to function in its own capacity from the function of the other parts connected with it. And in order for any of them to work, there must be a starting point from which the signals begin and will be carried throughout the entire system. If every system is not "in tune" and functioning correctly, the machine as a whole will not yield its prescribed duty. The man who invents his machine has a working understanding of it. What about our body?

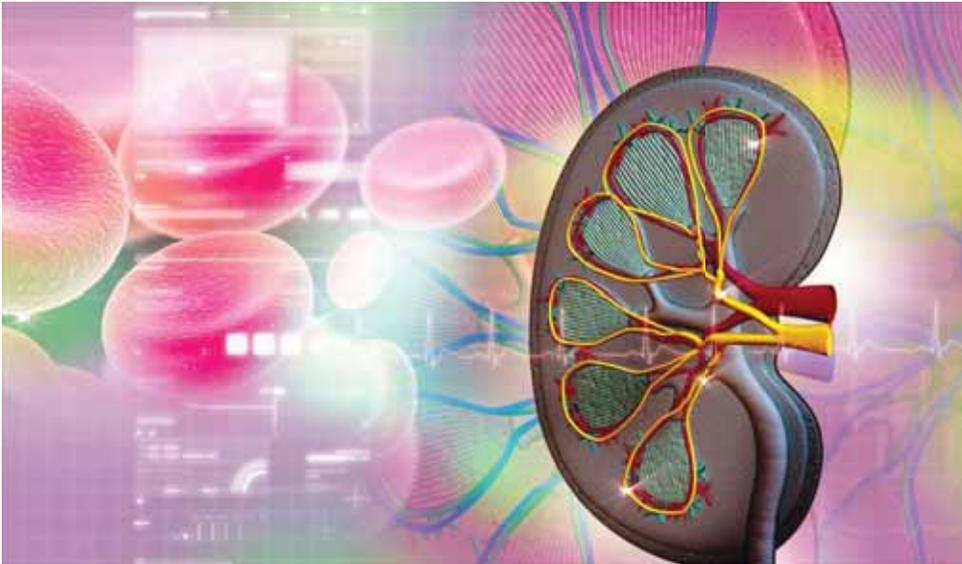
It cannot be fully understood!

"The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God."¹ We cannot fully understand everything about the human body, but we have been given sufficient knowledge concerning how it is constructed and how it works, so it is of utmost importance that we should properly care for it.

Body systems

In order for the body to function properly so that the human being will be able to perform all that is necessary to ensure life and health, there are many systems which have been put into place. Each has its separate function, but each works in harmony with all others for the ultimate goal of sustaining life. These systems are: Skeletal, Muscular, Lymphatic, Nervous, Circulatory, Respiratory, Urinary, Digestive, Reproductive, Endocrine, and Integumentary.

Each of these systems consists of its various organs which work to accomplish the task assigned to the individu-



al system. I have listed the integument as a system, but actually it is an organ; in fact, it is the largest organ of the body. Do you know what it is? If you would remove this from the body, you would see muscles, membranes, blood vessels, and other internal structures of the body. If you guessed it to be the "skin," you have guessed correctly.

The skin not only acts as a covering for the body which protects the internal organs but also helps to regulate temperature, protects from invading organisms, senses pain, and produces vitamin D as it protects from ultraviolet light. Two of its appendages are the hair and the nails.

Before we look at the individual systems, let's look at what it is that makes up the structural unit of all organs of the body.

Cells and tissues

The cell is the basic structural unit that makes up all living organisms. They are organized into tissues and tissues into organs. The cell is what contains our genetic information in the form of DNA. Cells divide and sometimes this process gets out of control and invades other tissues; this may result in the disease which we today know as cancer. These small structural units are truly amazing, for as they organize into tissues, and the tissues into organs, each will serve to carry on the function of the individual organ of which it is a part! Who but an all-wise Creator could bring about such detail of form and action and place within us our own genetic make-up?

The tissues, which are organized from cells of a similar kind, are what make up the various organs and their particular function. The four major types of tissues are epithelial,

connective, muscular, and nervous. The function of each type is determined by the specific organ which it serves. This wisdom of what to do that is built into each component certainly does not come from a human but from the Creator of humanity!

The study of A&P (anatomy and physiology) was one of the most difficult courses that I encountered in my collegiate studies but by far was one of the most fascinating, therefore my favorite one. Through the study of our bodies and how they function so harmoniously, we can appreciate the wisdom and power of the God who designed them. *R*

Reference

¹ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 417.

Returning to Your First Love

A compilation from the Bible and
the Spirit of Prophecy, with comments
by Mario Alvarado



One of the finest periods in the history of the Christian era was the very first period—the time of Ephesus, often referred to as the “primitive” or early church. At that time, the leaders were the same apostles who had been with Jesus, had shared their time and their experiences with Him, and had been instructed by Him.

These believers received the Holy Spirit. They guided the crowds to repentance and conversion. They preached the doctrine of the Lord in all the languages of those who had come to the feast of Pentecost.

To bear the name “Christian” at that time was neither comfortable nor pleasant. The name “Christian” was a nickname, an insult; it was a way to label those who followed Him whom had been crucified as a “blasphemer.”

Nonetheless, in that name and for that name the Christians persisted and triumphed. They unfurled a great missionary effort against all opposition and persecution from both Jews and Gentiles. They laid down their lives for the love of Christ and the salvation of souls: Paul was beheaded, Peter was

crucified, Stephen was stoned, James was killed with the sword by Herod, and John was banished to the lonely isle of Patmos.

Despite the noble qualities then manifested, to the church of that era came a reproach from the Lord: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love” (Revelation 2:4). This objection is obviously for those who lived at the end of the period of the church of Ephesus. It was for those who no longer looked to Jesus, those whose faith had weakened, and those who turned their eyes to the world. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). This was the admonition and the entreating message the apostle John gave for such an unfortunate circumstance.

For “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (verse 16) they had dishonored the name of God and had turned off the light of the Spirit; they had killed their first love.

In what did the first love consist?

Two things were key: Love for the salvation of souls and having fellow-

ship among the believers of the faith. This we also read in John’s first letter: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you” (1 John 1:3). “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another” (verse 7).

The love of the world has been, is, and will always be a test for the Christian until probation closes. The elderly apostle strove much to keep love alive in the church. He declared, “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John 4:20). “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15).

We need to be in communion with God every day and every moment. Allowing His love to escape our hearts means much. His inspired messenger for our generation wrote:

“There is something to repent of. Worldly-mindedness, selfishness, and covetousness have been eating out the spirituality and life of God’s people.

“The danger of God’s people for a few years past has been the love of the

world. Out of this have sprung the sins of selfishness and covetousness. The more they get of this world, the more they set their affections on it."¹

There must be a search for specific sins that have been offensive to God. We must return to the Lord through self-sacrifice.

"Of ourselves we can do nothing; but, through God strengthening us, we can live to do good to others, and in this way shun the evil of selfishness. We need not go to heathen lands to manifest our desire to **devote all to God in a useful, unselfish life. We should do this in the home circle.** . . . It is the daily dying to self in the little transactions of life that makes us overcomers. We should forget self in the desire to do good to others."²

WHAT KILLS OUR FIRST LOVE?

As the years of our religious life progress, we may feel that we are not where we should be, spiritually speaking. We become aware that we urgently need to improve our ways in the sight of God. Expressions are heard from the believers that recognize this reality, describing their spiritual condition with thoughts such as: "My spiritual life has declined," "I need to be rebaptized," "I feel that I was more faithful before, more dedicated," or "I think I have sinned against the Holy Spirit."

Why are we not like we were before—when we began our religious life with joy, sincerity, and a living faith, when we were more faithful, more earnest, more punctual, more missionary-minded, more tolerant, and more sensitive to the needs of the brethren and sisters? Following are some reasons why we may have fallen away from our first love—and by the grace of Christ, we should permanently leave these things behind:

Faultfinding

"Into the hearts of many who have been long in the truth there has entered a hard, judicial spirit. They are sharp, critical, faultfinding. They have climbed upon the judgment seat to pronounce sentence upon those who do not conform to their ideas. God calls upon them to come down

and bow before Him in repentance, confessing their sins."³

Measuring others

The Lord's messenger warns: "I saw that the minds of some of the church have not run in the right channel. There have been some peculiar temperaments that have had their notions by which to measure their brethren. . . .

"I saw that some are withering spiritually. They have lived some time watching to keep their brethren straight—watching for every fault to make trouble with them. And while doing this, their minds are not on God, nor on heaven, nor on the truth; but just where Satan wants them—on someone else. Their souls are neglected; they seldom see or feel their own faults, for they have had enough to do to watch the faults of others without so much as looking to their own souls or searching their own hearts. A person's dress, bonnet, or apron takes their attention. They must talk to this one or that one, and it is sufficient to dwell upon for weeks. I saw that all the religion a few poor souls have consists in watching the garments and acts of others and finding fault with them. Unless they reform, there will be no place in heaven for them, for they would find fault with the Lord Himself. . . .

"These notional, faultfinding ones would often cure themselves of the habit if they would go directly to the individual they think is wrong. It would be so crossing that they would give up their notions rather than go. But it is easy to let the tongue run freely about this one or that one when the accused is not present."⁴

Trifling and frivolous words

"All frivolous words, all lightness and trifling, are enticements of the enemy to deprive you of spiritual strength."⁵

Parents that are Satan's helpers

In the parable of the sower, "some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up." (Matthew 13:4) "As the birds are ready to catch up the seed from the wayside,

so Satan is ready to catch away the seeds of divine truth from the soul. . . .

"Satan has many helpers. Many who profess to be Christians are aiding the tempter to catch away the seeds of truth from other hearts. Many who listen to the preaching of the word of God make it the subject of criticism at home. They sit in judgment on the sermon as they would on the words of a lecturer or a political speaker. The message that should be regarded as the word of the Lord to them is dwelt upon with trifling or sarcastic comment. The minister's character, motives, and actions, and the conduct of fellow members of the church, are freely discussed. Severe judgment is pronounced, gossip or slander repeated, and this in the hearing of the unconverted. Often these things are spoken by parents in the hearing of their own children. Thus are destroyed respect for God's messengers, and reverence for their message. And many are taught to regard lightly God's word itself.

"Thus in the homes of professed Christians many youth are educated to be infidels. And the parents question why their children are so little interested in the gospel, and so ready to doubt the truth of the Bible. They wonder that it is so difficult to reach them with moral and religious influences. They do not see that their own example has hardened the hearts of their children."⁶

Business made the grave of religion

The neglect of the proper upbringing of the children calls for an exhortation from the Lord, saying "Where are your children? Are you educating them to discern and to escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust? Are you seeking to save their souls, or are you by your neglect aiding in their destruction?"

"Altogether too little attention has been given our children and youth. . . . Some church members who have loved and feared God in the past are allowing their business to be all-absorbing and are hiding their light under a bushel. They have forgotten to serve God and are making their business the grave of their religion."⁷

There is a time of probation

We have a unique message for us, and of this we should have no doubt. Chronologically speaking, we are living in the period of Laodicea and we, as individuals, are indebted to the Lord. We have departed from His love, we are being overcome by the world, and we are walking in the works of the flesh.

However, there is a plea of grace for us: "Be zealous therefore, and repent" (Revelation 3:19) It is good that we still have time to restore our own paths; that we may repent, that we may seek forgiveness of God by confessing our sins, and that we may achieve victory over them through the grace of Christ. There is still opportunity for us to become zealous and fervent in the cause of the Lord and thus leave the state of half-heartedness, of formalism, of hypocrisy, and of the appearance of evil.

Looking unto Jesus

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1, 2)

"Look up to God, look not to men.... By beholding Christ, you will become changed, until you will hate your former pride, your former vanity and self-esteem, your self-righteousness and unbelief. You will cast these sins aside as a worthless burden, and walk humbly, meekly, trustfully, before God."⁸

We need to praise God

One sacrifice that pleases our God is for us to praise Him. The seraphim continually praise Him saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy". "This praise is for the Lord of hosts", even if it is with three words, even if it is the same words, repeating it but harmoniously. God is hurt when His people praise Him so little.

"By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continu-

ally, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name' (Hebrews 13:15). "The praise and thanksgiving from grateful hearts will ascend to God as a sweet oblation. The Lord desires us to make mention of His goodness and tell of His power. . . .

"To praise God in fullness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer."⁹

"Even in this world of sorrow, disappointment, and sin the Lord desires us to be cheerful, and strong in His strength. The whole person is privileged to bear a decided testimony in every line. In features, in temper, in words, in character, we are to witness that the service of God is good."¹⁰

"These exercises [of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord] drive back the power of Satan. They expel the spirit of murmuring and complaint, and the tempter loses ground. They cultivate those attributes of character which will fit the dwellers on earth for the heavenly mansions. Such a testimony will have an influence upon others. No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ."¹¹

"Repent, and do the first works"

To those who have left their first love, whether in the church or the home—or both—Christ says, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Revelation 2:5).

In the same way that the loss of love in the early church, required a genuine repentance ("repent, and do the first works"), in the period of the last church, in our time, also the loss of the first love, or lack of gold refined in the fire, requires a true repentance ("be zealous therefore, and repent"). This is a timely message and the only solution for those of us who have lost our first love, for those who the attractions of the world and the desire for earthly perishable things have led us away from personal missionary work, and from the careful, special love for our fellow believers of the church.

To return to our first love is a matter of life or death. If we do not do it, we will face the same fate as the one who

buried the talent—that bad servant who was found without the wedding garment—or the foolish virgins to whom Christ will be compelled to say: "I know you not" (Matthew 25:12).

The Lord is calling us; He refuses to leave us. We have been in His church, we have enjoyed the fellowship of the believers. We have preached the gospel; we have been in His work, involved in different activities. Why should we be left behind? Why should we be in darkness? Because faith that works was initially in our first love, but now the world has prevailed; we have been trapped by its advantages and our selfish interests, and yet we have not humbled ourselves as the prodigal son to return to our Father to tell Him: "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee" (Luke 15:18). Rather, we have remained too long in neglect and indifference.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock"

Dear brethren and sisters, the invitation of Jesus still stands. The door of probation has not closed. The Lord is still waiting; He is still calling; He continues to offer His excellent remedies for our Laodicean sick souls. Let us first ask Him for the heavenly eyesalve to improve our vision, to search inside ourselves in order to see our own extreme condition and to feel regret for our spiritual decline—and to pray and sigh and to plead for ourselves and for our brethren and sisters. We hear the voice of the Holy Spirit who speaks to our heart, to our conscience, that we may always do what is right. Let us not ignore Him, let us not reject Him, and let us not grieve Him. Quench not the Spirit! Let us return to our first love! Amen. *R*

References

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 141.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 132.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, pp. 298, 299.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 145.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 133.

⁶ *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 44–46.

⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 195, 196.

⁸ *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 388.

⁹ *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 298, 299.

¹⁰ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 365.

¹¹ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 300.



Romania

Newly dedicated International Youth Convention and Family Retreat Center, August 2011.

Peru

International Health Seminar entitled "Total Health With Jesus" with more than 200 medical missionary participants, June 2011.



England

Believers and friends at a baptism in London, August 2011.

Burundi

2011 Medical Mission Project organized by the General Conference Welfare and Medical Department, July 2011

Top: One of the Sabbath meetings.

Below: A part of the team from various countries who participated.

- More detailed report is available on Youth Messenger, 4th issue, 2011.



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CHILDREN'S
CORNER

Gossip or Goodness?

"The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words"

(Proverbs 15:26).



Dinnertime. The plates were served and everyone was seated. After the thanks for the food had been said and the eating began, the family began talking about a church outing that was soon to take place.

"Marylou is always looking for attention," complained Carolyn. "I just don't like her."

Was it true about Marylou? Possibly.

Was it worth thinking about and speaking to others about it? No.

If the attitude of Marylou bothered Carolyn, was it worth it for her to pray about privately? Yes.

Would it also have been worth it for Carolyn to try to help Marylou individually by reassuring her of God's care so she would not be tempted to seek it so much from others? Yes.

Just look at the book of Psalms. It is full of inspired prayers for peace and protection against those whose words or actions may be hurting us. If we are to love others as ourselves, we will pray for them. We will call upon them by name in our private prayers. Then we discover a nice surprise: It's hard to dislike a person for whom you are praying!

Only God knows why people do what they do. We can't read the heart of

others. Is this only important for grownups to understand? Not at all! If a child is old enough to speak, he or she is old enough to learn how to use the talent of speech for good, not evil. To be old enough to know about Jesus is to be old enough to ask for His help for ourselves and for others.

A warning against gossip

"How many families season their daily meals with doubt and questionings! They dissect the characters of their friends and serve them up as a dainty dessert. A precious bit of slander is passed around the board to be commented upon, not only by adults, but by children. In this God is dishonored.

"In the home the spirit of criticism and fault-finding should have no place. The peace of the home is too sacred to be marred by this spirit. But how often, when seated at the meal table, the members of the family pass round a dish of criticism, faultfinding, and scandal. Were Christ to come today, would He not find many of the families who profess to be Christians cherishing the spirit of criticism and unkindness? The members of such families are unready to unite with the family above."¹

"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11). May the Lord help us to choose our thoughts and words wisely and pray in private for ourselves and for each other! *R*

Reference

¹ *The Adventist Home*, p. 440.