

the
REFORMATION
herald

Vol. 52, No. 5

**DELAY
No LONGER**

Mission Possible / Recent Events and the Approaching Sunday Law/ Boast Not

I N T H I S I S S U E

Digging Into Doctrine

- **The Order of Final Events in Prophecy**
Now is the time to reform—not later! 4

Good News

- **The Gospel of Restoration**
The power of Christ, our only Hope. 7

Character Builder

- **Mission: Possible!**
Godliness is indeed within our reach. 10
- **Boast Not**
Pride goes before a fall. 13

The Prophetic Word

- **Recent Events and the Approaching Sunday Law**
Signs of the times fulfilling. 15

Home & Family

- **Delay No Longer**
God cares about time—and so should we! 19
- **Maintaining a Schedule and a Routine**
Practical tips for more efficient household. 21

To Your Health!

- **“Created He Them . . .”**
Wonderful systems wonderfully made. 24

Meet Today’s Reformers

- **A New Experience in Evangelism**
The pioneer work of the gospel. 28

SDARM World News

- **Pictorial News**
Photos from around the world. 30

Children’s Corner

- **Delivered by a Nurse**
Standing by principle, saved from stress. 32



Official Church Publication of the
Seventh Day Adventist
Reform Movement

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

Editor D. Sureshkumar
Assistant to the Editor B. Monteiro
Creative Services D. Lee

THE REFORMATION HERALD® (ISSN 0482-0843) features articles on Bible doctrine that will enrich the spiritual life of those who seek to know more about God. It is published bimonthly by the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference, P. O. Box 7240, Roanoke, VA 24019-0240, U.S.A.

Web: <http://www.sdarm.org>
e-mail: info@sdarm.org

Printed and distributed by Reformation Herald Publishing Association. Manuscripts, inquiries, address changes, subscriptions, payments, and donations should be mailed to the address below. Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, Virginia 24022.

Subscription rates:
United States US \$14.95
Foreign (air mail) US \$20.00
Single issue US \$ 3.50

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Reformation Herald, P. O. Box 7240, ROANOKE, VA 24019.

Vol. 52, No. 5; Copyright © 2011 September–October Issue;
Illustrations: 123RF on pp. 2–4, 6, 13, 19–28, 32;
Dreamstime on pp. 10, 12; Good Salt on the front cover; SermonView.com on pp. 2, 7, 14, 15, 24.

THE PROCESS OF *Purification*

God will have a purified church without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. But how is such a tremendous feat accomplished? Certainly not by some strange, mysterious act of magic.

The work must begin with each of us individually. Sanctification of the soul is not a dry, theoretical doctrine, but it is rather a determined, living experience.

When medical practitioners need to sterilize utensils, they often make use of the autoclave—a machine that uses steam under pressure, heating instruments to such a high temperature as to destroy the microorganisms that endanger health. This is essentially a work of purification.

The same is true in our life. The fiery trials we must endure are God's means of purifying our characters until our nature will ultimately become free of any soul-destroying elements. God's aim is not to dishearten us but rather to strengthen our spiritual vigor, and challenge it to a higher level as we cleave to His divine arm. The true

perspective on all this is gained as we study the words of inspiration with open mind and heart. There we find scriptural principles that will cross against our natural desires, habits, and tendencies. The Word is sharper than any two-edged sword and discerns even the thoughts and intents of the heart. God does not promise that this process is an easy task, yet "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."¹

"The strongest evidence of man's fall from a higher state is the fact that it costs so much to return. The way of return can be gained only by hard fighting, inch by inch, every hour. By a momentary act of will, one may place himself in the power of evil; but it requires more than a momentary act of will to break these fetters and attain to a higher, holier life. The purpose may be formed, the work begun; but its accomplishment will require toil, time, and perseverance, patience and sacrifice.

"Beset with temptations without

number, we must resist firmly or be conquered. Should we come to the close of life with our work undone, it would be an eternal loss.

"Paul's sanctification was the result of a constant conflict with self. He said: 'I die daily' (1 Corinthians 15:31). 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."²

What is the church's role in this work?

Let us keep in mind the experience of Jeremiah. He was bidden to stand in the court of the Lord's house and call the people to repentance and reformation. In relating that scene to us today, the pen of Inspiration declares:

"In these days [God] has instituted no new plan to preserve the purity of His people. As of old, He entreats the erring ones who profess His name to repent and turn from their evil ways. Now, as then, by the mouth of His chosen servants He predicts the dangers before them. He sounds the note of warning and reproves sin just as faithfully as in the days of Jeremiah."³

Are we willing to humbly, prayerfully be part of the solution? *R*

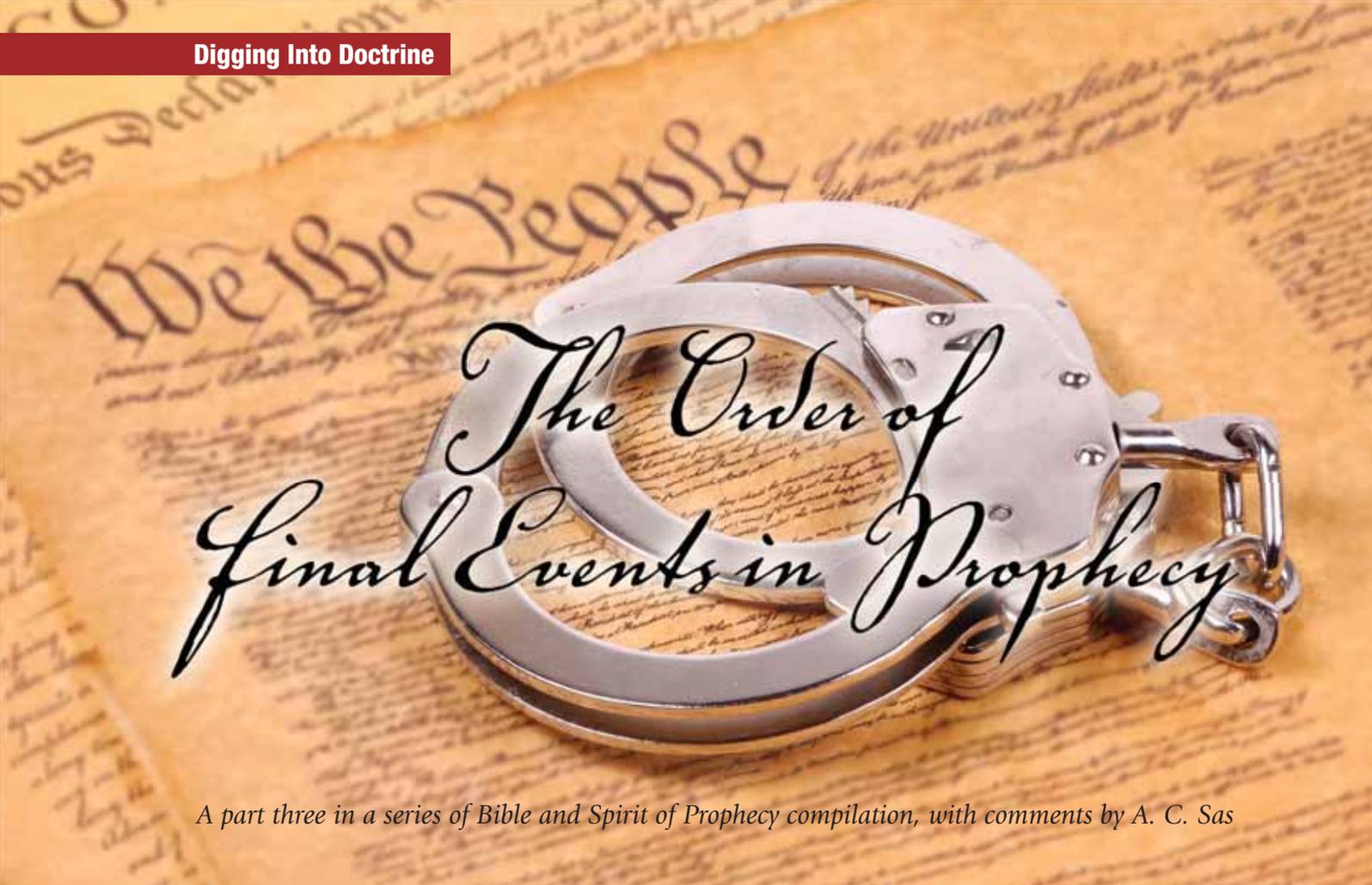
References

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 66.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 313.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 165 [Emphasis added.]

Sanctification is not a dry, theoretical doctrine, but a determined, living experience.



The Order of Final Events in Prophecy

A part three in a series of Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments by A. C. Sas

In preceding two issues of the *Reformation Herald*, we examined the shaking, separation, reformation, and purification which, prophecy reveals, would occur among Advent believers in preparation for the latter rain. Under the powerful influence of the latter rain, the proclamation of the message swells into the loud cry of the third angel. As precious souls around the world begin to embrace the present truth, there are others who reject it and attempt to stop the rays of light by means of a universal Sunday decree.

The Sunday decree (the enforcement of keeping the spurious Sabbath) is issued right before the close of probation. It is the great final test to every soul. Everyone will receive sufficient light on the Sabbath truth to make an intelligent decision for or against it. The message of the third angel will be given with the greatest power by the people of God who have received the latter rain. As the light penetrates

everywhere, the whole world will be brought to the final test. The Spirit of Prophecy explains the event thus:

“Not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart and tries every motive will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently.

“The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in

compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God’s law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.”¹

No reformation at the Sunday decree

The Sunday decree or Sunday enforcement is called “the final test.” This means that the true people of God have been tested before. The final “test is for those who have never heard words like these,”² that is, they have never heard the truth preached with the “greatest power.” All receive “sufficient light” to make their decision intelligently.

In the time of the final test there will be no chance for those who knew the

truth but were not sanctified by it to start the work of reformation. At that time (at the Sunday enforcement) the people of God (the church) are pure, clothed with the armor (the latter rain) and are giving the message with the greatest power, or loud voice (loud cry), and this motivates churches and the state to enforce the Sunday law shortly before the close of probation. This last event before the close of probation is also called the "short"³ time of trouble, and the "time of God's destructive judgments." The Testimony reads:

"There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. The time of God's destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have had no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched; His hand is stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter."⁴

The door of mercy closes first for the people of God who have known the truth. Their cases have been examined, and they are now either "clothed with the armor" (the latter rain), or they are not any more with the people of God, because in this time the church of God is a pure, holy church.⁵ But opportunity is now given for the children of God who are in Babylon to hear and accept the truth, to come out of her, and join the remnant people of God. The event is described as follows:

"Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond' (Revelation 13:16), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath."⁶

"The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama."⁷

"The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied."⁸

In the time of the last act in the drama, or the final test, there will

be no more time to begin a work of reformation, whether individually or collectively as a church. There is no more time for preparation or purification. All this must be done beforehand. The call will be given (Revelation 18:4), and the gold found in all fallen churches will come out from among the dross and join the remnant.

Another separation in the "large class"

"The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church."⁹

Those who are "uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit"¹⁰ and "step by step [yielding] to worldly demands"¹¹ are the same non-pleading class.¹² They will now take the "easy, popular side,"¹³ and "yield to the powers that be."¹⁴ The gold existing in their midst will be removed.

This church, which at the time of the Sunday enforcement (the last act in the drama) has gold and dross mixed in her midst, is not the remnant church because the remnant at this time, is already clothed with the armor of God. The remnant are those who will receive the gold which will come out of Babylon and from the "large class."

Here is another prophecy about the same event (a separation), at the time of the Sunday enforcement, just before the close of probation:

"The casting of the net is the preaching of the gospel. This gathers both good and evil into the church. When the mission of the gospel is completed, the judgment will accomplish the work of separation. . . .

"Both the parable of the tares and that of the net plainly teach that there is no time when all the wicked will turn to God. The wheat and the tares

grow together until the harvest. The good and the bad fish are together drawn ashore for a final separation.

"Again, these parables teach that there is to be no probation after the judgment. When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and the evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed."¹⁵

The work of the gospel is completed right before the close of probation, under the last act in the drama, the final test. Then a separation takes place so that the destiny of each class be forever fixed. This separation occurs because God's people in all fallen churches respond to the call to "come out of her" (Revelation 18:4).

The Testimonies say that a "large class,"¹⁶ "the great proportion"¹⁷ that unite more and more to the world, will remain unreformed. There will be no true revival and reformation in that church. On the other hand, the remnant church will be purified and prepared to give the last warning under the power of the latter rain. We read of these two companies as follows:

"How is it with the rising generation? Are they converted to God? Are we awake to the work that is going on in the heavenly sanctuary, or are we waiting for some compelling power to come upon the church before we shall arouse? Are we hoping to see the whole church revived? That time will never come."¹⁸

"The church is to be fed with manna from heaven and to be kept under the sole guardianship of His grace. Clad in complete armor of light and righteousness, she enters upon her final conflict. The dross, the worthless material, will be consumed, and the influence of the truth testifies to the world of its sanctifying, ennobling character."¹⁹

A further prophetic statement says: "The time of the judgment is a most solemn period, when the Lord gathers His own from among the tares. Those who have been members of the same family are separated. A mark is placed upon the righteous. 'They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own

son that serveth him' (Malachi 3:17). Those who have been obedient to God's commandments will unite with the company of the saints in light."²⁰

When the mark is impressed, those who have been obedient to the commandments of God join the "company of the saints in light." Those obedient to the commandments of God are not Sundaykeepers but Sabbathkeepers. Before the outpouring of the seven last plagues, these commandment keepers join the company that "had the light and power of God."²¹

Another very interesting prophecy:

"I saw that God has honest children among the nominal Adventists and the fallen churches and before the plagues shall be poured out, ministers and people will be called out from these churches, and will gladly receive the truth. Satan knows this; and before the loud cry of the third angel is given, he raises an excitement in these religious bodies, that those who have rejected the truth may think that God is with them. He hopes to deceive the honest and lead them to think that God is still working for the churches. But the light will shine, and all who are honest will leave the fallen churches and take their stand with the remnant."²²

The honest children of God must join the remnant in order that they "be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). They will come out from all apostatized churches and take their stand with the remnant before the plagues are poured out. The remnant church will be protected from the plagues, while the fallen churches will receive the plagues.

The crucial question now to settle is this: Who are the "nominal Adventists" of *Early Writings*, p. 261? We know who the fallen churches are, but who are the "nominal Adventists"? Many believe that the prophet was referring to the firstday Adventists. Maybe. We do not know of any Sundaykeeping church having the name "Adventist." [There are still churches originating from those here called nominal adventists. Although they do not use the word "Adventist" in their name, these denominations still exist.] Furthermore,

the prophecy takes us to the time just prior to the close of probation when there will be only two classes of Christians.²³ The word "nominal" means that they have only the name. It does not matter to whom these words refer; the important point is that the "nominal Adventists" will receive the plagues. Otherwise there would be no point for the honest to come out from among them.

What do the Testimonies say about the "large class," the non-pleading class that still bears the name of Seventh-day Adventists, those to whom God has given great light?

Let us read:

"The class who do not feel grieved over their own spiritual declension, nor mourn over the sins of others, will be left without the seal of God. The Lord commissions His messengers, the men with slaughtering weapons in their hands: 'Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house' (Ezekiel 9:5, 6).

"Here we see that the church—the Lord's sanctuary—was the first to feel the stroke of the wrath of God. The ancient men, those to whom God had given great light and who had stood as guardians of the spiritual interests of the people, had betrayed their own trust."²⁴

Here is the class that remain unreformed. They are left without the seal of the living God, and after the close of probation they will receive the plagues. They are the first to receive the stroke of the wrath of God (Revelation 15:1). All will perish. What about the sincere, faithful ones in her midst? There will be no faithful believers among this class at the time of the plagues, because they had come out before, when the door of mercy was still open. Therefore, all churches apart from the remnant church will be visited with the anger of God without mixture of mercy. Thus it is very important to identify who the remnant are and join them before it is too late.

As we have seen, at the time of the Sunday enforcement there will be a separation in the SDA Church. This is the second and final separation prophesied in the Testimonies.

The first separation occurred when the message to Laodicea was presented and rejected by the majority. To this first separation references are made in *Early Writings*, p. 270; *The Great Controversy*, p. 608; *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 400; *Christian Service*, p. 41.

The second separation takes place in the time of the final test, the Sunday enforcement, the last act in the drama. To this second separation references are made in *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 81; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 188; *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 122, 123; *Early Writings*, p. 261; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 234; *The Great Controversy*, p. 612.

We should be careful to distinguish the two separations. Let us not make reference to past events as being in the future, and vice versa. Protestants cannot discern the difference between the two laws, but we see them clearly. The Jews believe that the Messiah will come. It is true that He will come, but this is His second coming. He did already come the first time. The same is true with the prophecies about the separations in the church. We must understand that one separation did already occur, and the second one will come soon. The very existence of the Reform Movement is proof that the prophecies do not fail.

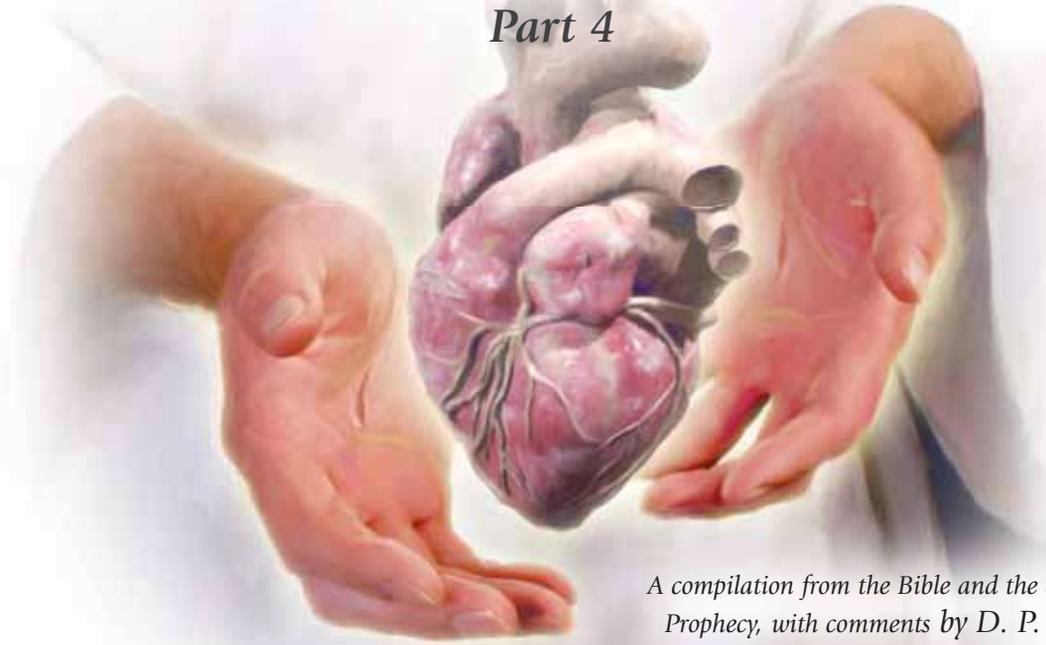
The close of probation

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.' Then Jesus

(Continued on p. 18.)

THE GOSPEL OF *Restoration*

Part 4



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

God's image in humanity

"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" (Genesis 1:26, emphasis added).

"Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is 'the express image' (Hebrews 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will."¹

"Every soul, however degraded by sin, is in God's sight accounted precious. As the coin bears the image and superscription of the reigning

power, so man at his creation bore the image and superscription of God; and though now marred and dim through the influence of sin, the traces of this inscription remain upon every soul. God desires to recover that soul and to retrace upon it His own image in righteousness and holiness."²

"When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. 'God created man in His own image' (Genesis 1:27), and it was His purpose that the longer man lived the more fully he should reveal this image—the more fully reflect the glory of the Creator. All his faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase. Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field opened to their research. The mysteries of the visible universe—the 'wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge' (Job 37:16)—invited man's study. Face-

to-face, heart-to-heart communion with his Maker was his high privilege. Had he remained loyal to God, all this would have been his forever. Throughout eternal ages he would have continued to gain new treasures of knowledge, to discover fresh springs of happiness, and to obtain clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the wisdom, the power, and the love of God. More and more fully would he have fulfilled the object of his creation, more and more fully have reflected the Creator's glory."³

"The education to be secured by searching the Scriptures is an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation. Such an education will restore the image of God in the soul. It will strengthen and fortify the mind against temptation, and fit the learner to become a coworker with Christ in His mission of mercy to the world. It will make him a member of the heavenly family, and prepare him to share the inheritance of the saints in light."⁴

"None are so vile, none have fallen so low, as to be beyond the working of this power. In all who will submit themselves to the Holy Spirit a new principle of life is to be implanted; the lost image of God is to be restored in humanity.

"But man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected. The leaven—something wholly from without—must be put into the meal before the desired change can be wrought in it. So the grace of God must be received by the sinner before he can be fitted for the kingdom of glory. All the culture and education which the world can give will fail of making a degraded child of sin a child of heaven. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power."⁵

Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. "When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.

"It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain."⁶

Genuine restoration: Possible only through Christ

"The very essence of the gospel is restoration, and the Saviour would have us bid the sick, the hopeless, and the afflicted take hold upon His strength."⁷

"We can see in the cross of Calvary what it has cost the Son of God to bring salvation to a fallen race. As the sacrifice in behalf of man was complete, so the restoration of man from the defilement of sin must be thorough and complete. The law of God has been given to us, that we may have rules to govern our conduct. There is no act of wickedness that the law will excuse; there is no unrighteousness that will escape

its condemnation. The life of Christ is a perfect fulfillment of every precept of this law. He says, 'I have kept my Father's commandments' (John 15:10). **The knowledge of the law would condemn the sinner and crush hope from his breast if he did not see Jesus as his substitute and surety, ready to pardon his transgression and to forgive his sin. When, through faith in Jesus Christ, man does according to the very best of his ability and seeks to keep the way of the Lord by obedience to the ten commandments, the perfection of Christ is imputed to cover the transgression of the repentant and obedient soul.**"⁸

"The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished."⁹

"The power of love was in all Christ's healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people. There were places where the Saviour Himself could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief. So now unbelief separates the church from her divine Helper. Her hold upon eternal realities is weak. By her lack of faith, God is disappointed and robbed of His glory."¹⁰

A good example of complete restoration

"[Jesus] entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city. And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of

the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Matthew 9:1-6).

"The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. The spiritual healing was followed by physical restoration. This lesson should not be overlooked. There are today thousands suffering from physical disease, who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the foundation of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the Healer of the soul. The peace which He alone can give would impart vigor to the mind and health to the body."¹¹

Christ's mission

"Jesus came to 'destroy the works of the devil.' 'In Him was life,' and He says, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' He is 'a quickening spirit' (1 John 3:8; John 1:4; 10:10; 1 Corinthians 15:45). And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick and spoke forgiveness to the sinner. He 'forgiveth all thine iniquities,' He 'healeth all thy diseases' (Psalm 103:3)."¹¹

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world' (Galatians 6:14).

"We behold in the cross of Christ our efficiency, our inexhaustible source of power. . . .

"Behold in the cross of Christ the only sure guarantee for individual excellence and success. And the more the heart is wrapped up in Christ, the more secure is the treasure in the eternal world. . . .

"Hanging upon the cross Christ was the gospel. Now we have a message, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world' (John 1:29). Will not our church members keep their eyes fixed on a crucified and risen Saviour, in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered? This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the sorrowing, the hope for every believer. If we can awaken an interest in men's minds that will cause them to fix their eyes on Christ,

we may step aside, and ask them only to continue to fix their eyes upon the Lamb of God. They thus receive their lesson. Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. He whose eyes are fixed on Jesus will leave all. He will die to selfishness. He will believe in all the Word of God, which is so gloriously and wonderfully exalted in Christ.

"As the sinner sees Jesus as He is, an all compassionate Saviour, hope and assurance take possession of his soul. The helpless soul is cast without any reservation upon Jesus. None can bear away from the vision of Christ Jesus crucified a lingering doubt. Unbelief is gone.

"The cross of Calvary challenges and will finally vanquish every earthly and hellish power. In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection. Yea, more, it was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror.

"Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen.'

"Christ declares, 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me' (John 12:32). If the cross does not find an influence in its favor, it creates an influence. Through generation succeeding generation, the truth for this time is revealed as present truth. Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. This is the means that is to move the world."¹²

"Jesus knows the circumstances of every soul. You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. . . . He is today standing at the altar of incense,

presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help.

"The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God."¹³

New creatures in Christ

" 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new' (2 Corinthians 5:17). Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' (Colossians 1:27).

"When the Spirit of God controls mind and heart, the converted soul breaks forth into a new song; for he realizes that in his experience the promise of God has been fulfilled, that his transgression has been forgiven, his sin covered. He has exercised repentance toward God for the violation of the divine law, and faith toward Christ, who died for man's justification. 'Being justified by faith,' he has 'peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Romans 5:1).

"But because this experience is his, the Christian is not therefore to fold his hands, content with that which has been accomplished for him. He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ's strength for victory."¹⁴

A restored creation

"A restored creation, a redeemed race, that having conquered sin could never fall—this, the result to flow from Christ's completed work, God and angels saw. With this scene the day upon which Jesus rested is forever linked. For 'His work is perfect;' and 'whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever' (Deuteronomy 32:4; Ecclesiastes 3:14). When there shall be a 'restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began' (Acts 3:21), the creation Sabbath, the day on which Jesus lay at rest in Joseph's tomb, will still be a day of rest and rejoicing. Heaven and earth will unite in praise, as 'from one Sabbath to another' (Isaiah 66:23) the nations of the saved shall bow in joyful worship to God and the Lamb."¹⁵

"About His coming cluster the glories of that 'restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began' (Acts 3:21). Then the long-continued rule of evil shall be broken; 'the kingdoms of this world' will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever' (Revelation 11:15). 'The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.' 'The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.' He shall be 'for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people' (Isaiah 40:5; 61:11; 28:5).¹⁶ ✎

References

¹ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

² *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 194.

³ *Education*, p. 15.

⁴ *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 42, 43.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 97.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁷ *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 467. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁸ *Christian Education*, pp. 112, 113. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁹ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143.

¹⁰ *Counsels on Health*, p. 31.

¹¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 270.

¹² *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, pp. 1112, 1113.

¹³ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

¹⁴ *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 476, 477.

¹⁵ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 769.

¹⁶ *The Great Controversy*, p. 301.

Missi Pos

*H*igher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached."¹

"The condition of eternal life is now just what it always has been—just what it was in Paradise before the fall of our first parents—perfect obedience to the law of God, perfect righteousness."²

What is a goal? It is the end or final purpose of an endeavor; the end to which a design tends, or which a person aims to reach or accomplish.

"Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With earnest desire they yield all and manifest an interest proportionate to the value of the object which they seek. A profession of Christ without this deep love is mere talk, dry formality, and heavy drudgery."³

This experience may seem impossible, and we may feel hopeless about the prospect of attaining it. However, if we accept the gospel into our life, a transformation will be accomplished.

Sometimes we are our own worst enemies. When we ignore the power of the gospel to change our life, we may become frustrated. We may even be tempted to give up. Yet, there is hope for us in the work of the gospel in us!

on: sible!

*A compilation from the Bible and
the Spirit of Prophecy, with comments
by Vernon Rankine*

Is it really possible?

How can I reach God's ideal of godlikeness? How can I perfectly conform to my Redeemer's will? What experience do I need to be saved in His kingdom? How can I live a holy life?

These great questions confront us who are looking for the soon return of Christ.

Travel with me on the journey which the apostle Paul depicts: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:52-54).

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

The beloved John penned these words: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter

in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). Not only will they keep the commandments of God, but they will have the faith *of* Jesus (not merely faith *in* Jesus).

We need to explore the faith of Jesus. What is this kind of faith? It is trusting implicitly in God and His leadings, regardless of the consequences.

"The faith of Jesus.' It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel's message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that He might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take His righteousness. And faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus."⁴

Jesus vowed to do His Father's will even if that would lead to His death. We also have bound ourselves to serve the Lord and Him only. The apostle Peter expressed it this way: "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Peter 3:13, 14).

The beloved apostle, John, tells of this experience: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of

God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:1-3). Therefore the Christian goal is to become pure "even as He is pure."

The Spirit of Prophecy teaches us that now is the time to achieve this perfection. Every day is the time to attain godlikeness. "In heaven there is perfect order, perfect obedience, perfect peace and harmony. Those who have had no respect for order or discipline in this life would have no respect for the order which is observed in heaven. They can never be admitted into heaven, for all worthy of an entrance there will love order and respect discipline. The characters formed in this life will determine the future destiny. **When Christ shall come, He will not change the character of any individual. Precious, probationary time is given to be improved in washing our robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.** To remove the stains of sin requires the work of a lifetime. Every day renewed efforts in restraining and denying self are needed. Every day there are new battles to fight and victories to be gained. Every day the soul should be called out in earnest pleading with God for the mighty victories of the cross."⁵

"Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change."⁶

The object of the Bible is to lead believers to an experience that will restore the image of God in the soul and lead to character perfection. Charles Wesley had it right when he penned this song:

*"O for a heart to praise my God!
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels Thy blood
So freely shed for me.*

*A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone.*

*A humble, lowly, contrite, heart,
Believing, true, and clean,
Which neither life nor death can part
From Christ who dwells within.*

*A heart in every thought renewed
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right and pure and good,
A copy, Lord, of Thine.*

*Thy tender heart is still the same,
And melts at human woe:
Jesus, for Thee distressed I am,
I want Thy love to know.*

*My heart, Thou know'st, can never rest
Till Thou create my peace;
Till of mine Eden repossess,
From self, and sin, I cease.*

*Fruit of Thy gracious lips, on me
Bestow that peace unknown,
The hidden manna, and the tree
Of life, and the white stone.*

*Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above;
Write Thy new name upon my heart,
Thy new, best name of Love."*

Believers in the Advent message have looked at perfect obedience to all the commandments and complete victory over every sin as a prerequisite for translation. This is a daunting and demanding future for God's people. Many struggle along the way, unable to accomplish this. Some even give up in discouragement. Others continue struggling, hoping somehow that a way will yet be found. Still others are continually advancing in their experience and are daily drawing nearer the goal.

For six thousand years Satan has held that God is asking for the impossible. He claims that perfection is an unjust demand. If God be God, He is not asking for the impossible! It is indeed possible for the gospel to do its work. God's plans are perfect and will work successfully if followed. They will bring us to the goal of conquering sin and obtaining holiness.

How is the goal attained?

"The prophets and apostles did not perfect Christian character by a miracle. They used the means which God had placed within their reach; and all who will put forth the same effort will secure the same results."⁷

The wise man, Solomon, describes the Christian life this way: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18).

And as we walk in this path we are counseled to "keep" our "heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

"There is a science of Christianity to be mastered—a science as much deeper, broader, higher, than any human science as the heavens are higher than the earth. The mind is to be disciplined, educated, trained; for men are to do service for God in ways that are not in harmony with inborn inclination. Often the training and education of a lifetime must be discarded, that one may become a learner in the school of Christ. The heart must be educated to become steadfast in God. Old and young are to form habits of thought that will enable them to resist temptation. They must learn to look upward. The principles of the word of God—principles that are as high as heaven and that compass eternity—are to be understood in their bearing on the daily life. Every act, every word, every thought, is to be in accord with these principles.

"No other science is equal to that which develops in the life of the student the character of God. Those who become followers of Christ find that new motives of action are supplied, new thoughts arise, and new actions must result. But they can make advancement only through conflict; for there is an enemy who ever contends against them, presenting temptations to cause the soul to doubt and sin. There are hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil that must be overcome."⁸

Closing remarks

Yes, our case may seem hopeless and impossible. Yet the apostle Paul expressed this sentiment: "I can do all

things through Christ which strengthen me" (Philippians 4:13).

Brethren and sisters, we should never lose the hope of our confidence in Jesus to make us complete. When we are tempted, let us look to the Scriptures where we will find a sure answer.

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (2 Corinthians 4:8–10). May we affirm our confidence in these promises:

"Every soul may say: 'By His perfect obedience He has satisfied the claims of the law, and my only hope is found in looking to Him as my substitute and surety, who obeyed the law perfectly for me. By faith in His merits I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with His righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in Him who brings in everlasting righteousness. He presents me to God in the spotless garment of which no thread was woven by any human agent. All is of Christ, and all the glory, honor, and majesty are to be given to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.'"⁹

Remember, we have an High Priest who is seated on the right hand of God who has never lost a case and whose blood is able to make us clean and spotless. We only need to wash our robe of character in His blood. He can present us spotless before the Father.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present [you] faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

May this be our experience! *R*

References

- ¹ *Education*, p. 18.
- ² *Steps to Christ*, p. 62.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- ⁴ *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 172.
- ⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 429. [Emphasis added.]
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 466.
- ⁷ *The Sanctified Life*, p. 84.
- ⁸ *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 20.
- ⁹ *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 396.

Boast Not

Pride goes before a fall

We are taught today to question everything. But almost three hundred years ago, when Benjamin Franklin was a student, students were taught to obey implicitly. Benjamin and his fellow students went with their teacher into the basement of a building. The teacher told each student to “bow your head,” a common way to tell people to bow in respect to another person. Benjamin refused to bow to any man, including his teacher. With his back straight and his head held high, Benjamin kept on walking. And he promptly hit his head on a very low supporting beam partially hidden by the darkness. “Sometimes, Benjamin, you have to show a little humility,” said his teacher.

Benjamin later admitted he needed to learn a little humility. He is not the only person to benefit from this lesson. Humility has been a valuable virtue throughout human history. Jesus used humility as an evangelistic tool. His meekness won people to the gospel.

“Jesus, the brightness of the Father’s glory, thought ‘it not a thing to be grasped to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant’ (Philippians 2:6,

7, RV, margin). Through all the lowly experiences of life He consented to pass, walking among the children of men, not as a king, to demand homage, but as one whose mission it was to serve others. There was in His manner no taint of bigotry, no cold austerity.

The world’s Redeemer had a greater than angelic nature, yet united with His divine majesty were meekness and humility that attracted all to Himself.”¹

No one can reach heaven without being humble. “The meek ‘shall inherit the earth’ (Matthew 5:5). It was

through the desire for self-exaltation that sin entered into the world, and our first parents lost the dominion over this fair earth, their kingdom. It is through self-abnegation that Christ redeems what was lost. And He says we are to overcome as He did (Revelation 3:21). Through humility and self-surrender we may become heirs with Him when 'the meek shall inherit the earth' (Psalm 37:11)."²

Jesus made this plain when He required Peter to accept His own service as a servant. At the "last supper" no one was willing to perform the basic service a host would provide directly or through servants of washing the feet of the guests. So Jesus girded Himself with a towel and did the work. Peter was too proud for Jesus to serve Him. "Peter saith unto [Jesus], Thou shalt never wash my feet." Jesus responded to Peter's pride: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8).

John the Baptist taught the importance of humility rather than presumption: "Said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him. . . . Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Luke 3:7-9).

These words perhaps seem distant to us now. But in John's day, to say

"Abraham is my father" would have been the same as saying "I am part of God's people" today. John gave the message that our actions matter, not our claims.

John's words did not suggest that the church was meaningless or that being one of God's people was valueless. He only taught that there is something of higher value. Actions speak louder than words. Let our actions demonstrate we are God's people, and then our words will have meaning.

"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 these last days to whom God has entrusted sacred truths to present before the people to prepare the way for the second appearing of Christ. John was a reformer."³

John recognized his need to have a humble view of himself. He recognized that his own actions needed to demonstrate the repentance he found with God. His own acceptance of this message gave power to his preaching. If we are to follow in his footsteps, we ought to believe his teaching. "Do not say within yourselves, that is, do not think: I am part of God's people, I am one of the remnant." If God needs more members for His church today, He can turn "stones" into honest believers. He does not need us just to make up an arbitrary number. He needs us to demonstrate in our life the results or fruits of repentance.

Repentance comes from recognizing the love of Jesus. "When the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God's holy law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth. The

'Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world' illumines the secret chambers of the soul, and the hidden things of darkness are made manifest (John 1:9). Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing, in his own guilt and uncleanness, before the Searcher of hearts. He sees the love of God, the beauty of holiness, the joy of purity; he longs to be cleansed and to be restored to communion with Heaven."⁴

Repentance comes when we stop making excuses to God.

Paul recognized the same need to have a spirit of humility and warned his fellow Christians. "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee" (Romans 11:18-21).

When we look to Jesus, when we find repentance, then we will be blessed with that humility that God values so highly.

"With untold love our God has loved us, and our love awakens toward Him as we comprehend something of the length and breadth and depth and height of this love that passeth knowledge. By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowledge of His love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued, and the sinner is transformed and becomes a child of heaven. God does not employ compulsory measures; love is the agent which He uses to expel sin from the heart. By it He changes pride into humility, and enmity and unbelief into love and faith."⁵ *R*

*Repentance comes
when we stop making
excuses to God.*

References

¹ *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 14.

² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 61, 62.

⁴ *Steps to Christ*, p. 24.

⁵ *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 76, 77.

RECENT EVENTS & THE APPROACHING SUNDAY LAW

By Gerson Robles



For believers in the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, the National & Universal Sunday Law is a much anticipated event. Although not necessarily welcome, we are expecting it to come for it is fundamental to our faith as a signal of Christ's soon return. In 1885, Ellen White wrote, "As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy [the U.S. National Sunday Legislation will] be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached."¹

In this article, we will investigate how the increase of natural disasters, the moral decay of society, and the consolidation of civil and religious powers will have a bearing on the forming of Sunday legislation, and how it will affect God's people.

A global issue

The third angel's message uniting with the work of the "other" angel from Revelation 18 will enlighten the world with the glory of God. Included in the enlightening work of the movement

represented by these angels is a warning against the violation of the commandments of God, especially the fourth.

Many have said that the idea of a National Sunday Law—much less a Universal Sunday Law—is a bit farfetched. People are saying there is no way such a thing could be. But what will happen when the event prophesied is seen to be approaching? "As the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before."²

Coming at just the right time, this warning will be given with the power of the latter rain and will reach every corner of the globe, but according to Revelation 13:11–18 the issue of Sunday legislation is first to begin in the U.S. The Spirit of Prophecy relates it this way:

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation [the United States of America] will disconnect herself fully from righteousness."³

"The people of the United States have been a favored people, but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and 'national apostasy' will be registered in the books of heaven."⁴

Then, Sunday legislation will extend globally. "The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. **When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself.**"⁵

During this time, the Bible predicts that trouble will increase upon the earth.

Four destructive winds

In Revelation 7:1 under the figure of four destructive winds, John wrote of the trouble coming upon the earth just prior to the return of Christ. "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree."

A search for the way the word "wind" is used in the Spirit of Prophecy reveals that the four winds represent wars, famines, pestilence, evil human passion, political strife, Satanic power, and natural disasters. These winds are being held back until the 144,000 are all sealed. However, it is clear that many of these destructive forces are continually increasing and causing chaos around the world right now. Ellen White described the four winds in these words:

"Local disturbances in nature are permitted to take place as symbols of that which may be expected all over the world when the angels loose the four winds of the earth."⁶

"As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. . . . The same destructive power exercised by holy angels when God commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere."⁷

Natural disasters

Jesus also predicted these destructive forces would take place just prior to His return. He said, "Great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven . . . and upon the earth distress of

nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" (Luke 21:11, 25, 26).

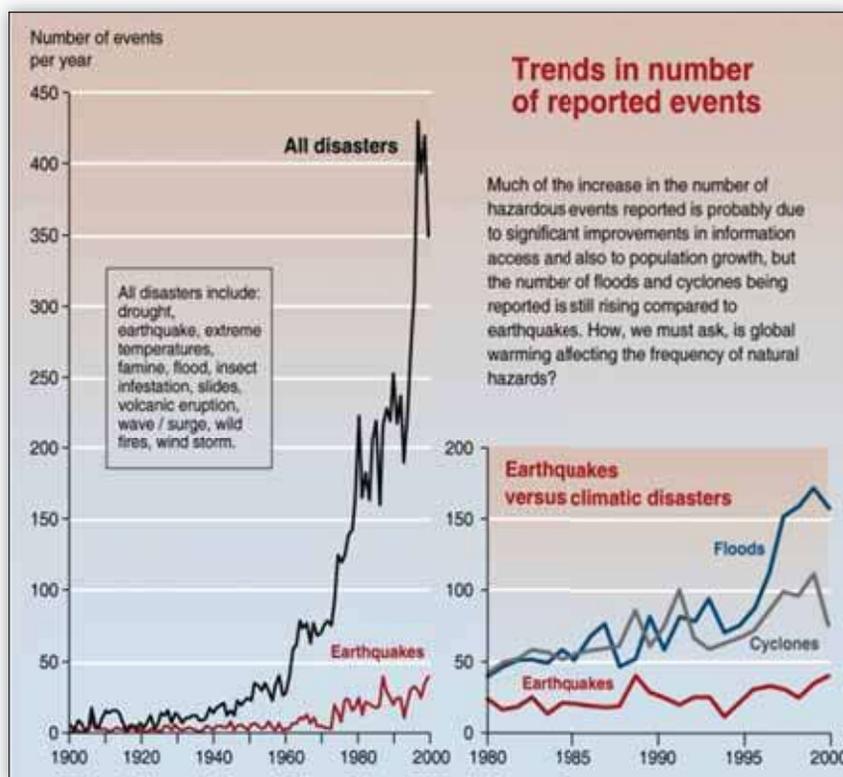
Natural disasters seem to be intensifying and increasing in frequency (see graphic.⁸ They are having a more devastating effect around the world. The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) reported that 2010 was the deadliest year for natural disasters in two decades. Some 373 natural disasters killed over 296,800, affected nearly 208 million, and cost nearly 110 billion dollars, all in one year.

The prophet Isaiah was also shown the plight of the world in these last days when he wrote, "The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned,

and few men left" (Isaiah 24:4-6, emphasis added).

In 2004, the United Nations published a report saying, "Environmental degradation has enhanced the destructive potential of natural disasters and in some cases hastened their occurrence. The dramatic increase in major disasters witnessed in the last 50 years provides worrying evidence of this trend. More than two billion people were affected by such disasters in the last decade, and in the same period the economic toll surpassed that of the previous four decades combined. If climate change produces more acute flooding, heat waves, droughts and storms, this pace may accelerate."⁹

To Seventh Day Adventists, the Spirit of Prophecy reveals the true cause of these natural disasters. Writing about a time just prior to the close of probation, while the last message of mercy is going out to the world, the Lord's messenger describes how Satan will come impersonating Christ on one hand and will cause destruction on the other: "While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, [Satan] will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are



reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become **more and more frequent and disastrous.**"¹⁰

But who will be blamed for all of this chaos? "And then the great deceiver will persuade men that **those who serve God** are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. **It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath, that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced;** and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity."¹¹

Sunday—a symbol of the environment

It seems that Sunday is gaining momentum even now as a symbol of the environment. On April 17, 2008, NEWSWEEK published an online article entitled, "The Green Pope Benedict XVI has embraced environmentalism. How he's using church teachings to urge Roman Catholics to take care of the earth.

The article went on to quote, " 'When you have an issue getting so much attention, there are a lot of voices talking about it. Benedict knows that and he wanted a seat at the table,' says Lucia Silecchia, a social law professor at Catholic University who published a paper last year titled 'Discerning the Environmental Perspective of Pope Benedict XVI.' 'He saw this as a way to push the values of the church in a new context.' "¹²

On September 2007, while visiting

Saint Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, the Pope said, "Sunday is also the Church's weekly feast of creation—the feast of thanksgiving and joy over God's creation. At a time when creation seems to be endangered in so many ways through human activity, we should consciously advert to this dimension of Sunday too."¹³

Moral decay

Adding to the increasing natural and environmental disasters seen recently, the Scriptures also predict a universal moral decay before Christ returns. See 2 Timothy 3:1–5, 13; Matthew 24:12; Luke 17:26.

As moral corruption around the world increases, what will popular religious leaders say will improve the situation? "This very class [of religious leaders] put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is **largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called "Christian sabbath,"** and that the **enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society.**"¹⁴

How will this appeal to "improve morals" be supported by evil spirits? "Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the **rejecters of Sunday of their error,** affirming that the laws of the land should be obeyed as the law of God. They will lament the **great wickedness in the world** and second the testimony of religious teachers that the **degraded state of morals is caused by the desecration of Sunday.** Great will be the indignation excited against all who refuse to accept their testimony."¹⁵

God's people will have an amazing conflict before them. It will then be seen that those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus are the real object of Satan's wrath (Revelation 12:17).

Consolidation of powers

While the winds are about to blow, churches are consolidating. In 2006, *Christian Churches Together* was formed to become the biggest consolidation of churches ever to occur in the United States. This is from their website's Press Release: "Thirty-four churches and

national Christian organizations, representing over 100 million Americans, have formed the broadest, most inclusive fellowship of Christian churches and traditions in the USA. . . .

National leaders from five Christian families— Evangelical/Pentecostal, Historic Protestant, Historic Racial/Ethnic, Orthodox and Catholic—made the historic decision to organize officially as Christian Churches Together in the USA. Its mission is 'to enable churches and Christian organizations to grow closer together in Christ in order to strengthen our Christian witness in the world.' "¹⁶

Where are the real Protestants today? The servant of the Lord wrote about this ecumenical unity: "It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy."¹⁷

You may wonder: How can the union of so many different denominations that hold so many various differing points of views and beliefs ever be accomplished? They certainly seem to be having success at it. But what type of union is this? Based on what?

"The wide diversity of belief in the Protestant churches is regarded by many as decisive proof that no effort to secure a forced uniformity can ever be made. But there has been for years, in churches of the Protestant faith, a **strong and growing sentiment in favor of a union based upon common points of doctrine.** To secure such a union, the discussion of subjects upon which all were not agreed—however important they might be from a Bible standpoint—must necessarily be waived."¹⁸

"**The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating.** They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones."¹⁹

What will be the result of this union? "When the leading churches of the United States, **uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common,** shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and

the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result."²⁰

European Sunday alliance

Bearing in mind that the Sunday law will become a global issue (Revelation 14:9–12), some recent events in Europe are also of interest.

On June 20, 2011, a relatively new organization called the European Sunday Alliance presented its message to the European Union's Economic and Social Committee, arguing that if Sunday was protected as a day of rest for all, it would promote better relationships in family and society and a healthier and safer Europe.

The European Sunday Alliance is a network of 65 civil society organizations, trade unions, and churches all rallying for the "protection" of Sunday. This is a quote from their Founding Statement:

"Sundays are the reference for the time organisation of state and society. Notwithstanding the need to provide essential services, . . . a common weekly day of rest creates the necessary framework with regard to the collective rhythm of time in all the Member States of the EU. It serves to strengthen social cohesion in our societies. Only a well-protected common work-free day per week enables citizens to enjoy full participation in cultural, sports, social and religious life, to seek cultural enrichment and spiritual well-being and to engage in volunteer work and association activities. Without this day, all these forms of social interaction and pastime would be endangered."²¹

Study history, and it is not difficult to see where all this is heading.

Are believers in the threefold angels' message immune?

Since we all believe in the seventh-day Sabbath so firmly and have the greater weight of evidence to support our belief, is it safe to say that we will be okay when the test comes before the world? Let's not get too comfortable.

In 1849, the messenger of the Lord made a sobering prediction about this very point: "I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, 'Thou art weighed in the balance, and

found wanting.' I asked who this company were. The angel said, 'These are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up.' I heard them cry with a loud voice, 'We have believed in Thy coming, and taught it with energy.' And while they were speaking, their eyes would fall upon their garments and see the writing, and then they would wail aloud. I saw that they had drunk of the deep waters, and fouled the residue with their feet— trodden the Sabbath underfoot—and that was why they were weighed in the balance and found wanting."²²

Conclusion

As we see the prophecies being fulfilled before our eyes, let us seriously and carefully examine ourselves whether we are in the faith. Faithfulness to the Lord today will prepare us for faithfulness under trials tomorrow.

The great question asked in the Scriptures when Jesus returns is, "The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:17). *R*

References

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 451.
- ² *The Great Controversy*, p. 606.
- ³ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 451.
- ⁴ *The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1893.
- ⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 141.
- ⁶ Manuscript Releases, vol. 19, p. 279.
- ⁷ *The Great Controversy*, p. 614.
- ⁸ UNEP/GRID-Arendal, Number of Disasters per Year, UNEP/GRID-Arendal Maps and Graphics Library, <http://maps.grida.no/go/graphic/number-of-disasters-per-year>, accessed April 19, 2011).
- ⁹ Report of the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, "A More Secure World, Our Shared Responsibility."
- ¹⁰ *The Great Controversy*, pp. 589, 599.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 590.
- ¹² www.newsweek.com/2008/04/16/the-green-pope, accessed April 19, 2011.
- ¹³ Homily of Pope Benedict XVI, Saint Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, Sunday, September 9, 2007.
- ¹⁴ *The Great Controversy*, p. 587.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 590.
- ¹⁶ www.christianchurchestogether.org/news/0011, accessed April 19, 2011.
- ¹⁷ *The Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1894.
- ¹⁸ *The Great Controversy*, p. 444.
- ¹⁹ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 11.
- ²⁰ *The Great Controversy*, p. 445.
- ²¹ www.europeansundayalliance.eu/site/foundingstatement/textofthefoundingstatement/article/66, accessed July 5, 2011.
- ²² *Early Writings*, p. 37.

(Continued from p. 6.)

ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, 'It is done'; and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: '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). Every case has been decided for life or death."²⁵

The order of the events is briefly mentioned in this short paragraph. Let us repeat them:

1. "The people of God have accomplished their work"²⁶ (a work of preparation);
2. "They have received the 'latter rain.'"
3. "The final test has been brought upon the world."
4. "Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above" (close of probation).

In this short paragraph not all details are mentioned, but we see that the Sunday decree comes right prior to the close of probation. *R*

References

- ¹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 605.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 606.
- ³ *Early Writings*, pp. 33, 85.
- ⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 97.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 251; vol. 9, p. 228.
- ⁶ *The Great Controversy*, p. 604.
- ⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 141.
- ⁸ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 412.
- ⁹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 81.
- ¹⁰ *The Great Controversy*, p. 608.
- ¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 81.
- ¹² *Early Writings*, p. 270.
- ¹³ *The Great Controversy*, p. 608.
- ¹⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 81.
- ¹⁵ *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 122, 123.
- ¹⁶ *The Great Controversy*, p. 608.
- ¹⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 136.
- ¹⁸ *Christ Our Righteousness*, p. 147.
- ¹⁹ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 17, 18.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 234.
- ²¹ *Early Writings*, p. 272.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 261.
- ²³ *The Great Controversy*, p. 450.
- ²⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 211.
- ²⁵ *The Great Controversy*, p. 613.
- ²⁶ See *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 619.

Delay No Longer

The Second of Two Articles

By Jeff Grimaldi



We are living in the last days. Do we really believe that? I'm not so sure we really do believe.

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord" (Jeremiah 8:7).

God knows we are not reading the signs of the times as we should—maybe it's because of the way we live our lives. We don't seem to show any urgency; we don't seem to live our lives as if we believe our name could come up in judgment at any time.

I remember doing the C-PAT (Candidate Physical Ability Testing) for the fire department. After initially putting on a 25-pound vest and walking up the stairmaster for 3 minutes, each person received another 10 pounds and began



the course. The course was a series of 8 tasks that had to be completed in 8 minutes.

One candidate was big, strong, and methodical. He slowly walked to each event and made doubly sure he did each event correctly and methodically. I was amazed because he never even broke a sweat, demonstrating himself to be flawless even at the last event. But how stunned and shocked he was when the moderator said, "Time!" and

took the pike pole (tool) from him at that moment. He stood there in disbelief and was greatly dismayed. When I talked with him later, he explained that he had been trying to pace himself. Yes, I agreed, it's good to pace yourself—as long as the pace isn't too slow! He had not had the sense of urgency that was needed to pass the test.

Can we afford to hesitate in these last days?

"The greatest promptness is positively necessary in the hour of peril and danger. Every plan may be well laid to accomplish certain results, and yet a delay of a very short time may leave things to assume an entirely different shape, and the great objects which might have been gained are lost through lack of quick foresight and prompt dispatch."¹

There are times when it is advisable to give great thought before acting—

such as when buying a piece of real estate. But there are other times when action is the answer. We need to ask our all-wise God to give us discernment in these matters.

In wartime especially, action is needed. Are we in a war? Yes, we are in combat against the ultimate terrorist—Satan. What do you think is one of his most used tools?

The messenger of the Lord explains:

“I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on *the turn of minutes*. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage. My brother, you need to reform. The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth. Victories are frequently lost through delays. There will be crises in this cause. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect will result in great failures and positive dishonor to God. *Rapid movements at the critical moment often disarm the enemy*, and he is disappointed and vanquished, for he had expected time to lay plans and work by artifice.”²

What about us?

Have we lost souls because we hesitated to tell them about Jesus and His love?

Remember the story of Lot’s wife? Was she the only one at fault?

“Again the solemn command was given to hasten, for the fiery storm would be delayed but little longer. But one of the fugitives ventured to cast a look backward to the doomed city, and she became a monument of God’s judgment. If Lot himself had manifested no hesitancy to obey the angels’ warning, but had earnestly fled toward the mountains, without one word of pleading or remonstrance, his wife also would have made her escape. The influence of his example would have saved her from the sin that sealed her doom. But his hesitancy and delay caused her to lightly regard the divine warning. While her body was upon the plain, her heart clung to Sodom, and she perished with it.”³

Does God care about time?

“Now after that John was put in prison, 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).

“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, **in due time** Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:5, 6, emphasis supplied).

God appointed a time for Jesus to come and save us, and that time was fulfilled.

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 4:3–5).

Again it tells us that when the fullness of time came, God sent Jesus. God is on schedule and on time. If Jesus is our Example, should we do any less?

Brethren and sisters, we are living in the last days and our time is running out. . . . Are we ready?

Does God care about time?

“For [God] hath made [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation)” (2 Corinthians 5:21–6:2).

It is time for us to stop delaying His coming by our inactivity. When is the time to know Jesus? You don’t know what tomorrow will bring or even if it is promised to you. But you can know Jesus today. I urge you to stop and think of all that is going around today. Can you afford to delay any longer to work for the Lord? It is time we performed our Christian service. I will never forget the look on that man’s

face when his time ran out, and he realized that it was too late for him. I guarantee you that we do not want that experience!

Ellen White describes what she saw in vision: “I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer’s inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, ‘*It is done.*’ And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, ‘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).

“Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.”⁴

Now to those of us who claim to know Jesus: Please don’t delay to do whatever it takes to develop that Christian character. We also need that sense of urgency that we do not now possess. I hope and pray that we all will feel that sense of urgency in our lives. Let us not be like the Pharisees who did not know the time of their visitation. *R*

References

¹ *Gospel Workers*, p. 134.

² *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 497, 498. [Emphasis supplied.]

³ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 161.

⁴ *Early Writings*, pp. 279, 280.

Maintaining a Schedule and a Routine

By Pam Stemmler



In the previous issue of *The Reformation Herald*, we wrote about the blessings of having a routine in the home. For many of us, such an aim is easier said than done. So here are some suggestions to help: Use a binder or notebook for weekly and daily schedules of tasks. There are excellent helps available for this purpose. Again, if it is not in your budget to buy, create. I have used a small binder, covered with quilt batting and nice fabric as my “brain,” my planner. Insert paper and dividers with different tabs like calendar, contacts, daily schedules, long term projects, prayer requests, and so forth.

Are you asking how you can get everything accomplished? One thing needs to be understood besides asking

God for direction, and that is prioritization. That seems like a long word, but it simply means putting things in order of priority or importance. I may have a long list of things to do, but it can't all be done at once. So I must look at the tasks and, praying for wisdom, decide which are the most important and what can wait.

A friend came up with a list to use when thinking of being wise with time management. (Thanks, Bro. Michel-Ange) It is as follows:

- Act immediately (if you want to do it, do it now)
- Break it down (divide the project into smaller tasks)
- Containerize (put physical things into plastic, see-through containers)

- Delegate (delegate to others you trust things you can't do)
- Eliminate (eliminate things you don't use or need physically and spiritually)
- File (have a good filing system for all papers)
- Give (give away good things you don't need or use)
- Home, sweet home (everything with an address)
- Identify (identify things you store)
- Judgment (use your judgment to do things; you can't do everything)
- Knowledge (knowledge is power; know the situation before you act)
- List (make lists for everything you do such as; shopping, cleaning, and laundry)

- Motivation (motivate yourself to do something)
- No (be able to say no)
- Order (work in order)
- Planning and preparation
- Quality and not quantity (better to do a few things well than to do more things poorly)
- Reminder (find something to remind you in advance)
- Sell it (if you don't need, sell it)
- Throw it away
- Utilize space
- Visualization (visualize projects as you do them)
- Write it down (if you don't write it down in a suitable place, it will never happen)
- X it away (when it is done)
- You (schedule time for yourself)
- Zoning things

Maintenance

Okay, we have now sorted the house, organized everything, and made up a schedule, but how in the world can I keep it up?

It's all about choices: daily choices, weekly choices, hourly choices. Old habits die hard; new ones take lots of cultivation to develop them well. Take time to ask God for help, and then establish daily habits of order.

If you see something out of place—pick it up.

If you move something—put it back.

If you find something missing—make a note or replace it quickly.

Cultivate the habit of putting clothing away as soon as it is laundered. Have a regular time for ironing. (Have a place to store it neatly until then.) When you have dirty clothing, place it right in the hamper, not on the floor. If you are going to wear it again, have a place that it can hang neatly until you do. After you eat, wash the dishes. As you cook, wash up your utensils. When you shop, put things away as soon as you return home.

If these things aren't possible because of some extenuating circumstances, have a storage place to put things until you can get to them: a cupboard, a closet, a basket.

When mail comes, sort it right away and place where it needs to go.

When you drop food or liquid, have

a cloth handy to wipe it up right away. If you mark your cupboards or walls, wipe them right away. Sweep the floor after a meal—it keeps food from tracking all over your house. In the bathroom, spot check and clean daily.

All of this may seem like a lot to keep track of, but it's not. Just be faithful, and you will notice how it gets easier.

All hands on deck!

The aspect of teamwork cannot be overestimated. Communicate with all who live with you the things you are striving to do and why. Enlist their help and their motivation to keep each other on track. A team works together to finish the goal. That is what is needed in home order. If you have only one who wants order and the rest are opposed, it will either wear out the one or it won't work.

Angels work unitedly. Families must work unitedly; churches must work unitedly. Communities must work unitedly. Ultimately, unity will be Heaven, but where do we begin? Right here, right now, in our homes.

In order for maintenance and teamwork to be developed, we must of necessity mention such words as discipline and obedience. If you are in your own home alone, you will recognize the need of self-discipline to keep all things the way that the Lord would have them. You will also recognize that part of that equation is the heartfelt desire to be obedient to the Lord, who gave us these principles, because He loves us and knows what will make our life better. Because we love Him, we will cheerfully obey Him.

If you have a family, you will understand that disciplining your children will probably be part of this process to develop a teamwork. Notice that I said disciplining, not punishing. Most people equate discipline with punishment, but that is not so. The root word of discipline is disciple. That means to train, to guide, and to encourage in the right way. This takes work, first to help them understand why, then to understand how. This will also take thinking of and implementing consequences if team members do not do their share. This will take more prayer and seeking

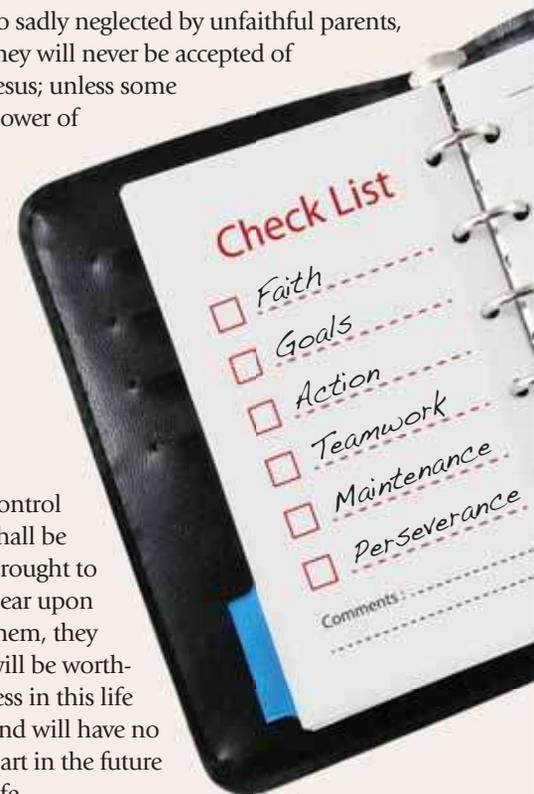
the Lord to understand how to deal with each member of your team.

Is this really that important? Notice the following:

"If parents would place themselves in the position of the teachers and see how difficult it must necessarily be to manage and discipline a school of hundreds of students of every grade and class of minds, they might upon reflection see things differently. They should consider that some children have never been disciplined at home. Having always been indulged and never trained to obedience, **it would be greatly for their advantage to be removed from their injudicious parents and placed under as severe regulations and drilling as soldiers in an army.** Unless something shall be done for these children who have been so sadly neglected by unfaithful parents, they will never be accepted of Jesus; unless some power of

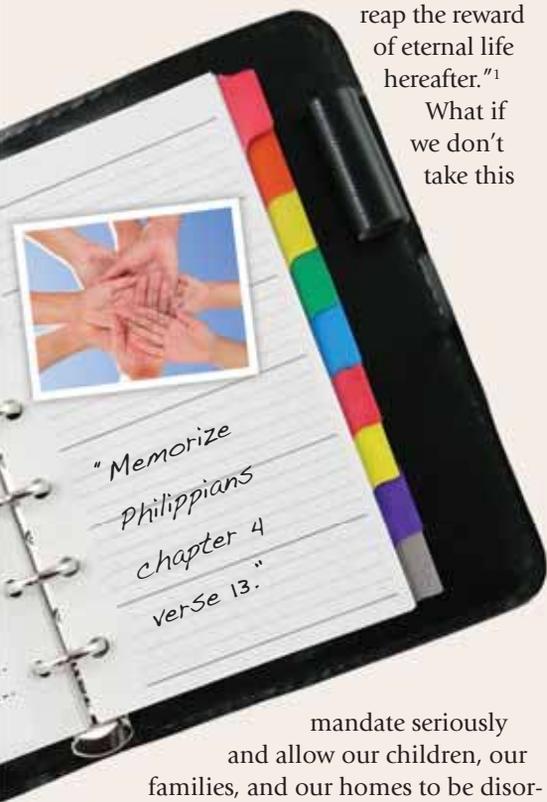
control shall be brought to bear upon them, they will be worthless in this life and will have no part in the future life.

"In heaven there is perfect order, perfect obedience, perfect peace and harmony. Those who have had no respect for order or discipline in this life would have no respect for the order which is observed in heaven. They can never be admitted into heaven, for all worthy of an entrance there will love order and respect discipline. The characters formed in this life will determine the future destiny. When Christ shall come, He will not change



the character of any individual. Precious, probationary time is given to be improved in washing our robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. To remove the stains of sin requires the work of a lifetime. Every day renewed efforts in restraining and denying self are needed. Every day there are new battles to fight and victories to be gained. Every day the soul should be called out in earnest pleading with God for the mighty victories of the cross. Parents should neglect no duty on their part to benefit their children. They should so train them that they may be a blessing to society here and may reap the reward of eternal life hereafter.¹

What if we don't take this



mandate seriously and allow our children, our families, and our homes to be disordered and unruly?

Wow! That makes me think very seriously about the training we must do as parents. May the Lord help us all to do faithfully that most important of vocations: The development of character in those for whom we are responsible.

Step by step

Any great change is not accomplished at once. Do yourself a favor, and don't expect that everything will be brand-new overnight. Take one step at a time. Give yourself a goal to reach what is reasonable after prayerfully seeking the Lord's will on the

matter. For example, maybe it will be giving yourself 2 weeks (in the midst of other responsibilities) to sort, clean, and organize a bedroom. If you need to paint, add more time. This is more reasonable than thinking "I can do one room each day and have the house totally transformed in 2 weeks."

It is said that it takes 21 days to form a habit. There is an interesting physiological explanation regarding habit formation. Messages are transmitted down nerve pathways all throughout your body. If something happens often, boutons (a small button-like part at the end of the nerve axon) are created to make the transmission of the nerve impulse quicker and more efficient along the nerve pathway. The more often the habit, the more boutons are built. However, if you want to create a new habit, you cannot just will the boutons away. Even though you may want to do differently, without thinking, a type of reflex action often occurs.

So how do we change habits of thinking and acting? By creating a new habit, a new set of responses and reactions. As we pray and ask for power outside of ourselves, the grace of Christ will enable us to do differently than we have done before, and as we persist in this way, new boutons are actually developed along a new pathway (a new reaction), making the new set of actions a habit. The more we develop the new habit, the more boutons there are and where there are more boutons, the easier that becomes. When we resist temptation, another chemical is secreted which keeps the old cell (pathway) from firing. As we continue to resist, we create another habit—the habit of resisting temptation. Now as you read the following, we can see more of the wonders of God.

"We need a constant sense of the ennobling power of pure thoughts. The only security for any soul is right thinking. As a man 'thinketh in his heart, so is he' (Proverbs 23:7). **The power of self-restraint strengthens by exercise. That which at first seems difficult, by constant repetition grows easy, until right thoughts and actions become habitual.** If we will, we may turn away from all that is cheap and inferior, and rise to a higher standard; we may be re-

spected by men, and beloved of God."²

"We shall be individually, for time and eternity, what our habits make us. The lives of those who form right habits, and are faithful in the performance of every duty, will be as shining lights, shedding bright beams upon the pathway of others; but if habits of unfaithfulness are indulged, if lax, indolent, neglectful habits are allowed to strengthen, a cloud darker than midnight will settle on the prospects in this life and forever debar the individual from the future life.

"One selfish thought indulged, one duty neglected, prepares the way for another. What we venture to do once, we are more apt to do again. Habits of sobriety, of self-control, of economy, of close application, of sound, sensible conversation, of patience and true courtesy, are not gained without diligent, close watching over self. It is much easier to become demoralized and depraved than to conquer defects, keeping self in control and cherishing true virtues. Persevering efforts will be required if the Christian graces are ever perfected in our lives."³

"The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts."⁴

Now, it is interesting to note that if we are not careful, our "resistance" can be hindered. How? Fatigue is one way that inhibits the "braking" capacity of certain cells. Can you think of other ways? Overeating, and overworking are also ways that affect the nervous system, and then we do that which we don't want to do. We need the Lord to help us exercise the discipline necessary to do "all" that He has told us. It is both for our good and the well-being of those around us.

The lesson is *persevere*. The Lord is able to help all who come to Him asking in faith for power to change! *R*

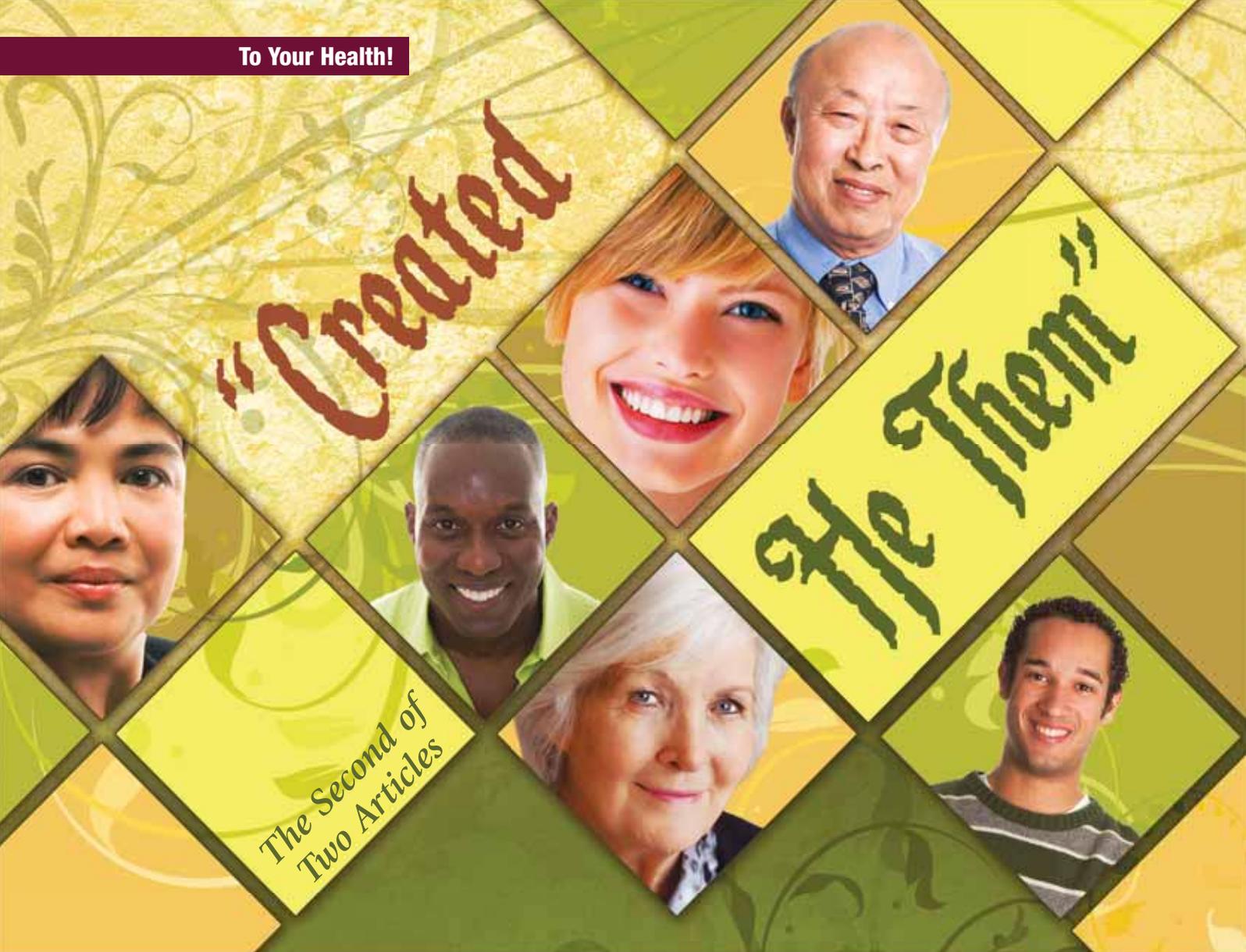
References

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 429. [Emphasis supplied.]

² *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 491. [Emphasis supplied.]

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 452 [Emphasis supplied.]

⁴ *Steps to Christ*, pp. 57, 58.



By Kay Clark



In the previous issue of *The Reformation Herald*, we began looking into some awe-inspiring wonders that characterize the Creator's design of the human body. Let us now continue with some of the marvelous systems of our physical being:

The skeletal system

Without the skeletal system we would be a "heap" of body parts without any form. This system constitutes the framework of the body, the support system which is the underlying structure for all the other organs. An all-wise Creator made each part for a specific function. The skull forms the skeleton of the head, the topmost part houses and protects the brain and the

brain stem. The lower part structures the face and all the parts of it; for example, the sockets for the eyes and the nasal cavity. Many bones of the skull are hollow and contain the sinuses. These lessen the weight of the bone and give resonance to the voice.

The vertebral column is commonly called the backbone or spine. This consists of the vertebrae, a stack of small bones located across the different parts of the spinal area. The neck or cervical area consists of seven bones, the thoracic or chest area consists of twelve bones, the lumbar or lower back consists of five bones. The last two bones, the sacrum and the coccyx are formed after puberty by the fusion or joining together of vertebrae, five in the sacrum and four in the coccyx.

The muscular system

If we had no muscular system, we would not be able to move; we would be a rigid skeleton that had to remain stationary.

There are two systems of muscle: voluntary and involuntary. The voluntary muscular system includes those muscles that operate under our conscious control. The involuntary muscular system includes those muscles that work without our conscious control, such as the cardiac (heart) muscle. The smooth muscle in the walls of the internal organs, such as the stomach, are also involuntary muscles. Our bodies contain approximately 700 muscles. Whenever we wish to move or eat we can do so without giving a thought to any of the processes which we must go through. We just do it! Imagine what a problem we would have if we had to think every time our heart had to beat, or every time we had to take a breath! We would have no time to think of anything else! Our Creator built the automatic mechanism into our body as He was creating us. How marvelous!

The lymphatic system

The body tissues are bathed in an almost clear liquid known as interstitial fluid which is filtered out from the blood vessels. Each cell of the body is bathed in this fluid. It is the function of the lymph nodes to keep debris cleaned from this fluid. The white blood cells found in the fluid gather up foreign bodies, bacteria, viruses, cancer cells, so that they can be expelled from the body and other intrusive materials.

The lymph moves slower than the blood because it has no pump. Its movement is facilitated by muscle contraction and breathing. Hence our need for a good exercise program daily. Like veins, the lymph vessels have valves to prevent back-up of fluid; it can only move in one direction. At times we may experience swollen lymph nodes, which can also be painful. This is a good house-cleaning system since its function is to filter out and destroy foreign bodies to prevent them from entering our circulation.

The nervous system

This system works together with our endocrine and immune systems to coordinate the activities of the body. It is through a series of nerves that we receive information into our brain about the outside world and from the internal organs of the body. When a problem occurs in our body, such as trauma or a malfunction of a body part, we would be unaware of it unless that information is carried to the brain by the nerves associated with that body part. The nerve cells fire electrical signals which move along nerve fibers at speeds up to 320 feet a second. Is it any wonder that a toothache becomes unbearable?

The nervous system consists of the central nervous system (CNS) and the peripheral system. The CNS is made up of the brain and spinal cord, and the peripheral nervous system consists of the nerves throughout the rest of the body.

The circulatory system

Without this system we certainly would not be able to live, much less function. It consists of the heart and blood vessels. The functions of this system are many. Everything is so well coordinated that the work of the great Designer is apparent. Engineers have designed engines which function as fluids and electrical stimuli move through them, but the designs of those things have been derived from the study of the functions of the body which our Creator has given us.

Without the function of the heart, we would not be alive, and nothing else in our bodies would be able to work. When the heart stops, everything else stops also. The veins, arteries, and capillaries are the highways through which the life-giving blood moves from the heart. Fresh oxygen and nutrients must be carried to every cell and tissue of every organ in the body or those will

die. Waste products such as carbon dioxide must be carried out of the tissues to be expelled from our system. What an engineering feat it is, when you consider the long distances travelled as the blood circulates throughout the body. Within our hearts are valves and ventricles and atria, each with its own perfect function within the heart. It is a smooth, coordinated effort which works for a long time, considering the span of a lifetime. How important it is that we follow the proper diet and exercise program that the Creator gave to us so that these functions can continue smoothly.

The arteries are flexible and thick-walled; they carry oxygenated blood from the heart to the rest of the body. If an artery is cut, the blood from it will appear dark and will spurt out with each contraction of the heart.

The veins are thinner and most of them contain valves so that the blood will not flow backward between heart contractions. They carry waste material from the various parts of the body so it can be expelled.

Capillaries are very small and are connectors between arteries and veins. They carry oxygen-rich blood into the tissues and carry waste material out. This waste is eliminated from the body through the lungs and kidneys.

The blood itself has many functions. The red cells carry the oxygen to the tissues and carry out the carbon dioxide. The white cells are the defense soldiers which hasten where needed to attack the "enemy" of bacteria, viruses, and other microbes whenever they enter the body. Surely, the Designer of all things has not forgotten anything!

This system can be studied endlessly.

The respiratory system

Here is another important system without which we could not function.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works" (Psalm 139:14).

It is during the metabolism process that the human body consumes oxygen and produces carbon dioxide as a waste product. It is the work of the respiratory system to exchange the carbon dioxide accumulated in the blood for oxygen in the airways. Air from the atmosphere is breathed into the lungs through the nose, pharynx, larynx, trachea, and bronchi. Each of these various components of the respiratory system has its own make-up and function. Each has its blood supply, nerves, fluids, muscles, and other necessary components by which it operates perfectly and smoothly.

As blood comes from the body containing carbon dioxide and passes into the alveoli of the lungs, there is an exchange by which the waste is eliminated and the inspired air full of oxygen passes into the blood to be carried back to the body to nourish its cells and tissues. Again, we see how other systems work with this one in proper order and sequence. There is a continuous steady function by which life is sustained; and the good thing about it is that we do not have to command that it be done. It is automatic!

The urinary system

There is another system through which waste is removed from the body: the urinary system. It also maintains a balance of water and electrolytes in the body. This system consists of the kidneys, ureters, urinary bladder, and urethra.

The kidneys are the filters which remove the waste products produced by metabolism. Each one contains a million microscopic tubules, and there is a capability within them to rid the blood passing through them of unwanted waste products and to reabsorb the vitamins, electrolytes, and water. Here we find the reason why our daily intake of water is so important. This intake will determine the amount and concentration of the urine produced. These marvelous filters cannot function well when the body is dehydrated, and kidney infections as well as stone formation may be the consequence. Severe damage and other problems may result from overuse of analgesics.

Renal failure is very serious and leads to death.

The two ureters are muscular tubes that carry urine from the kidneys into the bladder. If there is an infection in the bladder, the bacteria may be carried up the ureters and into the kidney; this produces a more serious and painful situation.

The urethra carries the urine from the bladder to the outside of the body where it may be eliminated. Again, here is another system with a specific function so that life may be sustained and health maintained.

The digestive system

Without this system, there could be no sustenance of life. The process of digestion breaks down foods into small molecules that the body can absorb to be used as building blocks for the human cells. These processes continue on regularly, and we do not need to overburden them by eating between meals so that the system has no time to rest.

Enzymes are present in the digestion to change the different types of foods into substances which the body can use. Carbohydrates are turned to glucose, proteins into amino acids, and lipids into fatty acids, and glycerol.

Digestion begins in the mouth, which is why we need to chew well each bite. From there, the system works well without our help! We just need to be sure that what we put into it is that which will produce a healthy outcome. This system is made up of many organs, each contributing its own process of preparing food to be used by the body. These various parts include the mouth, esophagus, stomach, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, and the small and large intestines.

The reproductive system

When God created Adam and Eve He had a purpose for them, that they should be fruitful and multiply. We find this written in Genesis 1:28. So that this could happen He created from man "an help meet for him," and she was called Woman (Genesis 2:21-23). God brought them together; thus the institution of marriage had its begin-

ning in Eden during creation week.

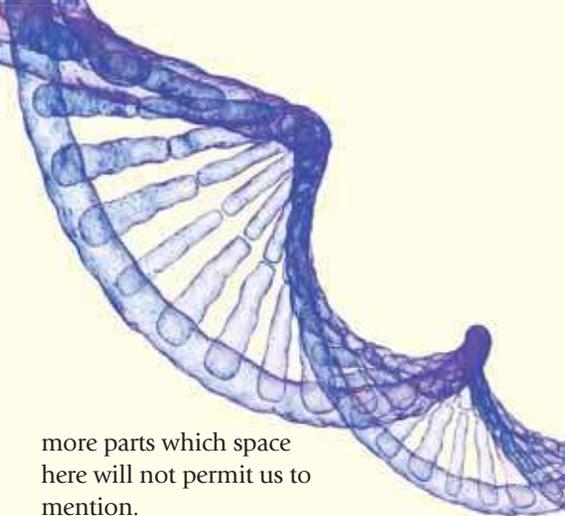
The reproductive system, as all other systems of the body, was made perfectly by the great Designer so that the human race could multiply upon the earth. There must be a union of the seed of the woman and that of the man in order that a new life, a new human being, can be formed. This is a miracle in itself. The new life that is formed at conception, begins to develop and grows into a fully functioning person at the given time. The female system produces the ova or eggs. When a baby girl is born she already has about a million ova in each ovary. This number is all that she will have throughout her lifetime. At the onset of puberty, as hormonal changes occur, one ovum is released each month throughout her child-bearing period of life. When fertilization occurs, it will attach itself to the uterus and develop first into an embryo, and then into a complete new human being. If all goes as it should, the new life is ready to be sustained within the outside world on its own after a forty-week gestational period.

The male system produces the seed of the man continuously throughout his lifetime. He, therefore, is capable of producing offspring for a longer period of time than is the woman. And a man should not blame his wife if the gender of the baby born is not according to his wish! The male chromosomes are "X" and "Y," those of the woman are "X." At conception, if an "X" from the man pairs with the "X" of the woman, a female child will be the result. If a "Y" from the man pairs with the "X" of the woman, the gender of the baby will be male. This is just another one of the marvels from the hand of an all-wise Creator; one over which we have no control.

The endocrine system

This is another very intricate system and very important, because it coordinates the activities of tissues throughout the body and acts through organic chemicals which are known as hormones. These hormones are made of amino acids or steroids and are released at specific times in precise amounts. Endocrine organs, or glands,

The Creator of our wonderful body has also given us a handbook of instruction. May we be faithful and diligent in learning all we can of these rules—the eight laws of health—and obediently follow them!



release only into the blood stream or body cavities.

These glands consist of the pituitary, parathyroids, thyroid, thymus, adrenals, pancreas, testes, and ovaries. The pituitary is a small gland in the base of the brain and is regulated by hormones secreted from the hypothalamus which lies just above it. The pituitary secretes hormones which control other endocrine glands in the body. The various needs and functions of the body are regulated through the substances secreted by these glands.

Some examples include the regulation of electrolyte balance by the pituitary gland, regulation of sodium and potassium by the adrenals, regulation of calcium and phosphate by the parathyroids, and regulation of chloride by the kidney.

This system is kept very busy at all times, keeping every function of the body in proper working order. And the good thing is that we do not have to concentrate on it or give it commands!

The integumentary system

Here we are at the system which consists of that which binds the entire body together—the skin. It serves as a

protector from external agents, invading organisms, and extreme temperatures. It helps to regulate temperature. It has three layers of tissue: epidermis, the outermost layer; dermis, the middle layer; and subcutaneous, the innermost layer. As we have all experienced, there are many nerve endings present in the skin. These nerves give us information when trauma has occurred, when the weather is too hot or too cold, or when something we have touched is too hot.

The sweat glands, hair follicles, and sebaceous glands lie among the layers of the epidermis and dermis. These each contribute important functions. When you become too hot, the sweat glands secrete perspiration onto the surface of the skin to bring cooling relief. The hair follicles contain the hair which we have over the body surface. When we become cold, these have a tiny muscle which reacts and causes “goose bumps,” and the hair stands on end. Sebaceous glands in the skin secrete a fatty liquid which helps to minimize loss of water from the skin and also acts as a lubricant for the hair and skin.

This system, as all the others, is integrated into the functioning of the body as a whole. It consists of many

more parts which space here will not permit us to mention.

Conclusion

This has been a brief study of the wonder and the highlight of God's creation, that of man and woman. We can begin to appreciate how we are put together, and how we are able to function. We are indeed “wonderfully made” in His image, and we should daily thank Him for His blessings and appreciate our body enough that we will take the best care of it so as to have optimum health.

An appeal

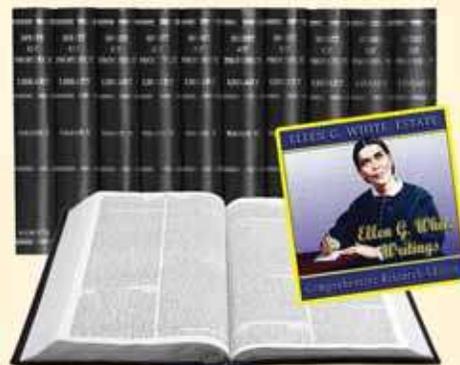
When a person makes a piece of machinery, he or she also prints a handbook of instruction as to how that machinery works and to how it should be cared for. The Creator of our wonderful body has also given us such instruction. May we be faithful and diligent in learning all we can of these rules, the eight laws of health, and obediently follow them. We are wonderfully made, and we need to glorify Him in our bodies, which belong to Him! *R*

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, LIBRARY 10-VOLUME SET *plus* E. G. WHITE CD

All of Ellen G. White's writings, published and unpublished, finally available in 10 volumes!

- More than one hundred books
- 21 volumes of *Manuscript Releases*
- More than 100 pamphlets
- Unpublished letters and messages
- Articles from more than 50 periodicals
- More than 19,000 pages total
- Comfortable 10pt font
- Complete *E.G. White Writings, 2008 Ed.* (CD-ROM), including the *Words of the Adventist Pioneers*

For more information or complete list of the contents, please call Reformation Herald Publ. Assn. **540-366-9400** Retail \$918.99, **RHA Price: \$749.00**



A New Experience in *Evangelism*

By Nahum Fuentes López

*H*e that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).
*"Medical missionary work is the pioneer work of the gospel, the door through which the truth for this time is to find entrance to many homes. God's people are to be genuine medical missionaries; for they are to learn to minister to the needs of both soul and body. The purest unselfishness is to be shown by our workers as, with the knowledge and experience gained by practical work, they go out to give treatments to the sick. As they go from house to house they will find access to many hearts. Many will be reached who otherwise never would have heard the gospel message. A demonstration of the principles of health reform will do much toward removing prejudice against our evangelical work."*¹

The 21st century is becoming a century of fierce competition. People seek to professionalize themselves so

they can advance ahead of others in attaining their goals. We, as the people of God, should be quite advanced in this effort to be as professional as possible, especially in our evangelistic efforts.

We do not need to invent anything, because we have been privileged by God to have enough light on this matter. To the messenger of the Lord it was revealed: "God has qualified His people to enlighten the world. He has entrusted them with faculties by which they are to extend His work until it shall encircle the globe. In all parts of the earth they are to establish sanitariums, schools, publishing houses, and kindred facilities for the accomplishment of His work."² There are several methods for missionary work. Each takes time and effort. We would like to take this opportunity to share with you the following experience: One day I was meditating on how much I owe God. Everything that I was, am, and hope to be I owe it to

Him. I remembered 2 Corinthians 8:9, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." And I concluded that if Jesus left the worship of angels, purity, peace, glory, and immortal life in heaven to come to the degradation of this earth only to suffer pain, shame, and death on the cross to save me, the least I could do was to serve Him in this blessed hope for those in need.

When I had about two more years of medical studies, I thought to make a promise that if God would help me to graduate I would serve Him, according to His will, use my medical profession merely for personal profit. I made that promise, and I've kept it by the grace of God.

After graduating as a physician from the university in Guatemala, I worked four years for the Guatemalan Field. Then I was called to work for the Central American Union as the canvassing work secretary.

Our first task was to merge the **canvassing and medical missionary work**. Our Lord Jesus was the greatest evangelist in history. He attended to the necessities of the poor, cared for the sick, supported the weak, taught the ignorant, educated the inexperienced, and worked for the unconverted. He combined spiritual evangelism with medical missionary work. Why shouldn't we?

We directed the canvassers to start working in a particular city where there were no members. For three to four months they would visit from house to house. During this same time, we presented health talks in various private and government institutions. Through these meetings we were able to make contact with people interested in our messages and arrange to have Bible studies. We also gave away Bibles and signed up students for our health correspondence courses.

After these activities, we got permission to use the local community or city hall. There we presented a program of consultation during the day with the help of a medical team. After the consultations, we gave away free medicine.

These health fairs usually lasted from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m. we would start the evangelistic program of that day.

Some of the health fairs were attended by as many as three hundred people. On the last day of the fair, sometimes, we worked until midnight because of the very large number of patients.

At night, we presented a video and a health lecture. Then we had a song service, followed by a powerful presentation of the Word of God on the final events. At the end of the study every evening two canvassers gave out numbers to those that were interested in coming the next day to have an appointment with our medical practitioners.

This temporary medical clinic involved chiropractors, massage therapists, naturopaths, nutritionists, physicians, and sometimes dentists, psychologists, and surgeons. Nurses and our canvassers worked as support staff.

When people arrived at the clinic, they were greeted by our local pastors who provided pamphlets or showed a Christian or health video. We also collected the addresses of the patients to visit them at their homes with the message of salvation. We operated the clinic for a week or more in each city.

After this program in each city, our canvassers remained behind working with the interested ones. They worked with our new friends until a group was organized and the work was established. This, sometimes, took six months. Then, and only then, did we hand the established work over to the pastor or worker and move on to other cities. This is the way we have been working since 2007. As a result we have reached more than 23 locations.

We are grateful to the different donors and to our churches, fields, and the Central American Union for their help in sponsoring these programs. Hundreds of dollars were invested in organizing these events.

Sometimes we were invited by various Sunday-keeping churches to present this program to their members. This allowed us to present our message to them and opened up an opportunity

to our canvassers to sell our literature. On one occasion, God allowed us to sell more than 100 sets of the 2-volume *Nueva Guía de Medicina Natural*, over 300 small health books, and more than 300 religious books. We were also invited by the nation's radio and TV channels to share health talks and to present our publications.

On one occasion two of our colporteurs were at a TV station. After the presentation, they received more than 100 calls from people that had watched the TV program. There were many other thrilling experiences.

Praise God that with this project we have been able to reach out and evangelize where we never imagined it would be possible. The results in favor of the cause of God are incalculable.

We used this opportunity to prepare medical missionary workers and to revive the canvassing department. The most wonderful thing is that through these "health fairs" more than 600 souls are studying or have studied the message of Reform. Many are now members of our church, and some have become leaders of missions and fields in the Central American Union. We can echo the words of the apostle: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

We are praying to God to open the way to find a suitable place to begin a sanitarium. With your help and the help of the General Conference, we want to reach those that are in need of healing soul and body. The plan is to establish also an internship program where our youth could study canvassing and then graduate as natural and allopathic therapists. **Gospel medical missionary work should be promoted.** "All that is done is to bear the impress of the Holy Spirit. We are to work as Christ worked, in the same practical lines. Then we shall be safe."³

We are open to your suggestions and request your prayers! *R*

References

¹ *The Review and Herald*, December 17, 1914. [Emphasis supplied.]

² *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 51.

³ *This Day With God*, p. 185.

Colombia

*Youth convention
in Barbosa,
July 2011.*



Brazil

*Union workers'
seminar in Brasilia
(middle) and
Itu (bottom),
December 2011.*



Uganda

Camp meeting in Eastern Uganda, Sironko church, December 2011.

South Africa

Cape Town missionary camp meeting, December 2011 (middle).

Guatemala

Evangelistic & Canvassing seminars, October 2011 (bottom).



P.O. Box 7240
Roanoke, VA 24019-0240

Return Service Requested

MOVING? Please let us know.

CHILDREN'S
CORNER

DELIVERED BY THE NURSE

By Tobias L. Stockler

Rada was at the doctor's office again. By now the routine was old. He would go and receive an examination. The doctor would look at his swollen leg, his injured arm. He would pronounce Rada too injured to serve in the military. Then Rada would take the report of the doctor's exam to the military officer. The officer would tell Rada that this report was not good enough and would send him to another doctor. The next doctor would give another exam. Sometimes that one would state that Rada could serve in the military. The officer would be satisfied. But another exam would soon be required, and it would come back negative. Back and forth went the outcome of each exam. And it all concerned Rada.

Rada was a new Christian. He had given his life to the One who had protected him during World War II. His injuries were from a grenade exploding near him. After that grenade went off, the other soldiers had abandoned Rada on the field, thinking he was dead—but he was not.

Someone noticed. And Rada was taken to the field medical hospital. The shrapnel was removed from his head and arm without any anesthesia to numb the pain.

Now, as a young Christian, Rada was determined not to be in the military. He did not know what to

do. Back and forth he went between doctors and the pushy military officer.

Quietly, Rada prayed. And he fasted, fasted for forty-five days. From time to time he allowed himself a cup of unsweetened tea or broth. Rada chose to die from starvation if necessary, rather than be involved in killing another human being.

And then God reached down to earth and helped Rada. When he arrived at the doctor's office, the nurse recognized him. She was impressed with him and appreciated that he was a Christian. She took extra effort to find his old reports. After the doctor arrived, she took the old reports to the doctor.

"Didn't you already pronounce this man too injured for military service. Are you going to flip-flop? Aren't you a better man than that?"

The doctor wrote "Permanently Disabled" on Rada's report and sent that to the military officer. With the new report, Rada would never be called for military service again in his life.

When Rada found out that the kindness of the nurse saved his life, he showed his gratitude. He used his skill as a baker and gave her a cake prepared just for her.

This year we laid the body of Radivoj (Rada) Vukovic in the grave. His smile is gone. But his character remains in our memories. Will we live as he did? Will we quietly determine to pray and if necessary fast until God solves the problems He didn't give us the ability to solve for ourselves? Will we choose to quietly die rather than disobey God and harm another person?

May God, who delivered Rada almost sixty years ago, help us today. *R*

