

Youth messenger

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WHO I AM VS. WHO YOU THINK I AM

JOHN SKORICH

Hebrew parents were particular in giving names to their children. Each person received a single name. In case of boys this was done on the eighth day, when circumcision was performed. Godly parents chose names that stood for traits of character that they desired to see developed in the child. Sometimes when a person

began a new life with God, his/her name was changed. Thus Abram became Abraham (Genesis 17:5), Sarai became Sarah (verse 15), and Jacob became Israel (Genesis 32:28). Thus it is with the life of the Christian. "Beginning in the morning of life, controlled by the laws of nature and of God, the Christian moves steadily onward and upward, daily drawing nearer his heavenly home, where await for him a crown of life, and a new name, 'which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it' (Revelation 2:17)" (*Messages to Young People*, p. 95).

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." This was very important to the Hebrews. What a person did during his/her lifetime brought honor or dishonor to his/her family and to the God of his/her fathers. This was much more important than being rich. After all, drug dealers, robbers, and dishonest business people may

become rich. “ ‘My good name is capital of far more value to me than gold or silver. Let me preserve it untarnished. If men assail that name, it shall not be because I have given them occasion to do so, but for the same reason that they spoke evil of Christ—because they hated the purity and holiness of His character’ ” (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 595).

OUTSIDE VS. INSIDE

When it comes to evaluating or judging other people, we look at what we see from the outside. When Samuel was trying to select a new king from among the sons of Jesse, “the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). Since we cannot read what is in other people’s minds, we tend to judge them by their looks, education, social status, and so on. In many cases, the outside parallels what is inside. However, it is not always so. Judas, for example, had a very fine reputation among the disciples. They thought that he would be an asset to the cause of Jesus, so they decided that he should be one of the disciples. Judas was deceiving himself and the disciples, but he could not deceive Christ. Because he was

rotten inside, he sold his Lord and hanged himself. Thus it is with us. We can build our character on our own foundation with the help of Satan and his host, or on the foundation of Jesus Christ with all heaven working for us. It is our choice.

ON OUR OWN

(With Satan’s help)

When we build our character on our own, we follow the plan that the devil began in heaven. Before he fell, Lucifer told himself, “I will be like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:14). His unholy love of self, the most insidious disease ever to afflict God’s creation, led to rebellion against God and is leading him to his final destruction. The devil told Eve the same lie, “Ye shall be as gods” (Genesis 3:5). Today he is presenting to us the same words in many different forms. However, God clearly says that He hates pride, arrogance, evil behavior, and perverse speech (Proverbs 6:16–18). “There is nothing so offensive to God or so dangerous to the human soul as pride and self-sufficiency. Of all sins it is the most hopeless, the most incurable” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 154).

Many people will lose their soul because of pride. When the apostle Paul was speaking to the Athenians, “many who listened to the words of Paul were convinced of the truths presented,

but they would not humble themselves to acknowledge God, and to accept the plan of salvation. . . . In their pride of intellect and human wisdom may be found the reason why the gospel message met with so little success among that people”

(Sketches From the Life of Paul, p. 96).

Today we face the same problem. Although science, knowledge, and the wisdom of this world may be contrary to the Word of God, many refuse to give these up. As a result, they will perish.

Unfortunately, pride can also manifest itself among God’s people. When Jesus was walking the streets of Jerusalem, the Pharisees proclaimed their goodness on the corners. “I am better than my brother,” they would say. We would be guilty of the same attitude today in thinking, “I am not like other Christians. Definitely I am better than unbelievers. You see, I am a Reformer.” Let us see what God has to say about this. Look up Proverbs 26:12. The wise man asks, “Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.” Yes, I can be thankful that I was born into a strong Christian home. Does that make me better than those who were not? Only if I accept the Lord Jesus as my Saviour and follow Him, will my

WHEN IT COMES TO EVALUATING OR JUDGING OTHER PEOPLE, WE LOOK AT WHAT WE SEE FROM THE OUTSIDE.

salvation be sure.

Many times we love to show off our appearance. The apostle Peter speaks of the adorning of both men and women when he says, “let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (1 Peter 3:3, 4). Devotion to fashion absorbs the mind



and heart so that no room is left for the important aspects of life. "No Christian can conform to the demoralizing fashions of the world without imperiling his soul's salvation" (*Child Guidance*, p. 433).

On the other hand, we may be tempted to be proud that we do not follow the fashions of the world. Many have a false humility in the way they dress. "When we lose taste for order and neatness in dress, we virtually leave the truth; for the truth never degrades, but elevates" (*Messages to Young People*, p. 353). Satan works in many ways. He does not care if we are proud and like to show off ourselves, or if we are proud of our "humility." For him it only matters that we are proud. The story is told of Benjamin Franklin, and how he wrote down all the vices that he had. He decided

to overcome each one of them. As he was overcoming one at a time, he would cross each one out. At the end he felt so good about what he had done that he strutted proudly around his room. Thus he still had pride. This pride, of all sins, is the most hopeless and incurable.

Why is it that God hates this pride? Why, of all sins, is it the most hopeless and incurable? Perhaps it is because pride distorts reality, never admits that it is wrong, insists on its own way, takes undue credit to itself, is never content, and is blind to its own need. "Pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give. There is no room for Jesus in the heart of such a person" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 7).

Do these words ring a bell? Remember what God's people, who live in the Laodicean period, are saying, "We are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Yes, we have the truth. We have the knowledge. And many times we are proud of it. Yet the True Witness says in essence, "You do not know. You do not know how wretched you are, how miserable you are, how blind and naked you are, if you do not have Christ in your hearts." (See Revelation 3:17-20.) Jesus is faithfully standing in front of the door of your heart. He is patiently

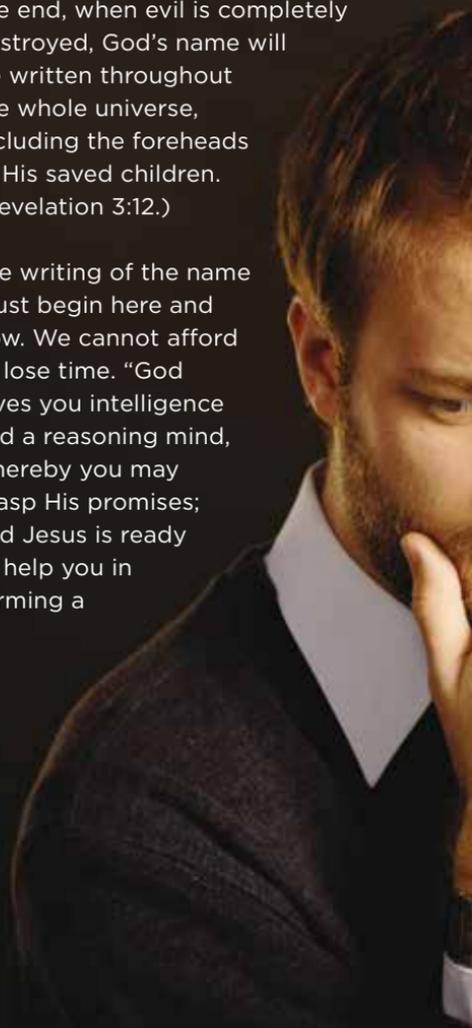
knocking and waiting for you to open your heart and invite Him in.

SOLUTION TO OUR DILEMMA

In Revelation 14:1 the apostle John saw the Lamb standing on mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 with the name of the heavenly Father written on their foreheads. Why is it that God's name is written on the forehead? Why not on some other part of our body? The forehead—the frontal lobes of our brain—deal with judgment, self-control, conscience, and imitation. “The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind” (*Temperance*, p. 13). It is very important what we choose as food for our mind. We can choose good or bad literature, good or bad food, good or bad music, and whether or not to indulge in TV, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and suffer the consequences. If Heaven cannot communicate with us, then we are left alone. How awful the words, “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone” (Hosea 4:17). You see, “God has given us intellectual and moral power; but to a great

extent everyone is the architect of his own character. Every day the structure more nearly approaches completion” (*Messages to Young People*, p. 412). God gives us strength, but we make choices. Why is it that God's name is written on the foreheads? Why not some other name? If you recall, the name represents a character. In this case, God's name represents His character. At the end, when evil is completely destroyed, God's name will be written throughout the whole universe, including the foreheads of His saved children. (Revelation 3:12.)

The writing of the name must begin here and now. We cannot afford to lose time. “God gives you intelligence and a reasoning mind, whereby you may grasp His promises; and Jesus is ready to help you in forming a



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strong, symmetrical character”
(*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 579). Lucifer had
an evil desire—to be like God, in
the sense that he wanted the
title, control, power, prestige. This
evil desire brought him ruin. But
let us realize that “we are in this
world to do service for God. We
are here to become like God in
character, and by a life of service
to reveal Him to the world” (*The
Ministry of Healing*, p. 409).

How to meet Criticism

E. G. White

There are those who cannot speak in favor of the very best of blessings without attaching a criticism, to cast a shadow of reproach. Let us be guarded. Let us refuse to allow the criticisms of anyone to implant objections in our minds. Let us educate ourselves to praise that which is good when others criticize. Murmurers will always pick flaws, but let us not be saddened by the accusing element. Let us not look upon it as a virtue to make and suggest difficulties, which will harass and perplex. Keep the atmosphere surrounding the soul clear by dwelling upon the bright sunshine of heaven, which is always shining to make us happy. Let us bring all the pleasantness possible into our lives.

When others begin to question and criticize, let us be determined, either by silence or by turning the conversation into another channel, to cut off the words which would not be spoken in wisdom. We are to continue to wait upon the Lord, making every effort to keep the door of our lips, so that we shall not utter one word savoring of unbelief.

We are to walk by faith, practicing the very things we have asked the Lord to give us grace to do. Thus we work out our own salvation, trying to help and save those in trouble by faithful words and kind deeds. It is God

who works in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. The finite and the infinite are to unite in accomplishing the work that needs to be done. God has pledged himself to supply us with strength, cheerfulness, pleasantness, and joyfulness in our Saviour. Abiding in him, the word that would cast a shadow over others is left unsaid.

Let us remember that everyone has some dark spot in his experience; and let us do all we can to bring cheerfulness and hope into the lives of others. What a blessing this will be to them! In turn they will speak words of good cheer to others, to bring sunshine into their hearts. As we do this work, we shall be in a position to realize, that the Lord hears our prayers, because we work in harmony with them, fulfilling all the duty we owe to God and to ourselves. We shall go about our work in a thankful, prayerful frame of mind.

By faith we may claim the promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7). Yes, we shall find the answer to our prayers; for God will do exceeding abundantly above our highest expectation. What precious witness we shall then bear for God! What an honor we shall be to the truth of His word!—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 4, 1901.

It is human to stand with the crowd; it is divine to stand alone.

It is manlike to follow the people, to drift with the tide; it is godlike to follow a principle, to stem the tide.

It is natural to compromise conscience and follow the social and religious fashion for the sake of gain or pleasure; it is divine to sacrifice both on the altar of truth and duty.

“No man stood with me, but all men forsook me” (2 Timothy 4:16), wrote the battle-scarred apostle in describing his first appearance before Nero to answer for his life for believing and teaching contrary to the Roman world.

Noah built and voyaged alone. His neighbors laughed at his strangeness and perished. Abraham wandered and worshipped alone. The Sodomites smiled at the simple shepherd, followed the fashion, and fed the flames.

Daniel dined and prayed alone. Elijah sacrificed and witnessed alone. Jeremiah prophesied and wept alone. Jesus loved and died alone.

And of the lonely way His disciples should walk, He said,

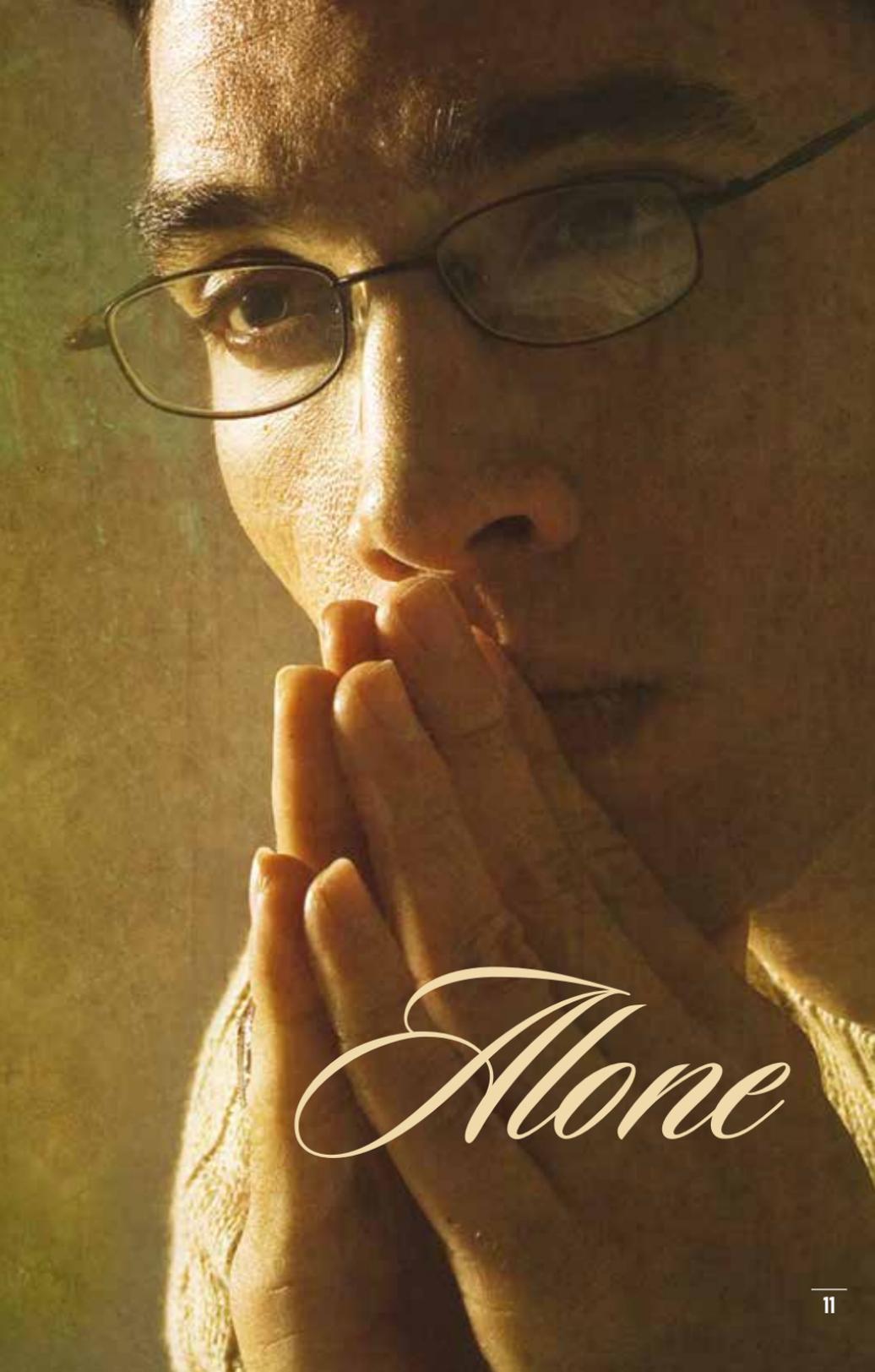
“Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matthew 7:14).

Of their treatment by the many who walk in the broad way, He said, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, . . . therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19).

The church in the wilderness praised Abraham, and persecuted Moses. The church of the Kings praised Moses, and persecuted the prophets. The church of Caiaphas praised the prophets, and persecuted Jesus. The church of the popes praised the Saviour, and persecuted the saints. And multitudes now, in both the church and the world, applaud the courage and fortitude of the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs, but condemn as stubbornness or foolishness like faithfulness to truth today.

Wanted, today, men and women, young and old, who will obey their convictions of truth and duty at the cost of fortune and friends and life itself!

—Selected from *The Youth's Instructor*, June 13, 1901.



More

The Joy of Recreation

THE HAPPINESS WHICH MUST DISTINGUISH YOUNG CHRISTIANS

G. Tinta – Trieste, Italy

All young people would like to be happy; it is important, however, to distinguish worldly happiness from the Christian one.

Young people are privileged to refresh their spirit and strengthen their bodies with innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental strength to the glory of God. We must differentiate between

recreation and amusement. Recreation provides refreshment for mind and body, enabling us to return with new vigor to the earnest work of life. Amusement, on the other hand, is sought for the sake of pleasure and is often carried to excess; it absorbs the energies that are required for useful work and thus proves a hindrance to life's true success. Let us remember that we cannot unite ourselves with worldly, amusement-loving people and, at the same time, be able to resist temptation.

In Titus 2:6-8, the apostle Paul exhorts young people to sobriety. God invites us to renounce every bad custom, to be diligent, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. This is more important today than ever before, as the world's corruption escalates and the prevailing



influence of society is for young people to follow their natural, carnal tendencies without regard to principle. See 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

The Spirit of Prophecy warns us concerning the unfortunate age in which we are living—especially the young. The current trend is to allow the youth to follow the natural turn of their own minds, making it hard for them to resist the worldly influences often perpetuated even by some who profess to believe the present truth. The majority of nominal Christians, while they profess to be living for Christ, are really living for the world. Since Christianity is considered honorable, people like to claim they are Christians, yet many do not discern genuine religion and do not restrain themselves from taking part in worldly pleasures. Flattering themselves that they are engaging in innocent amusement, many are separating themselves from God and becoming children of the world. Let us remember that God does not recognize the pleasure-seeker as His follower. Those only who are self-denying, living lives of sobriety, humility, and holiness are true followers of Jesus. And such do not enjoy the frivolous, empty conversation of the lover of the world.

The true followers of Christ will shun places of worldly amusement because they find no

Jesus there, no influence which will make them heavenly-minded and increase their growth in grace. Obedience to God's Word will lead them to come out from all these things and be separate. "By their fruits ye shall know them" describes well what Christ said about real Christians (Matthew 7:20)! Jesus, who has chosen His people out of the world, requires them to be separate from the world! To love God and keep His commandments is far away from loving the world's pleasures and its friendship. The youth who follow Christ have a warfare before them; they have a daily cross to bear in coming out of the world and imitating the life of Jesus. But there are many promises for such who seek the Saviour early, including Proverbs 8:17 and 1 Peter 1:13-15.

Every youth should ask himself or herself: what influence will this particular amusement have on my physical, mental, and moral health? Will my mind become so infatuated as to forget God?

The most dangerous pleasures of our time include the theater, the circus, card-playing, frivolous conversations, bad reading material, and the vast majority of what is found on television. But if we must renounce everything, how can young people be happy? In reality, worldly amusements don't make us happy! That is only an illusion. In Ecclesiastes 2:26, Solomon tells

us that it is God who gives joy to man. Peter repeats that in Jesus only can real happiness be found (1 Peter 1:8).

“Let us never lose sight of the fact that Jesus is a wellspring of joy. He does not delight in the misery of human beings, but loves to see them happy.

“Christians have many sources of happiness at their command, and they may tell with unerring accuracy what pleasures are lawful and right. They may enjoy such recreations as will not dissipate the mind or debase the soul, such as will not disappoint and leave a sad after-influence to destroy self-respect or bar the way to usefulness. If they can take Jesus with them and maintain a prayerful spirit, they are perfectly safe.

“Any amusement in which you can engage asking the blessing of God upon it in faith will not be dangerous. But any amusement which disqualifies you for secret prayer, for devotion at the altar of prayer, or for taking part in the prayer meeting is not safe but dangerous.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 513.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11).

The Spirit of Prophecy presents these questions to us: “Are our

recreations such as to impart moral and spiritual vigor? Will they lead to purity of thought and action? Impurity is today widespread, even among the professed followers of Christ. Passion is unrestrained; the animal propensities are gaining strength by indulgence, while the moral powers are constantly becoming weaker. Many are eagerly participating in worldly, demoralizing amusements which God’s word forbids. Thus they sever their connection with God and rank themselves with the pleasure lovers of the world. The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today—not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man. If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.

“And what has caused this alarming condition? Many have accepted the theory of the truth who have had no true conversion. I know whereof I speak. There are few who feel true sorrow for sin, who have deep, pungent convictions of the depravity of the unregenerate nature. The heart of stone is not exchanged for a heart of flesh. Few are willing to fall upon the Rock and be broken.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 218.

“Happiness that is sought from selfish motives, outside of the path of duty, is ill-balanced, fitful, and transitory; it passes away, and the soul is filled with loneliness and sorrow; but there is joy and satisfaction in the service of God; the Christian is not left to walk in uncertain paths; he is not left to vain regrets and disappointments. If we do not have the pleasures of this life we may still be joyful in looking to the life beyond.

“But even here Christians may have the joy of communion with

Christ; they may have the light of His love, the perpetual comfort of His presence. Every step in life may bring us closer to Jesus, may give us a deeper experience of His love, and may bring us one step nearer to the blessed home of peace. Then let us not cast away our confidence, but have firm assurance, firmer than ever before. ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,’ and He will help us to the end (1 Samuel 7:12).”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 124, 125.



Fire!

Nathan Tyler

A hysterical woman ran toward us, crying out something indistinct. Her screams were drowned by the roaring of flames and the shattering of glass as windows exploded. Just minutes before she had been preparing breakfast in the kitchen, while a visiting relative was lighting a fire in the living room heater. After several failed attempts, the guest had decided to use gasoline to ignite the material. You can guess what happened next.

It had been on our way to work that we noticed that giant plume of oily black smoke. Rounding a bend, we gazed horrified at the scene. The foul smell of burning asphalt hung in the air. As we rushed to see what we could do to help, the poor lady came up to us crying and trying to tell us that her keys were still in the house. She could not move her car which was parked dangerously close to the inferno. After trying to push it away, we realized that we would not be able to move it.

From what the lady said, I understood that there was someone trapped inside. I circled the now completely burning house, trying to find a window or doorway that was not pouring smoke or flame. There was none. Then Dad noticed that electric wires suspended over the home were starting to melt and fray, and he called for me to come

back to where he was. Retracing my steps, I wished that somehow we could do something. But I finally realized there was nothing we could do. For a few moments we stood frozen by the horror of the impressive spectacle, then slowly turned to leave as sirens wailed in the distance.

That cruel day I became acutely aware of the shortness and uncertainty of life. And it made me think. What if my own home had been destroyed that morning? If my family had been so suddenly displaced? Would I have been prepared to meet my Lord had the fire claimed me as its victim?

Then another thought more awesome came to mind. We are living in the time of judgment. Our Lord Jesus, the High Priest, is looking over the lives of everyone that professes to follow Him. Another fire, much hotter, will be the end of those who fail to accept Jesus' love and follow their own way instead.

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (1 Corinthians 3:13).

Friend, could He be looking at your name just now? It is a solemn thought. Do not think that

you have an indefinite period of time in which to prepare for the Judgment. Today, you may make your final decision.

Why today, you ask? I read once a story about a young man who grew up in a Christian home. He knew the Bible stories, he heard the minister preaching about salvation, but he decided that he wouldn't make a total surrender just yet. I can't give up everything yet, he reasoned. There are things I want to do.

This young man had a particular fascination with cars, especially fast ones. He had lots of fun driving at high speed to impress his friends. One evening he invited a young woman to accompany him. He brought some alcoholic drinks along, too. They were having a thrilling ride when, all of a sudden, a sharp curve appeared ahead. They were going far too fast. Worse, a big truck and trailer were slowly rounding that curve. The truck driver tried to avoid them, but they plunged ahead—right into the side of the trailer. Both the young man and his companion were killed instantly. Thus their lives were ended. No more opportunity to choose God's way. What had been the fruit of their effort?

And what about you and me? We do not have the liberty to do what we please, and then come

to the Lord at a convenient time. This moment, every moment, is a decision time. What you do today might set off a chain of events that would ruin your life and your soul.

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them”(Ecclesiastes 12:1).

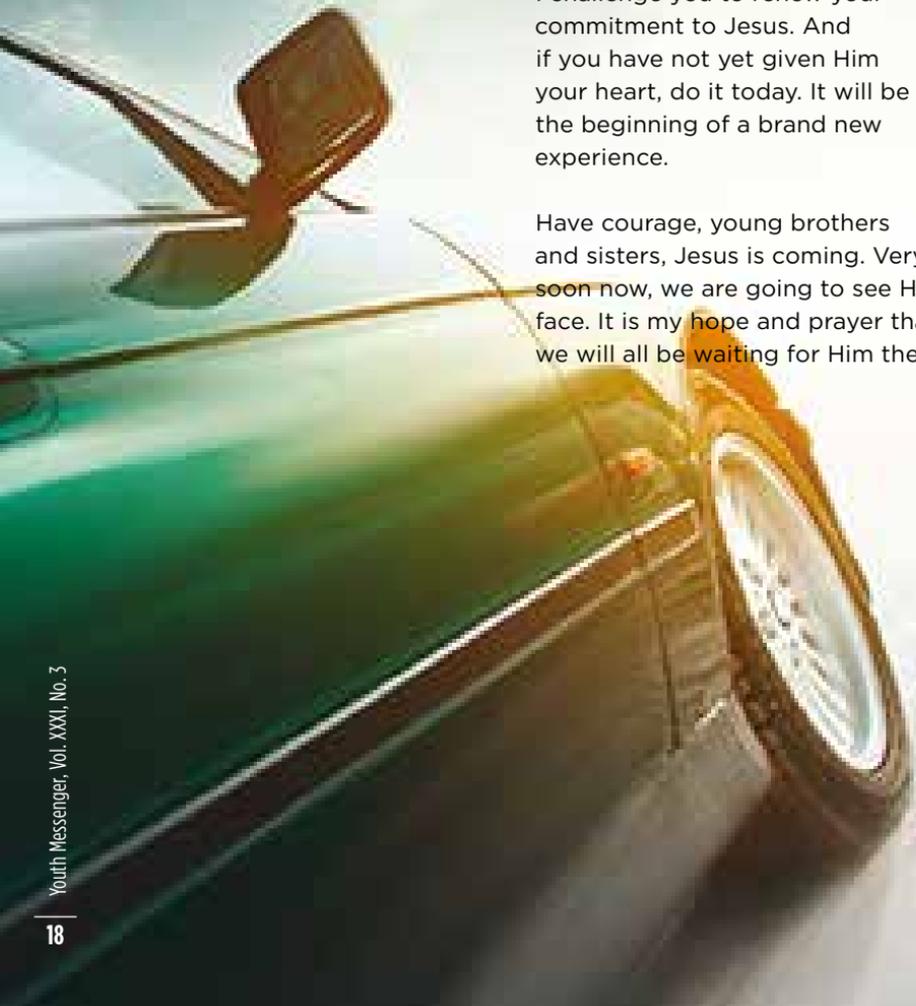
Oh, friend, will you make the

decision with me? Seeking the Lord now is important. Do not put it off for some time when you are older. Youth is the best time of your life. There is no better time to go all-out for God. Do not think that you can play with Satan’s amusements for a while and give your heart to the Lord later.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

I challenge you to renew your commitment to Jesus. And if you have not yet given Him your heart, do it today. It will be the beginning of a brand new experience.

Have courage, young brothers and sisters, Jesus is coming. Very soon now, we are going to see His face. It is my hope and prayer that we will all be waiting for Him then.



A Lamp in Every Corner

B. Monteiro

It is interesting to notice how practical God is.

In our living room at home, we do not happen to have a light fixture on the ceiling. So, instead of having one general light for the whole room, we have to use small table lamps wherever light is needed. There is a lamp beside the armchair for when my husband wants to read. Another is by the sofa for when I need to read, and a third is on top of the piano so that we can see the music whenever we play the piano. Each lamp has been selected as the most suitable for its particular spot. All three have a distinct purpose, and we appreciate each one. Unfortunately, the fourth corner is dark because we do not have another lamp to place there. It would be a nicer corner if we did.

Similarly, we are told that God, “the Light-giver arranges the lamps so that all in His house (the world) may be enlightened. He has an inexhaustible supply of light, and He places those who truly believe in Him where they will shine brighter and brighter. Constantly our light is to increase in brightness because we are constantly receiving light from the Source of all light. Beholding Christ, we are to become changed into His image, reflecting His light to the world.

“Each soul united to Christ becomes a light in God’s house. Each is to receive and impart, letting his light shine forth in clear, bright rays.



We are held responsible by God if we do not let light shine to those who are in darkness. . . . By His Spirit the Lord will mold and fashion the human agent, quickening his energies, and giving him light wherewith to enlighten others.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 197.

Have you ever wondered why you have been placed where you are at a certain time? Maybe you have ended up in a certain class at school that you were not expecting to take, or your whole family has been unexpectedly transferred to another city. Why are you where you are?

If you are a sincere follower of Christ, remember that He as the Light-giver arranges His lamps in the most effective way possible. Just as we select the most appropriate lamp for our needs in a particular corner of the room, so God places us where we can do the most effective service for

Him. There are probably a few people in your class at school who would be open to hearing about the present truth that you just happen to know. Or perhaps they need some moral counseling or suggestions about how to improve health—subjects about which you may already know more than you realized. You may very well be the lamp that God is placing near those persons to help them read and understand His Word. Without you there, perhaps they would not be able to see where to read. So, remember the words of the wise man, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecclesiastes 3:1). The Lord does not place us in a certain place at a certain time without having a specific purpose in mind. So, don’t leave your area in darkness! Why not pray and ask the Light-giver to show you what He has in mind especially for you in your particular corner?



Is it right for Seventh-day Adventists to listen to “pagan” music—and how can we identify “pagan” music? Also, should one be allowed to go into bars or discotheques if he or she does not use alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs?

We were happy to receive your inquiry via e-mail, and we hope that more young people will be inspired to contact us in cyberspace.

Regarding music, first of all we should mention that it is one of the best and most glorious arts through which a person can praise God as well as help and encourage fellow humans. However, as with everything good in this old world, our adversary, Satan, has made a counterfeit.

Most of the music being written and performed today is based on rhythms which are rooted

in various forms of spiritualism. You are correct in calling it “pagan” music, for it is not merely “secular” as were many of the great classical symphonies (which usually had a noble, uplifting flavor). Most of today’s popular music is actually “pagan” or “heathen” because it uses the same heavy, repetitious off-beat as is found in pagan occult rituals to summon demonic spirits.

The experience is told of a certain heathen tribe which used primitive drumbeats to work people into a hypnotic frenzy and make them accessible to demons. In more recent years this tribe

was using American rock music to achieve the same goal.

Scientific research demonstrates that amplified, low bass tones combined with a heavy, repetitious beat stimulate an unnatural secretion of body hormones and strongly affect your central nervous system. When in such a state, your brain actually becomes physiologically impaired, and it cannot make good moral decisions. Thus, the music acts almost like an evil drug to lower your standards of moral behavior.

No serious Christian should voluntarily place himself or herself in this situation by deliberately exposing himself or herself to such music. In discotheques and dancing bars, the music is played at such loud levels as to make it difficult to escape the problem. If one who knows better would choose to go to such a place, the presence of Christ and His angels would stay outside. You would be entering at your own risk, forfeiting their special protection.

Some may say, "Oh, but I'm only going there to be with my friends." Perhaps you should be more careful in choosing your friends! Others may say, "I'm only going there to be a witness for Christ." Sorry, the loud music will impair the thinking of your audience so badly that your efforts would

be practically worthless. Try introducing your friends to a better environment.

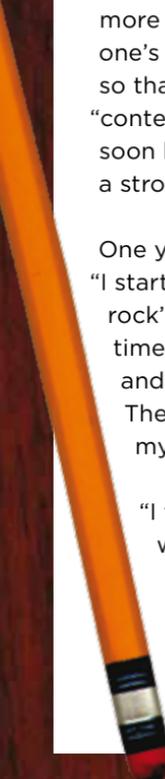
If the repetitious off-beat in pagan music is bad for your mind, it will trigger the same problem regardless of the words to the song. Actually, to take destructive music and paste Christian words onto it is taking the name of the Lord in vain, and misrepresenting His character. An American Christian missionary tells his experience:

What about contemporary "Christian" music or soft "Christian" rock?

"In 1981, I was driving down a jungle road in the Ivory Coast with several African pastors in the car with me. I had recently received a couple of cassette tapes from our denominational headquarters that were intended for our teenaged daughter.

"These were recordings of various 'Christian rock' artists. In listening to the tapes, I was very disturbed in my own spirit that such material was being sent to our missionary kids.

"But not trusting my own reaction alone and realizing that these pastors with whom I was



traveling were very sensitive to the spirit world (both good and evil), I decided to play the tapes for them. The reaction I got was immediate and verbally violent!

“One of the pastors asked me this question, ‘Do you mean to tell us that this kind of music is played in your churches in America?’

“I answered in the affirmative. His response was filled with disgust and anger as he replied with another question, ‘What are you doing allowing your church people to call up the evil spirits with their music?’ ”

The “rock beat” is, in and of itself, an addiction. Those who vibrate with it begin to desire more and more of it. Like a drug addiction, one’s appetite for it increases so that the “rock beat” in “contemporary Christian” music soon becomes dissatisfying, and a stronger beat is required.

One youth testifies:

“I started to listen to ‘Christian rock’ when I was eleven. Each time I heard it, I felt rebellious and had sensual thoughts. The feelings grew stronger as my music got harder.

“I finally realized this music was wrong, and I tried to get rid of all my music tapes, but I would always slip back into it.

“I am seventeen years old now, and I still struggle with this music. It is very addictive and so easy to slip back into.

“I pray that as you read of my struggles and of the struggles of other young people, you will want to keep this damaging tool of Satan out of our lives, our homes, and our churches.”

Another writes:

“In the summer of 1989, I purposed that I would listen only to music which is glorifying to God. However, Satan had a stronghold on my life because I listened to rock music for many years. As a result the sounds and words were embedded in my memory.

“As the teachers at school lectured, or as I ate lunch or walked through the hall and heard any word that was in a song, I would begin singing a song that the word reminded me of. Every conversation brought a song to my mind. Thus every day, evil lyrics were embedded deeper into my spirit.

“Only as I recognized the demonic nature of this addiction was I able to deal with it in a Scriptural way.”

One person has summarized the situation quite well: “Reaching teenagers with Christian rock music is like giving out liquor with Bible verses on the bottles.”

Money & Morals



It seems a strange combination! Is there any connection between money and morals? If there is, it is the connection that exists between the neck of the criminal and the ax of the executioner—a connection that is, as a rule, hopelessly and absolutely fatal. The reckless greed of gain has driven more men and women away from Jesus Christ than any other passion. “Very sorrowful, . . . for he was very rich.” That is a miniature portrait of a young man who once came to Christ, and it tells the story of many a prosperous but dissatisfied person today. Have you ever known any man or woman who received the slightest benefit of a high and noble kind from money? Has it ever made humans good? Has it ever increased their generosity, broadened their

sympathies, or aroused in them a longing for righteousness?—Never! It adds to your creature comforts, ministers to your merely sensuous enjoyment. If you possess brains, it enables you to encourage art and science; and if you are a practical Christian, it places in your hand the wherewithal to succor the suffering and relieve the distressed. But in itself money has never made any man or woman happy or healthy or holy. On the contrary, it has dimmed the love, wrecked the peace, and spoiled the characters of countless thousands.

Don't you think it is a very impressive and significant fact that the most heartless and contemptible act of treachery ever committed—an act which has excited the horror and disgust of

all ages—should have been due to the selfish desire of a miserable and covetous man to secure thirty pieces of silver? Judas Iscariot was not a degraded profligate—he was a disciple, with a character, no doubt, of the utmost decency and respectability. He may have been alluded to, for all we know, as a shrewd, practical, hardheaded man of business. But it was that little bag of money which led to his sin, his suicide, and his destruction. His love of gain was greater than his love for his Lord.

And this is just where the danger exists. Young people will exclaim, “Surely it is not wrong to wish to make money!” Certainly not, if you are careful that when you have made the money, it does not mar you. Riches are like a rose

in a human’s hand; if he or she holds it gently, it will preserve its beauty of shape and fragrance of smell; but if he or she holds it tightly, he or she will crush and destroy it. Hold the riches lightly—let them flow out freely in wise benevolence, use them

**HOLD THE RICHES
LIGHTLY—LET THEM FLOW
OUT FREELY IN WISE
BENEVOLENCE.**

liberally for the highest ends, and you will have done well. But hug your wealth, set your heart on it, let the miserly and covetous spirit paralyze your very soul, and life will become a hideous nightmare, a foul sepulcher, a long spell of hopeless servitude. —Atkins.



SKIP THE SKEPTICISM!

An excerpt from the writings of Ellen G. White, with comments by B. Monteiro

In one's deepest feelings, do we realize that Jesus is coming again soon? REALLY soon? During His time on earth, the Lord made a powerful comment, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth" (Luke 18:8)?

This means that genuine faith—the real faith spoken of in the Bible—will become so rare, that when Jesus returns in the clouds, hardly anyone will have real faith! Why not?

Jesus saw that the world would become a lot like the way it was before the great Flood in Noah's time. People would be

busy partying and thinking more about how to amuse themselves, play video games, watch movies, and indulge their lower passions than about eternity. He saw that people would lack self-control in their appetites. Even the churches would have low moral standards. The Bible would be neglected and unappreciated. Christ saw that all this feverish zeal for "fun" would be suddenly interrupted by the judgments of God.

How do you feel when you're on the Internet and suddenly get disconnected? Or when the signal drops on your cell phone right in the middle of an important



conversation? Yes, people will be interrupted again—really interrupted! All their plans will abruptly be shut down by the return of One who loved them so much as to have given His life to save them. Yet most will not welcome His arrival then because they do not welcome Him now. They're rejecting their own Maker and Designer and are choosing instead to focus on stuff that is cheap, flimsy, and so soon to perish—the things of this world.

THE STATE OF SOCIETY

Have you ever noticed that society today is really not very concerned about right vs. wrong? This lack of morality will ripen until finally the nations will become as lawless and corrupt as the people were before the great Flood in the time of Noah. Most people today do not appreciate the Bible as an authority in their lifestyle choices. It has become fashionable or “cool” to doubt and criticize. The law of God is laid aside and forgotten. This problem did not start with the youth—it is common nearly everywhere today, and the younger people end up having to suffer the most because of the rebellion found in schools, colleges, and workplaces everywhere.

But are education and work the problem? Not necessarily—the problem has to do with attitudes. When the law of God is abandoned, people behave badly. They think badly. Without the Word of our

Creator as our authority, we are like a lost boat drifting out to sea without direction. Do you want to live your life that way? The first storm that comes will easily cause shipwreck.

AN OLD-FASHIONED TEXT MESSAGE FOR A NEW GENERATION

Ellen G. White makes an earnest appeal to the young:

“I feel the most intense anguish for our youth. I warn you, as one who knows the danger, not to be entrapped by Satan through the little knowledge of science which you may have acquired. It is better to have a pure and humble heart than all the knowledge you can possibly gain without the fear of the Lord. The youth of today will be likely to meet skeptics and infidels wherever they may go, and how necessary that they be equipped, so that they may be able to give a reason of their hope with meekness and fear. . . .

“We are living in an age of licentiousness [loose morals], and men and youth are bold in sin. Unless our youth are sacredly guarded, unless they are fortified with firm principles, unless greater care is manifested in choosing their associates and the literature which feeds the mind, they will be exposed to a society whose morals are as corrupt as were the morals of the inhabitants of Sodom. The appearance of

the people of the world may be very attractive, but if they are continually throwing out suggestions against the Bible, they are dangerous companions; for they will ever seek to undermine the foundations of your faith, to corrupt the conscientiousness of old-fashioned, gospel religion.

“The youth often come in contact with those of skeptical tendencies, and their parents are in ignorance of the fact, until the terrible work of evil is consummated, and the youth are ruined. The young should be instructed diligently, that they may not be deceived in regard to the true character of these persons, and not form friendships with this class, or listen to their words of sarcasm and sophistry. Unless our young people have moral courage to sever their connection with these persons when they discover their unbelief, they will be ensnared, and will think and talk as do their associates, speaking lightly of religion and the faith of the Bible.

“Could the eyes of deluded youth be opened, they would see the exultant leer of Satan at his success in ruining souls. In every conceivable way he seeks to adapt

his temptations to the various dispositions and circumstances of those whom he wishes to entangle. He will try every device, and if the subjects of these temptations do not seek God, they will be blinded to his deceptions, and will be self-confident, self-sufficient, and in ignorance of their condition and danger. They will soon come to despise the faith once delivered to the saints. I speak to the youth as one who knows, as one to whom the Lord has opened the perils that attend their pathway. Self-confidence will lead you into the snare of the enemy. The youth do not ask counsel of God and make Him their refuge and strength. They enter society with all assurance, confident that they are fully able to choose the right and to comprehend divine mysteries, because of their powers of reason, as though they could discover truth for themselves. We fear more for those who are self-confident than for any others, for they will surely be entangled in the net that has been set by the great adversary of God and man. Some associate who has been chosen as a familiar friend, who has been tainted with the corruption of doubt, will instill his leaven of unbelief into the minds



of this class. By fulsome flattery of their talent, their intellectual superiority, by inciting in them an ambition for high position, their attention will be gained, and moral blight will fall upon them. Those who are exalted in their own opinions will despise the blood of the Atoning Sacrifice, and will do despite to the Spirit of grace.

“The children of Sabbath-keeping parents, who have had great light, who have been the objects of the tenderest solicitude, may be the ones who will leave a heritage of shame, who will sow to the wind and reap the whirlwind. In the judgment the names of those who have sinned against great light will be written with those who are condemned to be separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. They will be lost, lost, and will be numbered with the scorers of the grace of Christ. I would rather see my children laid in the grave, than see them taking the path that leads to death. The terrible fact that I had nurtured children to fight against the God of heaven, to swell the ranks of apostates in the last days, to march under the black banner of Satan, would indeed be a thought of horror to me.

“Our youth will meet temptations on every hand, and they must be so educated that they will depend upon higher power, higher teaching, than can be given by mortals. There are despisers of our Lord everywhere, who habitually throw contempt upon Christianity. They call it the plaything of children, invented to impose on the credulity of the ignorant. Those who have not moral power cannot stand in defense of the truth; they have not courage to say: ‘Unless such conversation ceases, I cannot remain in your presence. Jesus, the world’s Redeemer, is my Saviour; in Him is centered my hope of eternal life.’ But this is the very way in which to silence them. If you argue with them, they will have arguments with which to meet you, and nothing you may say will touch them; but if you live for Christ, if you are firm in your allegiance to the God of heaven, you may do for them that which argument will fail to do, and convince them of the fallacy of their doctrines, by the power of godliness.

“There is no sadder spectacle than that of those who have been purchased by the blood of

Christ, who have been entrusted with talents wherewith they may glorify God, turning to jest the messages graciously sent to them in the gospel, denying the divinity of Christ, and trusting to their own finite reasoning, and to arguments that have no foundation. When tested with affliction, when brought face to face with death, all these fallacies they have cherished will be melted away like frost before the sun. How terrible it is to stand by the coffin of one who has rejected the appeals of divine mercy! How terrible to say: Here is a life lost! Here is one who might have reached the highest standard, and gained immortal life, but he surrendered his life to Satan, became ensnared by the vain philosophies of men, and was a plaything of the evil one!

“The Christian’s hope is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that which is within the veil, whither Christ the forerunner is for us entered. We have an individual work to do to prepare for the great events that are before us. The youth should seek God more earnestly. The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury, by having repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea.

Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment’s warning will occur on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near! The prophet says: ‘Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger’ (Zephaniah 2:3).”—*The Signs of the Times*, April 21, 1890.

JUST THINK . . .

Does that message apply to us today? Are some people flattering you for your brains, your looks, or your abilities? Do they really want what is best for you—or are they actually being used by the serpent to trap you? Now is the time to flee to the arms of God and make Him your only refuge. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Proverbs 18:10). The arm of flesh will only disappoint. Instead, let Christ be your tower and strength in these perplexing days.

A Sense of Belonging

Everyone needs to feel like he or she “belongs” somewhere. There is nothing more awkward and embarrassing than to feel as if you are in a place where you don’t seem to belong.

Our kind and understanding heavenly Father has grouped the human race into families in which to live. In a healthy family, every member will have a sense of security—of belonging—and with that belonging comes a certain satisfaction.

There is, however, a security that is greater than any other on earth. This is the experience of belonging to the heavenly family. As we develop a more personal relationship with the Creator of the universe, we can enjoy a deeper security, a stronger stability, and a greater sense of belonging than anyone could ever imagine. No matter how hard our life seems to be at times, none of us need feel sorry for ourselves when we have such a wonderful Saviour as Jesus.

“The life of Christ was designed to show that purity, stability, and firmness of principle are not dependent upon a life freed from hardships, poverty, and adversity. The trials and privations of which so many youth complain, Christ endured without murmuring. And this discipline is the very experience the youth need, which will give firmness to their characters, and make them like Christ, strong in spirit to resist temptation. They will not, if they separate from the influence of those who would lead them astray and corrupt their morals, be overcome by the devices of Satan. . . . Christ’s life was an example of persevering energy, which was not allowed to become weakened by reproach, ridicule, privation or hardships.”—*Messages to Young People*, pp. 79, 80.

Dear reader, think about what this means! Even when people try to make fun of you or make you feel uneasy, there can still be a place where you belong. In this issue of the *Youth Messenger*, you are offered a deeper understanding of your very own Father in heaven. He cares about you, and wants you to depend on Him for stability and security. Count on Him to be your best, most trustworthy Friend, and He will help you learn to “feel at home” in the greatest place in the universe—Heaven!

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IT IS TIME

It is time to be brave; it is time to be true;
It is time to be finding the thing you can do;
It is time to put by the dream and the sigh,
And work for the cause that is holy and high.

It is time to be kind; it is time to be sweet,
To be scattering roses for somebody's feet;
It is time to be sowing; it is time to be growing;
It is time for the flowers of life to be blowing.

It is time to be lowly and humble of heart;
It is time for the lilies of meekness to start;
For the heart to be white, and the steps to be right,
And the hands to be weaving a garment of light.

— *Mary Wheaton Lyon*

