



The Reformation
Messenger
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Never Excuse Sin

WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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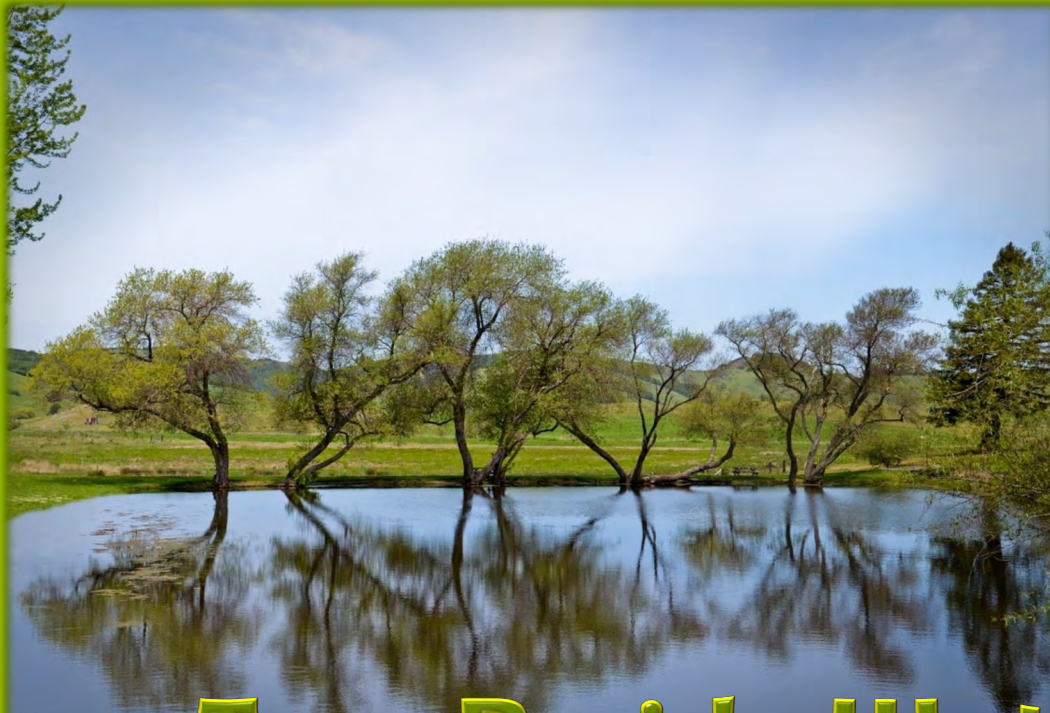
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As a Tree Beside Water

“Man is a tree planted by the hand of God in His own garden, brought under His own culture. It is His purpose that His people shall be trees of righteousness, bearing much fruit for Him. Of those who cooperate with Him in carrying out this purpose, it is written, ‘He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper’ [Psalms 1:3].” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 95

“I beseech you to keep reaching out after God, to keep drinking of the fountain of living water. You may be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, whose leaf does not wither. You may be full of moisture, and be able to refresh others, and to give them grace and comfort.” —*Gospel Workers*, p. 363–364

“You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness. Apart from Him you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish. Drawing your life from Him, you will not wither nor be fruitless. You will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 300

“We want a pure heart. We want Christ within, a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. We want to be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, whose leaf does not wither. We want to be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. Every

one of us will be rewarded according to his works. With what kind of material are you building? Is it with wood, hay, and stubble? In the great day of testing, will you lose all your life-work, and your soul as well? It is only gold and silver and precious stones that will abide in the fires of the last day. We should seek to form characters for eternal life, and to bring the very best material into our character-building.” —*The Review and Herald*, April 30, 1889

“The lowliest service done for Jesus is the greatest honor mortals can enjoy. Angels, pure and holy, obey His word; and shall we be deceived and deluded into the service of Satan? Shall we refuse obedience to His requirements? Shall it not be said of us individually, ‘But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth His fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.’” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 319

“Wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Cherish the grace of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness. This is the fruit of the Christian tree. Planted by the rivers of water, it always brings forth its fruit in due season.” —*My Life Today*, p. 50

Ellen G. White

Spiritual Eyesight



happiness. Are they finding it? NO! The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death. Isaiah writes in Isaiah 57:20–21, “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”

For lack of good eyesight, many accidents are taking place on our highways every day. If we could see the danger a little earlier, we could avoid the accident. Also, on the highway to heaven, many accidents are taking place. People see the danger too late. Millions of Christians are resting in their graves unsaved. They were on the way to heaven rejoicing in the blessed hope, but now they are eternally lost. Somewhere in the darkness they lost their way. Somewhere they did not see the danger until it was way too late. Because dangers are surrounding us all the time, what do we need? Is it not better eyesight? We must see the dangers before they overtake us.

Yet, what is often the condition of professing Christians? Jesus called the Jewish leaders and the Pharisees blind. “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” Matthew 15:14

Today, the world is boasting of great knowledge, and great advancements in science; even knowledge of the Bible has increased. The knowledge of salvation, however, has not increased. Over two billion professing Christians in our world today expect to be saved and to have eternal life, but almost all will be disappointed in the end when they realize their lost condition.

Satan’s spirit is controlling mankind. He has blinded the men and women who are seeking peace and happiness, but what do they find? Only confusion, restlessness, fighting, and wars. Satan has blinded also the children and young people to think that there is happiness in sin. Teenagers are turning to smoking, drinking, drugs, and defiance of authorities, hoping to find peace and

Many are deceived into seeking contentment and happiness through financial security, or entertainment. They do not find either, because it is not possible. People get married and form families hoping to find happiness and joy in life, but many times are disappointed, especially if both husband and wife do not fear God and serve Him. Many marriages and families without God end up in misery with fighting, depression, and often in separation and divorce. This is all blindness. Many men and women do not know the way of God, which alone can lead to peace and happiness.

Satan had it all. He was happy, full of joy, peace, and had eternal youth. He had the highest position in the universe after God the Father and Christ, but he stepped off from the way of God and lost it all. He became the most unhappy, miserable being. Anyone who follows his way of thinking will be blinded by him to seek happiness in disobedience to God. The result is only misery, confusion, and disappointment.

My friend, is it your desire to go to heaven? Is it your desire to have eternal life? Do you really want to be saved? Do you want to have happiness and peace in your soul? There is only one way to gain these and that is to follow the plan of God. The Bible will show you the way of life, the wonderful plan that God has made for us to have continual peace and happiness.

One great deception of Satan is to influence people to delay obedience to God. “Not now. Later I will obey and serve God.” The Bible tells us, “To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” Hebrews 4:7

Delayed obedience can lead to sin against the Holy

Spirit. Although God is merciful and understanding of human weakness, to continually sin with knowledge by delay will grieve the Holy Spirit. "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." Hebrews 10:26. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit by delay." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 56

Paul gave a study about salvation to the Governor, Felix, who trembled while he listened. He did not, however, continue these studies and said, "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." By delaying any further study, he sinned against the Holy Spirit. "A ray of light from heaven had been permitted to shine upon Felix, when Paul reasoned with him concerning righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come. That was his heaven-sent opportunity to see and to forsake his sins. But he said to the messenger of God, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.' He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God." – *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 427

Many delay their obedience to God. They say, "Later, not now, I will accept the salvation that God is offering." I talked to a young man in South America whose parents were members in our church. He said, "I would like to be a member in the church, but the requirements are too difficult." For this reason, Satan has established churches with easier requirements. They say you do not have to obey all that the Bible says and you will still be saved because God will forgive. These churches are growing in number, and have more members than the church of God. If a church makes even one small change from the Biblical requirements, that change makes it a fallen church where the blind leaders are leading the blind members.

Jesus had clear eyesight when He chose His disciples. Instead of choosing scribes and Pharisees, He chose poor, uneducated fishermen, to be the foundation of the new Christian church. In Mary Magdalene, who was possessed by evil spirits, He saw a most loyal follower. In Paul, others saw a persecutor of God's church, but Jesus saw in him His greatest advocate. Others saw in the criminal nailed to the cross an evil person, but Jesus saw in him a saint, fit for His own company. This kind of eyesight we also need; the greatest criminal can be changed to a holy person. Our enemies can become our best friends.

It is possible also that one who has been a faithful child of God can become His enemy. This happened to Judas.

He was a disciple of Jesus and later became His traitor.

Nero was very compassionate in his first years of reign. When he had to sign a death sentence, he said, "I wish I could not read nor write." Afterwards he changed, and he destroyed thousands of Christians, including his own mother.

We need to look at our own life with a vision. Try to see the end from the beginning. One sin leads to another sin. Small unfaithfulness leads to greater unfaithfulness. Conversely, one small obedience leads to greater obedience, and holiness leads to Godlikeness. Brick by brick great buildings are erected. In the same way, by resisting temptation, and faithfulness in small things a Christian character is built—brick by brick.

It is wonderful when a person, especially a young person, turns to God, and says to Him, "I love You! I will serve You to the end." Then a marvelous change will take place. As a caterpillar changes into a butterfly, so man can be changed from the evil selfish image of Satan into the lovely image of Christ. His heart can be changed from a hard stone to a heart of flesh. He becomes pliable, easily entreated, and forgiving. He will even be able to love his enemies, and do good to them that hate him.

Is this an image that you admire? Is Christ your hero, when He prayed for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"? Is this the character you want to learn? When we all change to His image and learn to love and forgive, then there will be no separation; we will love each other's company.

This is the way of God which leads to peace and happiness. There is no other way. There are many religions in the world, but only one religion will teach how to restore the image of God in us. Every word you speak will bring you closer to God, or a step further away from Him. Every action you do will bring you closer to the reflecting the image of God, or further away from it; . Every thought in your mind will lead you closer to perfection, or further away from it.

If you follow the word of God carefully, you will avoid the dangers that would make you lose your peace and happiness, and ruin your life. With confidence you will tell others, this is the way of God, this is the way to peace and happiness. This is the way that leads us to our celestial home. Your face will be shining with peace and happiness. Your look will be beyond the external and you will see the end, the wonderful reward of the righteous. Amen. **Timo Martin**



The Two Gardens

When we think of the word Garden, we often think of:

- A place of beauty;
- A place of tranquility;
- A place of safety;
- A place—apart from the stresses of society.

Or:

A place where you receive delicious organic food. . . .

A garden is a piece of ground, or larger area set aside for the planting of trees, flowers, shrubs or vegetables. It can be a small garden near a person’s house, or large, as a park where one can go and stroll around and find peace and serenity.

In the Bible we read of two gardens where events happened that were quite significant in the plan of salvation, that made a serious impact in the universe.

The first one is, The Garden of Eden. This was a by far the more beautiful of the two. It came fresh from the Creator’s hand and there was not a taint of sin and decay. It was a place of idyllic beauty and safety—a place where man spoke face to face with his Maker. There was no evil. The devil was confined to the tree of knowledge as his only place of possible contact with Adam and Eve. The inhabitants were surrounded with love, peace and beauty. No one to torment or disturb them. “The Garden of Eden, the home of our first parents, was exceedingly beautiful. Graceful shrubs and delicate flowers greeted the eye at every turn. In the garden were trees of every variety, many of them laden with fragrant and delicious fruit. On their branches the birds caroled their songs of praise. Adam and Eve, in their untainted purity, delighted in the sights and sounds of Eden.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 266

The second one, the Garden of Gethsemane, was not as idyllic as the Garden of Eden as it existed after 4000 years of sin and decay on this earth. Leaves dried and fell off trees, weeds grew among the plants. Plants and flowers died after a time. Although it may not have been as beautiful and perfect as Eden, it was a place where the greatest event oc-

curred on this planet. When the Son of God prayed in this garden, He was surrounded by a world of evil and evil angels. A terrible battle, unseen to the human eye, took place. It is here that we see the greatest victory. We see that entire self-surrender, amidst great torment and uncertainty, was experienced.

In one garden, there was the greatest fall. In the other garden the greatest victory.

“The Garden of Eden, with its foul blot of disobedience, is to be carefully studied and compared with the Garden of Gethsemane, where the world’s Redeemer suffered superhuman agony when the sins of the whole world were rolled upon Him. Listen to the prayer of the only begotten Son of God, ‘O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.’ And the second time He prayed saying, ‘O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.’” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 24

Heeding this counsel, let us study and compare the two gardens.

The apostle Paul contrasted the two main events that occurred in the two gardens by saying, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12 “Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” Romans 5:18

“Adam’s fall in the Garden of Eden caused all to sin; but in the Garden of Gethsemane Christ drank the bitter cup of suffering and death, that whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life.” —*The Signs of the Times*, June 13, 1900

GARDEN OF EDEN

“When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, they were innocent and sinless, in perfect harmony with

God. Enmity had no natural existence in their hearts. But when they transgressed, their nature was no longer sinless. They became evil, for they had placed themselves on the side of the fallen foe, doing the very things that God specified they should not do.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 28

“The Garden of Eden was created by God. He made it a beautiful and holy place. But Satan found entrance to the Garden, leaving his slimy trail of sin and disobedience.” —*The Review and Herald*, March 20, 1958

We are all familiar with the story of the first sin, the eating of the forbidden fruit by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There is, however, a lot more to the event than just the simple eating of the fruit by Eve and giving some to her husband, Adam, to eat.

“The Garden of Eden with its disobedience and the Garden of Gethsemane with its obedience are presented before us. What a costly work was that in Eden! How much was involved in the fatal eating of the forbidden tree! But many are following in the very same footprints, in disobedience, in breaking away from the law of God. When men selfishly enter a course of disobedience to God they go on imperceptibly. They do not calculate what the sure result will be when they enter the path of temptation, and make but feeble efforts to resist, and some make none at all. But when the scroll is unrolled, and God looks over it, He will find that He has been denied in that place, dishonored in another place; and as the roll is opened more and more, the results of un-Christlike actions are revealed.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1103

Divide and Conquer: Eve’s first mistake was to leave the side of Adam. Although this was not yet sin, it led up to the events that caused her to be on her own and then sin. “The angels had cautioned Eve to beware of separating herself from her husband while occupied in their daily labor in the garden; with him she would be in less danger from temptation than if she were alone. But absorbed in her pleasing task, she unconsciously wandered from his side.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 53–54

Satan knows that in unity there is strength. “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.



For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” Ecclesiastes 4:9–10, 12

The enemy has always sought to bring divisions amongst God’s people. As we study the history of the Christian church up to the present day, there are many times when Satan has succeeded in causing divisions in the church for one reason or another.

“‘Press together; press together,’ are the words of our divine Instructor. Unity is strength; disunion is weakness and defeat.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 517. “In unity there is a life, a power, that can be obtained in no other way.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 36

“The closer our union with Christ, the closer will be our union with one another. Variance and disaffection, selfishness and conceit, are striving for supremacy. These are the fruits of a divided heart, open to the suggestions of the enemy of souls. Satan exults when he can sow seeds of dissension.” —*Our Father Cares*, p. 36

Self Righteousness: “On perceiving that she was alone, she felt an apprehension of danger, but dismissed her fears, deciding that she had sufficient wisdom and strength to discern evil and to withstand it.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 54. Eve thought she was just fine on her own. Her own wisdom was sufficient. Thus she leaned on her own strength in her discussion with the deceiver. Many have fallen, leaning on their own wisdom. They do not regard the inspired wisdom of the church leaders and feel themselves all wise and all righteous; not needing the counsel or encouragement of brethren.

Deceived: The end result of self-righteousness is being deceived. Eve was totally deceived by the enemy. She did not suspect that this beautiful creature was the agent of Satan. But he led her to distrust God and this should have been a warning signal to her. Satan’s temptations are becoming more deceptive as we near the close of time. We need to be in constant connection with the Lord or we will be deceived. “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Matthew 24:24

“Satan’s angels are wise to do evil, and they will create that which some will claim to be advanced light, and will proclaim it as new and wonderful; yet while in some respects the message may be truth, it will be mingled with human inventions, and will teach for doctrine the commandments of men. If there was ever a time when we should watch and pray in real earnest, it is now. Many apparently good things will need to be carefully considered with much prayer, for they are specious devices of the enemy to lead souls in a path which lies so close to the path of truth that it will be scarcely distinguishable from it. But the eye of faith may discern that it is diverging, though almost imperceptibly, from the right path. At first it may be thought positively right, but after a

while it is seen to be widely divergent from the way which leads to holiness and heaven.” —*Evangelism*, p. 590

Eve, “felt no evidence of God’s displeasure, but on the contrary realized a delicious, exhilarating influence, thrilling every faculty with new life, such, she imagined, as inspired the heavenly messengers.” —*Patriarch and Prophets*, p. 56. Many have left the people of God, gone their own way, and then felt as though they are more spiritual, on a higher spiritual plane, with greater spiritual insight. The truth is, the devil is no longer buffeting them. They are deceived.

Lust of Eyes, and Lust of Flesh: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18

What you see often leads to desire. “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Matthew 5:28. We cannot walk around with blinders on our eyes. Sin is all around us. However, we need not linger when we behold evil. We can turn away. We can stay our minds on Jesus. Lingering leads to desire.

When Eve found herself by the tree of knowledge in her absentminded wanderings, she should have turned away. She, however, lingered with curiosity. Seeing the serpent speaking intrigued her. Beholding the lovely fruit and listening to the words of the tempter, created doubts in her mind. “Unmindful of the angels’ caution, she soon found herself gazing with mingled curiosity and admiration upon the forbidden tree. The fruit was very beautiful, and she questioned with herself why God had withheld it from them.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 54

Eve grew bolder. She “saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.” Genesis 3:6

Pride of Life—self-importance “Eve had been perfectly happy by her husband’s side in her Eden home; but, like restless modern Eves, she was flattered with the hope of entering a higher sphere than that which God had assigned her. In attempting to rise above her original position, she fell far below it. A similar result will be reached by all who are unwilling to take up cheerfully their life duties in accordance with God’s plan. In their efforts to reach positions for which He has not fitted them, many are leaving vacant the place where they might be a blessing. In their desire for a higher sphere, many have sacrificed true womanly dignity and nobility of character, and have left undone the very work that Heaven appointed them.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 59

“The Devil made me do it!” Did he? Can he force you? “When the woman was asked, ‘What is this that thou hast done?’ she answered, ‘The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.’ ‘Why didst Thou create the serpent? Why didst Thou suffer him to enter Eden?’—these were the questions im-

plied in her excuse for her sin.” —*Ibid*, p. 58

Who do you blame when you sin? “It is Satan’s act to tempt you, but your own act to yield. It is not in the power of all the host of Satan to force the tempted to transgress. There is no excuse for sin.” —*Maranatha*, p. 82

ADAM’S SIN: Many focus on Eve’s sin, but Adam was not guiltless.

Love family/friends more than the Lord: There are many Christians who do not want to offend non-religious family members so they make compromises in their presence by the foods they eat, the language being used, the activities participated in, the TV shows watched, etc.

“Adam understood that his companion had transgressed the command of God, disregarded the only prohibition laid upon them as a test of their fidelity and love. There was a terrible struggle in his mind. He mourned that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side. But now the deed was done; he must be separated from her whose society had been his joy. How could he have it thus? Adam had enjoyed the companionship of God and of holy angels. He had looked upon the glory of the Creator. He understood the high destiny opened to the human race should they remain faithful to God. Yet all these blessings were lost sight of in the fear of losing that one gift which in his eyes outvalued every other. Love, gratitude, loyalty to the Creator—all were overborne by love to Eve. She was a part of himself, and he could not endure the thought of separation.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 56

Act spontaneously: “Adam did not stop to calculate the result of his disobedience.” —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1103. He did not consider the consequences. “Adam yielded to temptation, and we have sin and its consequences laid distinctly before us. Reasoning from cause to effect, we see it is not the greatness of the act of disobedience which constitutes sin, but the fact of variance from God’s expressed will in the least particular, for this is a virtual denial of God, a rebellion against the laws of his government. . . . whenever man chooses his own way, there is controversy between the man and God.” —*The Signs of the Times*, April 10, 1893

Have you ever done, or said, or written something on the spur of the moment, not thinking, and later regretted what you did? We must consider our actions. Think before we act, speak or spend. Every moment spent we will give to God an account. Every penny spent we will give to God an account. Every word spoken or written we will give an account to God.

In reality, your spontaneity should be Christ-centred. When there is a call to help in the church, whether it be missionary work, visiting the sick and suffering, or church work, you are automatic in volunteering to help—without giving it a second thought. Consider your ways. Reflect at the end of the day: How much time and money did you spend for yourself? How much time for the Lord today?

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

The climax of Jesus' earthly ministry occurred in the Garden



of Gethsemane. It was here that the sorest conflict raged in His mind. It was here that the cup of human woe weighed in the balances. This event occurred in the nighttime—in the darkness. There were no birds singing, no beautiful trees and flowers to be enjoyed. Only a very solemn stillness. This is quite the opposite setting as we would think of when we think of the Garden of Eden.

But what a tremendous victory was gained here in that darkness. It is often in the darkness, when there are no other distractions, that the Lord speaks to us.

"It was here the mysterious cup trembled in the hands of the Son of God. Shall He wipe the bloody sweat from His agonized countenance and let the human race go? The wail, wretchedness, and ruin of a lost world rolls up its horrible picture before Him." —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 24

Resist the devil, when all human inclination wants to listen to Him: "With the issues of the conflict before Him, Christ's soul was filled with dread of separation from God. Satan told Him that if He became the surety for a sinful world, the separation would be eternal. He would be identified with Satan's kingdom, and would nevermore be one with God." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 686

"In its hardest features Satan pressed the situation upon the Redeemer: The people who claim to be above all others in temporal and spiritual advantages have rejected You. They are seeking to destroy You, the foundation, the center and seal of the promises made to them as a peculiar people. One of Your own disciples, who has listened to Your instruction, and has been among the foremost in church activities, will betray You. One of Your most zealous followers will deny You. All will forsake You. Christ's whole being abhorred the thought. That those whom He had undertaken to save, those whom He loved so much, should unite in the plots of Satan, this pierced His soul. The conflict was terrible. Its measure

was the guilt of His nation, of His accusers and betrayer, the guilt of a world lying in wickedness. The sins of men weighed heavily upon Christ, and the sense of God's wrath against sin was crushing out His life." —*Ibid*, p. 687. Thankfully, Jesus did not listen to Satan's temptations. He chose to obey His Father instead.

Perfect Obedience: Every cell in your body is crying for selfish desire, but your mind says no. "Behold Him contemplating the price to be paid for the human soul. In His agony He clings to the cold ground, as if to prevent Himself from being drawn farther from God. The chilling dew of night falls upon His prostrate form, but He heeds it not. From His pale lips comes the bitter cry, 'O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.' Yet even now He adds, 'Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'" —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 687

"And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.' 'And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him.' The conflict is ended; Jesus consents to honor His Father by doing His will and bearing His curse, the consequence of humanity's transgression. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Here was what was involved in Adam's disobedience and what the obedience of the Son of God means to us." —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 24

"The strength given to Christ in the hour of bodily suffering and mental anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, has been and will be given to those who suffer for His dear name's sake. The same grace given to Jesus, the same comfort, the more than mortal steadfastness, will be given to every believing child of God, who is brought into perplexity and suffering, and threatened with imprisonment and death, by Satan's agents. Never has a soul that trusts in Christ been left to perish. The rack, the stake, the many inventions of cruelty, may kill the body, but they can not touch the life that is hid with Christ in God." —*The Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1897

Prayer and supplication: In Gethsemane, Jesus encouraged His disciples to watch and pray lest they fall when tempted.

He then went apart and prayed in agony to His Father. His prayer life on earth prepared Him for the struggle in Gethsemane. Jesus, our example, sometimes spent all nights in prayer. Did He sleep all day the following day? Was it not often that the people sought Him out so that He could heal their sick ones and preach to them the words of life?



Often one can stay up

late for selfish entertainments, visiting friends, etc. They can even work nights, without complaints—necessitating the need to sleep the following day. But ask them to pray for the night, and they will be far too tired to do so.

I am sure that all are guilty of staying up late at nights when it was not necessary. I will not exclude myself from this guilt. I know how tired I felt the next day. On the other hand, I also have stayed up late, studying, praying and writing articles for the Lord, and have not been near as tired the next day as when I stayed up late for selfish reasons. Why? Because one is for self, and one is for the Lord—and the blessing of the Lord rests upon those who deny themselves for Him.

“What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of His children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of heaven think of poor helpless human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God’s heart of infinite love yearns toward them, ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little and have so little faith?” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 94

Thinking of others rather than personal comfort:

When Jesus suffered greatly in the Garden of Gethsemane, His Father sent an angel to comfort Him. It was the thought of the multitudes that would be saved by His sacrifice that brought Him comfort.

“Three times has He uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last, crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human race comes up before the world’s Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood, that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression. And He will not turn from His mission. He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin. His prayer now breathes only submission: ‘If this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.’” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 690–693

Reflection from the life of Ellen G. White: “At times, when in great trial or pain, I think, What is the use of continuing to work as I do? But I am ashamed of myself as soon as such a thought as this passes through my mind. I see Jesus, my Redeemer, suffering in Gethsemane; I see trembling in His hand the cup that is to separate Him for a time, as it were, from His Father; I see Him suffering at the hands of cruel men; I see Him smitten in the face; and suffering every indignity, and then mockingly commanded to show by a sign that He is the Saviour. O, what if He had refused to drink the cup of bitter agony He endured! What if His prayer had been answered? But God knew best, and strengthened His only-begotten Son to endure the agony and the shame, and become a propitiation for the sins of a lost world.” —*North Pacific Union Gleaner*, March 23, 1910

“Adam’s sin consisted in doing the thing the Lord had forbidden him to do, and this opened the flood gates of woe on our world. We should carefully meditate upon the life of Christ, and desire to understand the reason why He came at all. We should search the Scriptures as Christ has enjoined upon us to do, that we may know those things that are testified of Him. By searching we may find the virtues of obedience in contrast with the sinfulness of disobedience. ‘As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.’

“Christ redeemed Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall, and was conqueror, thus testifying to all the unfallen worlds and to fallen humanity that through the divine power granted to him of heaven man can keep the commandments of God. Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself for us, endured temptation for us, overcame in our behalf, to show us how we may overcome; by the closest ties He bound up His interest with humanity, and gave positive assurance that we shall not be tempted above that we are able; for with the temptation He will make a way of escape.” —*The Signs of the Times*, April 17, 1893

From these two gardens, we learn that we cannot put our faith in our environment. Even in the most perfect environment, man can fall. In the less than perfect environment, man can be faithful. Our faith needs to be in Christ Jesus, who overcame all sin, showing us, and giving us the ability to also overcome in any circumstance and any environment that we may find ourselves in. Amen.

Wendy Eaton



EVOLUTIONARY Because of Health???

“Adam and Eve in Eden were noble in stature, and perfect in symmetry and beauty. They were sinless, and in perfect health. What a contrast to the human race now! Beauty is gone. Perfect health is not known. Every where we look we see disease, deformity and imbecility. I inquired the cause of this wonderful degeneracy, and was pointed back to Eden. The beautiful Eve was beguiled by the serpent to eat of the fruit of the only tree of which God had forbidden them to eat, or even touch it lest they die.

“Eve had everything to make her happy. She was surrounded by fruit of every variety. Yet the fruit of the forbidden tree appeared more desirable to her than the fruit of all the other trees in the garden of which she could freely eat. She was intemperate in her desires. She ate, and through her influence, her husband ate also, and a curse rested upon them both. The earth also was cursed because of their sin. And since the fall, intemperance in almost every form has existed. The appetite has controlled reason. The human family have followed in a course of disobedience, and, like Eve, have been beguiled by Satan: to disregard the prohibitions God has made, flattering themselves that the consequence would not be as fearful as had been apprehended. The human family have violated the laws of health, and have run to excess in almost everything. Disease has been steadily increasing. The cause has been followed by the effect.

“God gave our first parents the food He designed that the race should eat. It was contrary to His plan to have the life of any creature taken. There was to be no death

in Eden. The fruit of the trees in the garden, was the food man's wants required. God gave man no permission to eat animal food until after the flood. Every thing had been destroyed upon which man could subsist, and therefore the Lord in their necessity gave Noah permission to eat of the clean animals which he had taken with him into the ark. But animal food was not the most healthy article of food for man.

“The people who lived before the flood ate animal food, and gratified their lusts until their cup of iniquity was full, and God cleansed the earth of its moral pollution by a flood. Then the third dreadful curse rested upon the earth. The first curse was pronounced upon the posterity of Adam and upon the earth, because of disobedience. The second curse came upon the ground after Cain slew his brother Abel. The third most dreadful curse from God, came upon the earth at the flood.

“After the flood the people ate largely of animal food. God saw that the ways of man were corrupt, and that he was disposed to exalt himself proudly against his Creator, and to follow the inclinations of his own heart. And he permitted that long-lived race to eat animal food to shorten their sinful lives. Soon after the flood the race began to rapidly decrease in size, and in length of years. There were a class of very large animals which perished at the flood. God knew that the strength of man would decrease, and these mammoth animals could not be controlled by feeble man.” —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, p. 120–121

Ellen G. White, Submitted by Mike Newby

Never Excuse Sin! —



Part One

From the beginning, people have tried to excuse and hide sin. After he sinned, Adam said “the wife You gave me is the one who. . .” Eve exclaimed, “the serpent You created. . .” This story clearly shows how Adam and Eve, rather than take responsibility for their sin, made excuses.

No one likes to die, or to see his or her loved ones taken in death. How can we say we dislike death, and yet at the same time like or justify sin? Let us remember that death came because of sin. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12. When sin is finally eradicated, death will disappear completely. Therefore, we have no reason to hide, justify, excuse or explain sin, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

“The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 311

NEVER HIDE YOUR SIN

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” 1 John 1:8–10

“When men apostatize from the truth, many will raise the question, What is the reason this has happened?

And when they can find no reason for apostasy, they will be inclined to believe that the apostates have never had a genuine experience in the truth and cause of God, that they were wholly insincere in their professions; but this is not safe reasoning. What was it caused Satan to rebel? Was there any just reason that could be assigned for his sin? The place where sin originated has been pointed out, but the reason for sin cannot be found; for there is no reason for its existence. It is written of Satan, ‘Thou wast perfect in all thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.’ All who apostatize are destitute of any real excuse. Their apostasy will be manifested in rebellion and self-exaltation, as it was seen in the first apostate. Of him it is written, ‘Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.’” —*The Signs of the Times*, September 18, 1893

CALL SIN BY ITS RIGHT NAME.

“And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.” Joshua 7:19



“When the church is in difficulty, when coldness and spiritual declension exist, giving occasion for the enemies of God to triumph, then, instead of folding their hands and lamenting their unhappy state, let its members inquire if there is not an Achan in the camp. With humiliation

and searching of heart, let each seek to discover the hidden sins that shut out God's presence." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 497

"The sin of one man caused Israel to be beaten before the enemy. Something more than prayer was required. They were to get up and cleanse the camp of Israel." —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 120

"The love of God will never lead to the belittling of sin; it will never cover or excuse an unconfessed wrong. Achan learned too late that God's law, like its Author, is unchanging. It has to do with all our acts and thoughts and feelings. It follows us, and reaches every secret spring of action. By indulgence in sin, men are led to lightly regard the law of God. Many conceal their transgressions from their fellow men, and flatter themselves that God will not be strict to mark iniquity. But His law is the great standard of right, and with it every act of life must be compared in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. Purity of heart will lead to purity of life. All excuses for sin are vain. Who can plead for the sinner when God testifies against him?" —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 214

NEVER SACRIFICE PRINCIPLE TO AVOID OFFENCE

In the first century, true Christians faced conformity and compromise of principles within their church. What did they do? We read that "After a long and severe conflict, the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church if she still refused to free herself from falsehood and idolatry. They saw that separation was an absolute necessity if they would obey the word of God. They dared not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls, and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children and children's children." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 45

Those who do speak out against sin can count on being called uncompromising and legalistic by some and should not be surprised to hear these words: "Don't be a fanatic." We should answer: "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Romans 13:14. Wanting to avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22) we need to stand firm, whatever the cost may be.

A kind, well-meaning rebuke is of great value. Often when we see a brother sinning, it is at first difficult to say anything for fear of offending that brother. This

attitude is of the devil. He is full of flattery and has only good to say to the sinner. He rocks them to sleep in his cradle, comforting them with the thought that they can be saved in their sin. They need not make a change in their character. We cannot compromise either, to avoid persecution.

"Jesus Himself never purchased peace by compromise. His heart overflowed with love for the whole human race, but He was never indulgent to their sins. He was too much their friend to remain silent while they were pursuing a course that would ruin their souls,—the souls He had purchased with His own blood. He labored that man should be true to himself, true to his higher and eternal interest. The servants of Christ are called to the same work, and they should beware lest, in seeking to prevent discord, they surrender the truth. They are to 'follow after the things which make for peace' (Romans 14:19); but real peace can never be secured by compromising principle. And no man can be true to principle without exciting opposition. A Christianity that is spiritual will be opposed by the children of disobedience. But Jesus bade His disciples, 'Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.'" —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 356

Of all the sins that God will punish, none are more grievous in His sight than those that encourage others to do evil.

EXPERIENCE OF AARON IN THE WILDRNESS

During the 40 days Moses was on Mount Sinai, Aaron, together with all the people, began to worry about his delay. "Feeling their helplessness in the absence of their leader, they returned to their old superstitions. .



. . . Among the objects regarded by the Egyptians as symbols of deity was the ox or calf; and it was at the suggestion of those who had practiced this form of idolatry in Egypt that a calf was now made and worshiped. The people desired some image to represent God, and to go before them in the place of Moses. God had given no manner of similitude of Himself, and He had prohibited any material representation for such a purpose. . . .

"In the absence of Moses, the judicial authority had been delegated to Aaron, and a vast crowd gathered about his tent, with the demand, 'Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that

brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.' . . .

“Such a crisis demanded a man of firmness, decision, and unflinching courage; one who held the honor of God above popular favor, personal safety, or life itself. But the present leader of Israel was not of this character. Aaron feebly remonstrated with the people, but his wavering and timidity at the critical moment only rendered them the more determined. . . . A few who ventured to denounce the proposed image making as idolatry, were set upon and roughly treated, and in the confusion and excitement they finally lost their lives.

“Aaron feared for his own safety; and instead of nobly standing up for the honor of God, he yielded to the demands of the multitude. His first act was to direct that the golden earrings be collected from all the people and brought to him, hoping that pride would lead them to refuse such a sacrifice. But they willingly yielded up their ornaments; and from these he made a molten calf, in imitation of the gods of Egypt.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 315–317

How often we encounter such situations, and how sad when a brother of many years of experience, who demands respect from people at a spiritual level, sins and acts contrary to God’s honor, despite repeated admonition and warning from his subordinates. Excuses such as, “The people caused me to act like that,” are given; and the few who stand firmly for God’s honour are usually not regarded or listened to. Finally, an attempt is made to kill them spiritually. “God does not accept the most splendid service unless self is laid upon the altar, a living, consuming sacrifice.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 248–249

“How often, in our own day, is the love of pleasure disguised by a ‘form of godliness’! A religion that permits men, while observing the rites of worship, to devote themselves to selfish or sensual gratification, is as pleasing to the multitudes now as in the days of Israel. And there are still pliant Aarons, who, while holding positions of authority in the church, will yield to the desires of the unconsecrated, and thus encourage them in sin. . . . To justify himself, Aaron endeavored to make the people responsible for his weakness in yielding to their demand; but notwithstanding this, they were

filled with admiration of his gentleness and patience. But God seeth not as man sees. Aaron’s yielding spirit and his desire to please had blinded his eyes to the enormity of the crime he was sanctioning. His course in giving his influence to sin in Israel cost the life of thousands. . . .

“Of all the sins that God will punish, none are more grievous in His sight than those that encourage others to do evil. God would have His servants prove their loyalty by faithfully rebuking transgression, however painful the act may be. Those who are honored with a divine commission are not to be weak, pliant timeservers. They are not to aim at self-exaltation, or to shun disagreeable duties, but to perform God’s work with unswerving fidelity.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 317, 323–324

“If Aaron had had courage to stand for the right, irrespective of consequences, he could have prevented that apostasy. If he had unswervingly maintained his own allegiance to God, if he had cited the people to the

perils of Sinai, and had reminded them of their solemn covenant with God to obey His law, the evil would have been checked. But his compliance with the desires of the people and the calm assurance with which he proceeded to carry out their plans, emboldened them to go to greater lengths in sin than had before entered their minds.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 98

God will use only those people who genuinely hate nothing but sin, who will not be bribed or bought, who will always be on God’s side, even though the situation is unfavorable, who will put self aside and depend on God.

What a solemn warning in Isaiah 56:10–11! The Lord uses very strong language—humanly, one would say that it is an insult—but Heaven says and means what is fit: “His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.”

We are a very fortunate generation, because God has so mercifully given us all the evidences of the end time so we can make a definite decision now and for forever. All the language used to rebuke, admonish, warn, and plead is for our salvation. Shall we not awake from spiritual slumber or death and take a decided stand for true revival and reformation in these last trying days?

God will use only those people who genuinely hate nothing but sin, who will not be bribed or bought, who will always be on God's side, even though the situation is unfavorable, who will put self aside and depend on God.

The Spirit of Prophecy declares: "But sin is not to be lightly regarded. The Lord has commanded us not to suffer wrong upon our brother. He says, 'If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him.' Luke 17:3. Sin is to be called by its right name, and is to be plainly laid out before the wrongdoer." –*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 248

"Those who are true to God need not fear the power of men nor the enmity of Satan. In Christ their eternal life is secure. Their only fear should be lest they surrender the truth, and thus betray the trust with which God has honored them." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 356

"But if the sins of the people are passed over by those in responsible positions, His frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for those sins. In His dealings with His people in the past the Lord shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs. One sinner may diffuse darkness that will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, they should seek God earnestly, in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve His Spirit are searched out and put away." –*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 334

REPENT BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 3:19

"So long as they can conceal their transgressions from their fellow men, many, like Achan, feel secure, and flatter themselves that God will not be strict to mark iniquity. All too late their sins will find them out in that day when they shall not be purged with sacrifice or offering forever. When the records of heaven shall be opened, the Judge will not in words declare to man his

guilt, but will cast one penetrating, convicting glance, and every deed, every transaction of life, will be vividly impressed upon the memory of the wrongdoer. The person will not, as in Joshua's day, need to



be hunted out from tribe to family, but his own lips will confess his shame. The sins hidden from the knowledge of men will then be proclaimed to the whole world." –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 498

"For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 2 Corinthians 7:10. . . . There are many professed Christians whose confessions of sin are similar to that of Achan. They will, in a general way, acknowledge their unworthiness, but they refuse to confess the sins whose guilt rests upon their conscience, and which have brought the frown of God upon His people." –*To Be Like Jesus*, p. 364

"It is the inclination to excuse our moral defects that leads to the cultivation of sin. We must never forget that God ascribes sin to the one who transgresses; it is not registered against Satan, but against the sinner. God never accepts the agency of Satan as an excuse for the committal of one sin. When there is any excuse for a seemingly wrong act, it is not sin. Satan triumphs when he hears the professed follower of Christ offering excuses for his defects of character. Sin unrepented of, unconfessed, can never be blotted from the books of God's record." –*The Signs of the Times*, December 13, 1899

John warns us in Revelation 3:19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Dear reader, "God calls upon you to be zealous and repent of your half-heartedness. Strive to walk wisely, in a perfect way. Begin and end each day with earnest prayer and close self-examination. Compare your life and character with the law of God, mark where its precepts condemn you, and set to work at once to correct the wrong by repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Wash your robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Let your words be well chosen. Put away all lightness, trifling, and irreverence." –*The Signs of the Times*, October 4, 1883

Finally brethren, "Have you fallen into sin? Then without delay seek God for mercy and pardon. . . . Mercy is still extended to the sinner. The Lord is calling to us in all our wanderings: 'Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.'" –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 177

May grace be upon us to redeem the time. Amen.

**Victor Shumbusho, DR Congo and
Jenifer Akello, Uganda**

Asleep

“What shall I say to arouse the remnant people of God? I was shown that dreadful scenes are before us, and Satan and his angels are bringing all their powers to bear upon God's people. He knows if they sleep a little longer he is sure of them, for their destruction is certain. I warn all who profess the name of Christ to closely examine themselves, and make full and thorough confessions of all their wrongs, and let them go beforehand to judgment, that opposite their names the recording angel may write, Pardon. If these precious, merciful moments are not improved, you are left without excuse. If you will make no special effort to arouse, if you will not manifest zeal in repenting, these golden moments will soon pass, and you will be weighed in the balance and found wanting, and then your agonizing cries will be of no avail. ‘Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of My counsel; they despised all My reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.’” – *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4b, p. 61 . *Ellen G. White* (Submitted by Mike Newby)

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JOSEPH WOLFF

“In 1821, three years after Miller had arrived at his exposition of the prophecies pointing to the time of the judgment, Dr. Joseph Wolff, ‘the missionary to the world,’ began to proclaim the Lord’s soon coming. Wolff was born in Germany, of Hebrew parentage, his father being a Jewish rabbi. While very young he was convinced of the truth of the Christian religion. Of an active, inquiring mind, he had been an eager listener to the conversations that took place in his father’s house as devout Hebrews daily assembled to recount the hopes and anticipations of their people, the glory of the coming Messiah, and the restoration of Israel. One day hearing Jesus of Nazareth mentioned, the boy inquired who He was. ‘A Jew of the greatest talent,’ was the answer; ‘but as He pretended to be the Messiah, the Jewish tribunal sentenced Him to death.’ ‘Why,’ rejoined the questioner, ‘is Jerusalem destroyed, and why are we in captivity?’ ‘Alas, alas!’ answered his father, ‘because the Jews murdered the prophets.’ The thought was at once suggested to the child: ‘Perhaps Jesus was also a prophet, and the Jews killed Him when He was innocent.’—*Travels and Adventures of the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, vol. 1, p. 6. So strong was this feeling that, though forbidden to enter a Christian church, he would often linger outside to listen to the preaching.

“When only seven years old he was boasting to an aged

Christian neighbor of the future triumph of Israel at the advent of the Messiah, when the old man said kindly: ‘Dear boy, I will tell you who the real Messiah was: He was Jesus of Nazareth, . . . whom your ancestors have crucified, as they did the prophets of old. Go home and read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and you will be convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 7. Conviction at once fastened upon him. He went home and read the scripture, wondering to see how perfectly it had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Were the words of the Christian true? The boy asked of his father an explanation of the prophecy, but was met with a silence so stern that he never again dared to refer to the subject. This, however, only increased his desire to know more of the Christian religion.

“The knowledge he sought was studiously kept from him in his Jewish home; but, when only eleven years old, he left his father’s house and went out into the world to gain for himself an education, to choose his religion and his lifework. He found a home for a time with kinsmen, but was soon driven from them as an apostate, and alone and penniless he had to make his own way among strangers. He went from place to place, studying diligently and maintaining himself by teaching Hebrew. Through the influence of a Catholic instructor he was led to accept the Romish faith and formed the purpose of becoming a missionary to his own people. With this object he went, a few years later, to pursue his studies in the College of the Propaganda at Rome. Here his habit of independent thought and candid speech brought upon him the imputation of heresy. He openly attacked the abuses of the church and urged the necessity of reform. Though at first treated with special favor by the papal dignitaries, he was after a time removed from Rome. Under the surveillance of the church he went from place to place, until it became evident that he could never be brought to submit to the bondage of Romanism. He was declared to be

incorrigible and was left at liberty to go where he pleased. He now made his way to England and, professing the Protestant faith, united with the English Church. After two years' study he set out, in 1821, upon his mission.

"While Wolff accepted the great truth of Christ's first advent as 'a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief,' he saw that the prophecies bring to view with equal clearness His second advent with power and glory. And while he sought to lead his people to Jesus of Nazareth as the Promised One, and to point them to His first coming in humiliation as a sacrifice for the sins of men, he taught them also of His second coming as a king and deliverer.

"'Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah,' he said, 'whose hands and feet were pierced, who was brought like a lamb to the slaughter, who was the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, who after the scepter was taken from Judah, and the legislative power from between His feet, came the first time; shall come the second time in the clouds of heaven, and with the trump of the Archangel' (*Joseph Wolff, Researches and Missionary Labors*, page 62) 'and shall stand upon the Mount of Olives; and that dominion, once consigned to Adam over the creation, and forfeited by him (Genesis 1:26; 3:17), shall be given to Jesus. He shall be king over all the earth. The groanings and lamentations of the creation shall cease, but songs of praises and thanksgivings shall be heard. ... When Jesus comes in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels,... the dead believers shall rise first. 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:32. This is what we Christians call the first resurrection. Then the animal kingdom shall change its nature (Isaiah 11:6-9), and be subdued unto Jesus. Psalm 8. Universal peace shall prevail.'—*Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, pages 378, 379. 'The Lord again shall look down upon the earth, and say, 'Behold, it is very good.'"—*Ibid.*, page 294

"Wolff believed the coming of the Lord to be at hand, his interpretation of the prophetic periods placing the great consummation within a very few years of the time pointed out by Miller. To those who urged from the scripture, 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man,' that men are to know nothing concerning the nearness of the advent, Wolff replied: 'Did our Lord say that that day and hour should never be known? Did He not give us signs of the times, in order that we may know at least the approach of His coming, as one knows the approach of the summer by the fig tree putting forth its leaves? Matthew 24:32. Are we never to know that period, whilst He Himself exhorteth us not only to read Daniel the prophet, but to understand it? and in that very Daniel, where it is said

that the words were shut up to the time of the end (which was the case in his time), and that 'many shall run to and fro' (a Hebrew expression for observing and thinking upon the time), "and knowledge" (regarding that time) "shall be increased." Daniel 12:4. Besides this, our Lord does not intend to say by this, that the approach of the time shall not be known, but that the exact "day and hour knoweth no man." Enough, He does say, shall be known by the signs of the times, to induce us to prepare for His coming, as Noah prepared the ark.'—*Wolff, Researches and Missionary Labors*, pages 404, 405.

"Concerning the popular system of interpreting, or misinterpreting, the Scriptures, Wolff wrote: 'The greater part of the Christian church have swerved from the plain sense of Scripture, and have turned to the phantomizing system of the Buddhists, who believe that the future happiness of mankind will consist in moving about in the air, and suppose that when they are reading Jews they must understand Gentiles; and when they read Jerusalem, they must understand the church; and if it is said earth, it means sky; and for coming of the Lord they must understand the progress of the missionary societies; and going up to the mountain of the Lord's house, signifies a grand class meeting of Methodists.' —*Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, page 96.

"During the twenty-four years from 1821 to 1845, Wolff traveled extensively: in Africa, visiting Egypt and Abyssinia; in Asia, traversing Palestine, Syria, Persia, Bokhara, and India. He also visited the United States, on the journey thither preaching on the island of Saint Helena. He arrived in New York in August, 1837; and, after speaking in that city, he preached in Philadelphia and Baltimore, and finally proceeded to Washington. Here, he says, 'on a motion brought forward by the ex-President, John Quincy Adams, in one of the houses of Congress, the House unanimously granted to me the use of the Congress Hall for a lecture, which I delivered on a Saturday, honored with the presence of all the members of Congress, and also of the bishop of Virginia, and of the clergy and citizens of Washington. The same honor was granted to me by the members of the government of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, in whose presence I delivered lectures on my researches in Asia, and also on the personal reign of Jesus Christ.'—*Ibid.*, pages 398, 399.

"Dr. Wolff traveled in the most barbarous countries without the protection of any European authority, enduring many hardships and surrounded with countless perils. He was bastinadoed and starved, sold as a slave, and three times condemned to death. He was beset by robbers, and sometimes nearly perished from thirst. Once he was stripped of all that he possessed and left to travel hun-

dreds of miles on foot through the mountains, the snow beating in his face and his naked feet benumbed by contact with the frozen ground.

“When warned against going unarmed among savage and hostile tribes, he declared himself ‘provided with arms’—‘prayer, zeal for Christ, and confidence in His help.’ ‘I am also,’ he said, ‘provided with the love of God and my neighbor in my heart, and the Bible is in my hand.’—*W.H.D. Adams, In Perils Oft*, page 192. The Bible in Hebrew and English he carried with him wherever he went. Of one of his later journeys he says: ‘I . . . kept the Bible open in my hand. I felt my power was in the Book, and that its might would sustain me.’—*Ibid.*, page 201

“Thus he persevered in his labors until the message of the judgment had been carried to a large part of the habitable globe. Among Jews, Turks, Parsees, Hindus, and many other nationalities and races he distributed the word of God in these various tongues and everywhere heralded the approaching reign of the Messiah.

“In his travels in Bokhara he found the doctrine of the Lord's soon coming held by a remote and isolated people. The Arabs of Yemen, he says, ‘are in possession of a book called Seera, which gives notice of the second coming of Christ and His reign in glory; and they expect great events to take place in the year 1840.’—*Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, page 377. ‘In Yemen . . . I spent six days with the children of Rechab. They drink no wine, plant no vineyard, sow no seed, and live in tents, and remember

good old Jonadab, the son of Rechab; and I found in their company children of Israel, of the tribe of Dan, . . . who expect, with the children of Rechab, the speedy arrival of the Messiah in the clouds of heaven.’—*Ibid.*, page 389.”
—*The Great Controversy*, p. 357–362

Joseph Wolff lived from 1795 to 1862 and his name most certainly would be added to the heroes of faith in Hebrews chapter 11 had he lived in Biblical times.

Even with his extensive missionary work and travels, he still was married. His first wife, Lady Georgiana Mary Walpole, was the sixth daughter of the Earl of Orford. He met her in 1826 through Edward Irving, who introduced him to her. She was a descendant of Robert Walpole, the first Prime Minister of Great Britain. They were married on February 26, 1827. Together they had a son, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff.

Wolff never managed to cope with English ways. His wife Georgiana, before going away for a few days, made him promise to put on a clean shirt every day. When she returned she found him wearing five shirts, one on top of the other!

Mary died on January 16, 1859 and in May 14, 1861 he married Louisa Decima, daughter of James King, rector of St. Peter-le-Poer, London. A year later, He was planning another great missionary journey when he died at Isle Brewers on May 2, 1862 at the age of 66, still in harness, still serving Christ as well as he knew how.

On May 24, 2018, the Army of the Lord lost a valiant soldier.

Brother Franco DiFranca was relieved of his duties in the battle of life by the Lord, for which he as a faithful soldier most of his life. Brother DiFranca is always remembered by his beautiful smile, his love of life, and his passion to serve God and be a blessing for others. He was always ready to lend a helping hand to those in need.

Let us pray for his family members who are grieving his loss and who are struggling to carry on the battle without his presence. The Lord will strengthen them to carry the torch that he has laid down and, in the near future, we pray that they can be reunited once more, never more to be separated. Let us all share that blessed hope.



HEALTH MATTERS:

HAPPINESS:

WHY SO ELUSIVE?

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

“God wants us to be happy.” —*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 27, 1900. “Our Saviour wants you to keep in close relation to Himself, that He may make you happy.” —*The Review and Herald*, July 29, 1890

If someone asked you to define happiness, what would you say? We all know how we feel when we are happy, but can it be put into words? Definitions of happiness are many, and most recognize that happiness is not just a positive mood, which can be fleeting, but encompasses so much more. One of the definitions of happiness is as follows: “More than simply a positive mood, happiness is a state of well-being that encompasses living a good life—that is, with a sense of meaning and deep satisfaction.” Happiness is having a worthwhile destination, and making steady progress towards it. It is an experience of joy and contentment, a spiritual experience of living every moment with love, grace, and gratitude. Each person has their own idea as to what their overall happiness looks like; therefore, each person’s happiness will reflect how they perceive their overall wellbeing. Most of us do not need a formal definition of happiness—we know it when it is there in our lives. Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher said about happiness: “Happiness does not consist in pastimes and amusements but in virtuous activities.” “Happiness depends upon ourselves; it is the meaning and purpose in life, the whole aim and end of human existence.”

How important is happiness to people? Most people would say that finding happiness is one of the biggest goals in their life. This is reflected in the number of self-help gurus, promotional speakers, seminars, all focused

on “finding happiness.” The pursuit of happiness was even written into the Declaration of Independence of the United States. Some people are able to discover what brings happiness more so than other people. However, human nature makes finding happiness harder than it should be. Often we hear the phrase, “true happiness”. Is this something that is more than just the standard definition of happiness?

How can we achieve happiness? Nowadays, it is not about finding that one book that talks about happiness. If we look in any bookstore, there are hundreds of books, all geared to seeking and finding happiness, and the definitions for happiness vary by the author. Are these books marketed to the poor countries, to war-torn countries, where citizens have had to escape from their homes, and live in displacement camps? No, these books are written for people in developed countries, for those who have adequate food, housing, clothing, employment, and who are not daily in fear for their lives. Why is there so much written about achieving happiness? Is it something that people are not able to find? Is there so much discontentment in this world, that happiness is difficult to find? Are people less happy now than in previous generations? Why is happiness so elusive? If happiness is a concept that many people struggle with, it must be more than a product of what we have; it must be so much more.

The problem is that many are seeking for happiness in the



wrong places. Modern society today has an obsession with money, wealth, and possessions. Having more is valued; however people are never satisfied with what they have. There is always something more that they want. They buy the biggest investment they can afford, the biggest house, the most expensive car, vacations, clothing, jewelry, and then they struggle to pay for these all. They want to be the top employee, so they put in long hours at work. And when it comes to their children, no want is ever denied; after all, they want their children also to be happy. And when they achieve a certain level of success, they start to move in social circles with other people who have what they have. Often people define their success in comparison to others. If they have more than the next person, they are satisfied. But, this is a losing battle. There will always be someone who has more.

People also look for happiness in their surroundings. They feel that if they lived in a certain neighbourhood, had a certain type of home, filled with luxury items, they would be happy. Then people use the phrases, “if only” or “when” to state the conditions that they would need to be in to be happy. For example, “if only I had...” or “if only I was with...” or “when I graduate...” or “when I find that person I want to marry...” Expecting that happiness will be achieved when certain conditions are met can lead to great unhappiness when those conditions do not materialize. This also places happiness in some future event, and does not allow happiness to exist in the present.

We are surrounded by advertising that promote products by implying that your life will be more fulfilling if you purchase the product they are trying to sell to you, while also, subtly or not, telling you that if you did not have such and such an item, you would be someone that others would look down on. The pursuit of the “good life” through the practice of what is known as “consumerism” has become one of the dominant global social forces. Consumerism states that “an increasing consumption of goods is economically desirable;” it is also “a preoccupation with and an inclination toward the buying of consumer goods.” The culture prevalent in the world is that you can be happy with “things.” However, repeated studies have established beyond doubt that once basic needs for food and shelter have been met, wealth and possessions have no influence at all on attaining happiness. We see in the news accounts of celebrities, the wealthy, those who appear to have achieved the pinnacle of success, suffer from depression and even commit suicide. Therefore, these sym-

bolis of success do not guarantee happiness. In research that looked at lottery winners, the increase in happiness is fleeting; people eventually revert back to their “baseline” happiness, which is more significantly shaped by genetics and personality.

Many feel that happiness is derived when doing something that is considered “fun” such as attending parties, entertainment; people feel they are happy when they experience the “high” brought on by drug use. However, after the fun is over, that rush of positive emotions also disappears.

Then there are those who always look on the negative side of life. Instead of counting their blessings, they focus on their problems. Often this negative attitude is labeled as a mental illness known as a “personality disorder.” Are these people truly sick or just unhappy because they always see life in terms of what it lacks?

How about selfish people, those who are always looking out for themselves, should they not be happy? After all, they recognize what they want and what they need, and they seek to always satisfy that. But, selfishness can never be satisfied; there is always that one thing that a selfish person does not have that they seek for. Selfish people also expect the people in their lives to treat them a certain way, to meet their needs and wants, and when that does not happen, they are miserable.

We find what we look for. Science calls this phenomenon as the brain’s “confirmation bias.” The brain tends to see what it believes to be true, and ignores that which does not confirm this belief. If the brain holds a certain image of what happiness is expected to be, and this is not occur, then happiness can become unattainable. Many people equate happiness to a set of circumstances that are unrealistic, which leads to major disappointment and unhappiness.

In recent years, scientific research has found that positive emotions such as happiness are good for us. They motivate us to pursue important goals and overcome obstacles, they connect us with other people, and they even prevent physical and mental illnesses and ailments. Since the 1990’s, a whole branch of psychology called positive psychology has been dedicated to identifying happiness, how to achieve it, and how to sustain it.

“Those who would find true happiness must have the blessing of Heaven upon all that they possess and all that they do. It is disobedience to God that fills so many

hearts and homes with misery.” —*The Advent Home*, p. 67

THE HAPPINESS STUDY

Every year, a study is done to determine the happiest countries in the world. Information is gathered from roughly 3000 respondents in each of more than 150 countries, to a number of questions, asking them to evaluate their current lives on a ladder where 0 represents the worst possible life and 10 the best possible. In the most recent study, the top 10 countries were: Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Switzerland, Finland, The Netherlands, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Sweden. The bottom ten countries were: Haiti, Yemen, South Sudan, Liberia, Guinea, Togo, Rwanda, Syria, Tanzania, and Burundi. The study also found that in many African countries, conditions are improving, but scores were lower based on often delayed and disappointed hopes for happier lives.

Three-quarters of the differences among countries were accounted for by six variables which address different aspects of people’s lives. They include: gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, healthy years of life expectancy, social support (having someone to count on in times of trouble), trust (perceived absence of corruption in government and business), perceived freedom to make life decisions, and generosity (amount of donations). In the example of the United States, we can see the effect of these variables on the country ranking. In the last happiness study, The United States dropped to 19th in the rankings. Income and healthy life expectancy both increased, however the four social variables all deteriorated—the United States showed less social support, less sense of personal freedom, lower donations, and more perceived corruption of government and business.

The interesting finding was that, despite the overall differences in happiness from the top to the bottom countries, 80% of the differences in happiness were found within countries, and even within regions in those countries. What this concludes is that, even in the world’s happiest countries, there are many unhappy people, and in the world’s unhappiest countries, there are many happy people. The effects of

social factors in improving the happiness of the lower ranked countries are larger than improvements in GDP per capita and healthy life expectancy. Increasingly, governments see happiness of their citizens as a goal when developing public policies, and as a means to determine how well their country is doing in terms of social progress. Measurements of the well-being of citizens are being used to track the progress of nations.

When looking at richer countries, within-county differences in happiness are not explained by income inequality but by differences in mental health, physical health, and personal relationships, again confirming that happiness is not based on the amount of goods a person has. The biggest single source of misery in developed countries is mental illness. Income differences matter more in poorer countries, but mental illness also is a major source of misery. Work is also a major factor affecting happiness. Unemployment causes a major fall in happiness, and even among those who work, quality of work can cause major differences in happiness.

“Godliness with contentment is great gain. Here is the true secret of happiness, and real prosperity of soul and body.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 542

WHAT DETERMINES HAPPINESS?

Research has determined that 50% of our propensity for happiness is inherited, and it is nearly impossible to modify our genes to boost our level of happiness. However, 40% of our ability to be happy is governed by our own choices, which implies that a significant part of happiness is under our own control. And finally, 10% of our happiness is based on circumstances, on external factors such as income, beauty, ability to purchase luxury items and travel the world. These external factors have the smallest influence on our overall happiness. Therefore, if people stopped blaming others, blaming the world and started looking to themselves as the author of their happiness, then they may find it. Included in the 40% of our level of happiness that we can control are changing our patterns of thinking, of behaving, and ways of reacting to situations, to improve our happiness.

Despite happiness only minimally affected by circumstances, there is a difference in happiness between people in differing circumstances. A re-



cent study looked at the happiness of citizens of the United States. Overall numbers showed that, currently 33% are very happy, 55% pretty happy, 11% are not too happy. Then, the study looked at specific circumstances of the study participants. When looking at the role that work or unemployment has on happiness, those who were retired had highest levels of happiness (38%), next came those who had full time work (33%); the least happy were people who were unemployed (18%). When it comes to the type of job that makes people happy, clergy were at the top of the list. Money can increase happiness because it can provide those comforts that reduce stress, yet rates of happiness have not kept up with the rise in income. With people who made over \$150,000 a year, 47% were happy. Of those who made less than \$30,000 a year, 23% were happy. Married people are generally happier than unmarried people. Married without children, 41% were happy; when married with children, 36% were happy, and single parents were least happy at 17%. These correlate to the challenges that people face when raising children. Across religions, and consistently over decades, those who attend church are happier than those who don't attend. 41% of those who attend church weekly are happy, compared to 28% of those who seldom or never attend. When it comes to age, seniors are the happiest among adults (38%), with those aged 18–24 are the least happy (27%). This reflects the pressures that the youth face in school, and then the challenges in finding work, which is often a struggle during today's economy.

While variables like socio-economic status, income, marriage, education, and religiosity are significantly associated with individual happiness, none typically accounts for more than 3% of the variation in happiness.

Scientists studied 300,000 people, tested their DNA, and their levels of well-being. There was a definite link between one's genes and feelings. Each of us has differences in our genes that are unlike anyone else's, that make us unique. These are referred to as gene variants. Scientists found three gene variants associated with happiness; two that accounted for symptoms of depression, and 11 locations on the genes that accounted for neurotic behaviours. Twenty areas were linked to happiness. What was also determined was that environmental factors (including what we eat) can influence how those genes express themselves (genes tell each cell how to function). Certain circumstances in life can cause genes to either be silenced or expressed over time. In other words, they can be turned off (becoming

dormant) or turned on (becoming active). Because of differences between individuals in our genes, and their ability to turn off or on, depending on the environment, this study suggests that it is helpful to customize health and education about happiness specific to each individual.

HAPPINESS AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Proverbs 17:22

Not only does happiness improve our outlook on life, and our general sense of wellbeing, happiness also improves our physical health. Studies show that the happiest people have an average heart rate of about six fewer beats per minute. This leads to a lower risk of heart disease and strokes.

In a 2010 study, for every one-point increase in positive emotions (on a scale of 1–5), a person's risk of heart disease drops by 22%. The immune system is stronger in happy people, reducing risk of diseases such as cancer, and infections. Pain levels associated with chronic diseases such as arthritis were less when people experienced positive emotions. Obesity is linked with lower emotional wellbeing; obese people are more likely to experience stress, worry, anger, and depression. The question is—what came first, unhappiness or obesity? They seem to influence each other. Unhappy seniors were twice as likely to die in the next five years than their happier peers. Better moods are linked to a longer life overall.



THE KEY TO TRUE HAPPINESS

If a large part of our happiness is under our own control, we do not need to be dependent on our genes and our environment to ensure happiness. What is the most significant personal choice that we all have the opportunity to make, to ensure that our life is filled with happiness? The Spirit of Prophecy tells us: "If happiness is drawn from outside sources and not from the Divine Fount, it will be a changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend on any circumstance in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living waters, and happiness and peace drawn from Him will never fail, for He is a well-spring of life." —*Faith and Works*, p. 88

CHILDREN'S CORNER:

Gossip



You would not expect that Christian people would say bad things about each other. Christians claim to be followers of Christ and Jesus never said bad things of others. The sad thing is that Christians do sometimes say bad things about each other. At Jenny and Paula's church, some of the kids gossiped a lot. Usually it was about silly stuff, but sometimes some of the kids were unkind to some of the other kids in the Children's Sabbath School class, even though Sister Nora, the teacher, talked to them a lot about Christian unity and loving each other. Gossiping is not love; that is one thing the children knew. But, sadly, it happens.

One day gossip got started that was really terrible. Paula heard it from Susan. Susan waited until the Children's Sabbath school class was over and whispered, "You know Jenny? Well, somebody at school saw her with an older boy and. . ." she continued to whisper things in Paula's ear that simply could not possibly be true. Jenny was a good girl and the rumour suggested she was being very naughty with a boy. Well, Paula did not repeat the details but she told her brother Edward about it and she was very worried.

"Jenny is one of our closest friends and she loves Jesus with all her heart. This kind of rumour could ruin her reputation and hurt her really badly," she said. But the rumour kept spreading and soon it got to Jenny. Then one day Paula saw Susan whispering in Jenny's ear. It just crushed her inside to see what happened next. Jenny burst into tears and ran from the Children's Sabbath School room and did not come to church for weeks.

Both Paula and Susan felt awful about it. But they did not say anything, even though they both imagined how Jenny was feeling, all alone at her house, thinking everybody thought she was such a sinful girl when she was not; the gossip was a big lie. That night Edward had a dream. It was really frightening and he woke up with a gasp and had to sit out in the living room with a glass of water to try to get it out of his head.

"I dreamed about the rumour that hurt Jenny last night, Paula," he told his sister the next day.

"What happened in your dream?" she was wanting to know.

"Well, we were at church and the children were all whispering that rumour to each other. Suddenly, the rumour jumped out of the mouth of Susan and became a terrible beast. It had a huge round body and a tiny little head but huge lips on the front. Its fur was long and full of tangles and dirt and filth because it never cleaned itself. It had legs like a duck with big huge feet that were covered with nasty black fur and he could run really fast all over, spreading himself, the rumour to everybody he could hunt down." Edward said, his eyes wide like he was dreaming it again.

"Then it started chasing all the children and if they could not run fast enough, he jumped on them and fell on them with his big nasty fat lips and put the rumour all over them so they could never get rid of it. Finally, it went to Jenny and when it got to her, it ate her completely up and she was gone and we never

saw her in Sabbath School again.” He finished. Both Edward and Paula’s hearts were racing from the dream. While it was a silly animal the damage the rumour did was so scary because they knew the damage was real.

“We will lose Jenny if we don’t do something. We have to tell Dad.” Paula concluded. As soon as she said that, Edward knew she was right. When their father got home from work, they told him everything. As soon as he heard that Jenny had stopped coming to church he called their mother in.

“We can’t let Jenny get hurt like this,” he said. “I am sure Jenny’s parents don’t know why she won’t go to church.” Then he told Mother to call Jenny’s parents and tell them what was going on; they wanted to fix the situation and not just ignore it. Edward and Paula were grateful for their parent’s willingness to help them. Then their father called Sister Nora and let her know what was going on and why Jenny had not been at church for a few weeks. Sister Nora agreed to take care of matters and confront the rumour face to face the next Sabbath.

“This rumour about Jenny is false,” she told the Children’s Sabbath School class. “You all know Jenny is a good girl. Satan uses rumours to destroy the church and if we don’t stop Satan, he is going to destroy someone we love, like Jenny. We aren’t going to stand for that, are we?”

“NO” the children answered. Sister Nora then welcomed Jenny back to the class.

“The weapon that defeats rumours and the devil is love. We all owe Jenny an apology and we need to pray that she forgives us, that we forgive each other and that God keeps us honest and helps all watch out for each other that rumours don’t hurt our brothers and sisters again.”

The prayer ended the rumour and Jenny was as happy as ever.

“I had another dream last night,” Edward told his sister the next day.

“About the rumour?” she asked.

“Yes. The rumour with

the furry feet walked into our Children’s Sabbath School class to attack more kids and it was faced with Sister Nora leading us all in prayer. It grabbed its chest and dropped dead right there on the spot. Then from its useless body, beautiful flowers started to grow and continued to grow until we couldn’t see the filthy beast at all, just the pretty flowers that grew from its body.”

So their Children’s Sabbath School class got stronger and grew closer because they knew what to do when God’s enemy tries to hurt someone in the church with a rumour. And now you know too, so if you see the rumour with the furry feet, you can kill him and share all the beautiful flowers that grow from his stomach with everyone in your class.

“The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.” Proverbs 26:22

“We think with horror of the cannibal who feasts on the still warm and trembling flesh of his victim; but are the results of even this practice more terrible than are the agony and ruin caused by misrepresenting motive, blackening reputation, dissecting character? Let the children, and the youth as well, learn what God says about these things: ‘Death and life are in the power of the tongue.’

“The spirit of gossip and talebearing is one of Satan’s special agencies to sow discord and strife, to separate friends, and to undermine the faith of many in the truthfulness of our positions.” –*The Adventist Home*, p. 440–441

“Cultivate the habit of speaking well of others.” –*The Ministry of healing*, p 492



Montreal, Canada Conference May 18-20, 2018




**Baptism of
Jayson
Consavan
At the
Montreal
Conference**

Togo



Tennessee, USA Youth Conference May 25-28, 2018





"If we make God our trust, we have it in our power to control the mind in these things. Through continued exercise it will become strong to battle with internal foes and to subdue self, until there is a complete transformation, and the passions, appetites, and will are brought into perfect subjection. Then there will be daily

piety at home and abroad, and when we engage in labor for souls, a power will attend our efforts. The humble Christian will have seasons of devotion which are not spasmodic, fitful, or superstitious, but calm and tranquil, deep, constant, and earnest. The love of God, the practice of holiness, will be pleasant when there is a perfect surrender to God." - *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 507