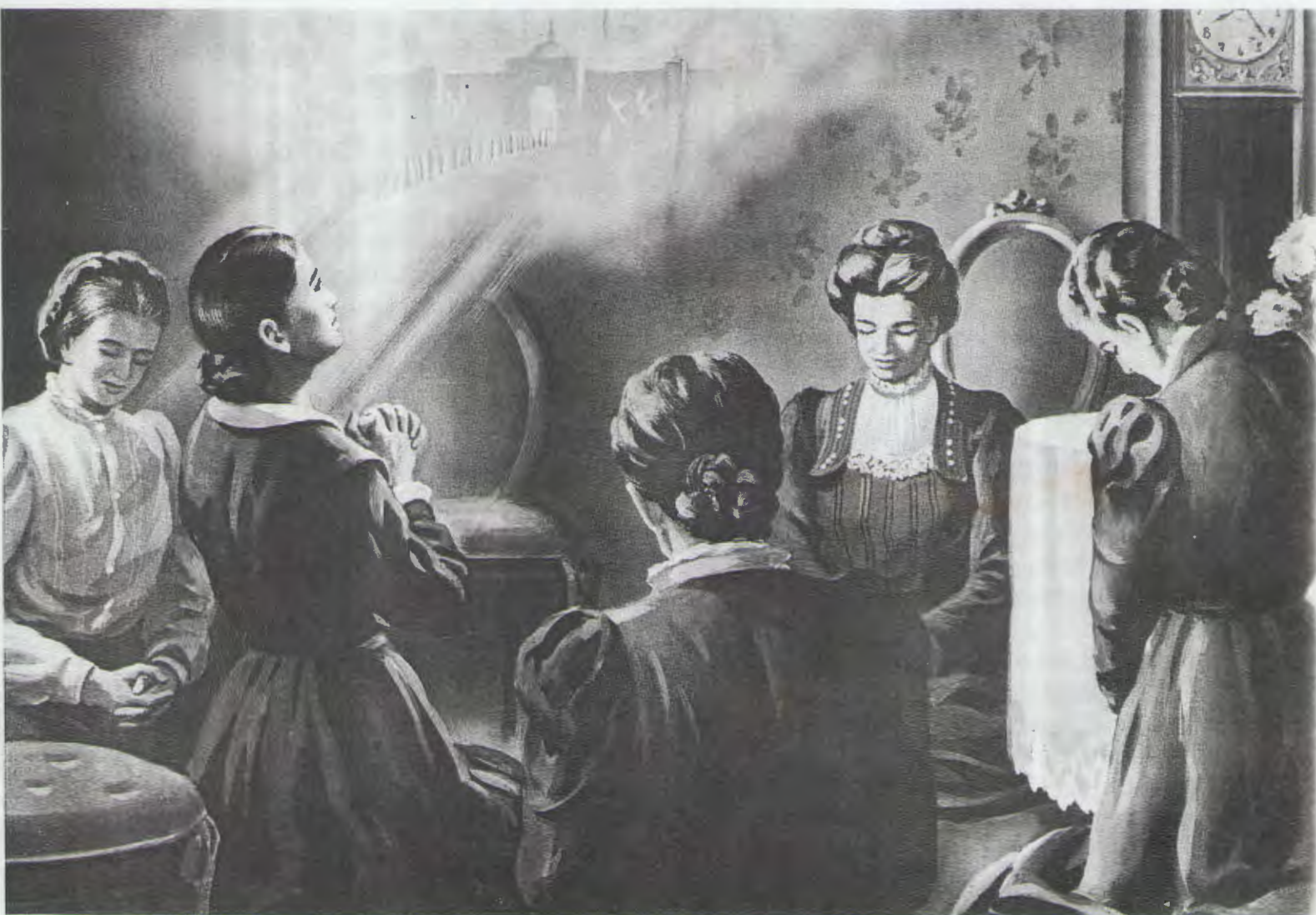


Canadian-Caribbean Union 

Messenger

Volume 5, Number 2

February 1998



**An artist's painting of Sister White
in Dec. 1844 seeing her first vision**

"Get Ready, Get Ready, Get Ready"

"Saith the angel, Get ready, get ready, get ready. Ye will have to die a greater death to the world than ye have ever yet died.' I saw that there was a great work to do for them and but little time in which to do it." EW, 64.

Our time is running out. The coming of Jesus is at the door, and yet many are unprepared to meet their God. Many, like the foolish virgins are sleeping only to wake up suddenly to the realization that the Lord is coming and they have no oil in their lamps, and to purchase oil is too late for them.

On the great ocean liner, Titanic, people were eating, drinking, dancing, laughing and not realizing that this was their last night of life. Moments later, 1500 men, women and children perished in the icy waters. These people were unprepared to meet their God. Death came upon them so unexpectedly.

Today we are not ignorant of the destruction that is coming upon the world. Warnings and descriptions of the coming doom are clearly presented to us in the Word of God. Signs of the times written by the hands of the prophets are being fulfilled all around us. The Catholic church with the protestant churches are working with the heads of the governments to enforce the Sunday laws. Many reports of these movements have reached our ears lately.

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

the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." Test. Vol. 6:18.

"Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the papacy. By a national act enforcing the false sabbath they will give life and vigour to the corrupt faith of Rome, reviving her tyranny and oppression of conscience." Last Day Events, 128.

"Soon the Sunday laws will be enforced, and men in positions of trust will be embittered against the little handful of God's commandment-keeping people." Last Day Events, 129.

"There are many who are at ease, who are, as it were, asleep. They say, 'If prophesy has foretold the enforcement of Sunday observance, the law will surely be enacted,' and having come to this conclusion they sit down in a calm expectation of the event, comforting themselves with the thought that God will protect His people in the day of trouble. But, God will not save us if we make no effort to do the work He has committed to our charge." RH, Dec., 24, 1889.

Brothers and sisters, we must wake up. The work that God has given us to do is to prepare ourselves. Our characters must reflect the image of Jesus fully. Our work is also to warn the world of the events before us. If we neglect this preparation and this work of warning the world, we will be lost. We will not receive the seal of the living God, but will be found wanting.

The work of Reformation must be done in our lives. Idols of this world must be thrown out and the soul temple must be purified. Now is the time for deep soul searching. Compare your life to the life of Christ and if in any point you are lacking do not rest until the victory is gained.

We read in the beginning that we must die to the world. This means we need to denounce worldly ambitions, entertainment, fashions and riches. Solomon called them all "vanity" and Paul called all worldly advantages as "loss for Christ". What would it profit us now even if we would gain the whole world when we are at the threshold of eternity? We have only a few more days left and yet so much to do.

There is a solemn testimony written to us as a warning: "The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to

derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death. The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat." Test. Vol. 5: 81.

From the church of God, from the Reform Movement many a bright star will go out into darkness. A multitude like a cloud will be blown away and only the ones that remain will receive the latter rain. The ones that remain will be humble members who never sought positions, but who would rather die than commit the smallest sin.

May God have mercy upon His people.

AMEN.



Committee members of Jamaican Field



God's Church in the Last Days

Stuttgart, Germany, November 30, 1997

Notes from the Lecture

By Larry D. Watts

The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy references used at the above lecture and cited in the article are presented for the readers' further study and reference.

"There are only two parties in our world, those who are loyal to God, and those who stand under the banner of the prince of darkness. Satan and his angels will come down with power and signs and lying wonders to deceive those who dwell on the earth, and if possible the very elect. The crisis is right upon us. Is this to paralyze the energies of those who have knowledge of the truth? Is the influence of the powers of deception so far reaching that the influence of the truth will be overpowered?" 7 BC 982.4.

Jesus often used a hermeneutic principle: "...The last shall be first, and the first last..." Matthew 20:16. Another principle of Bible interpretation is that of "first occurrence": The first place or time something happens, or a word is used, in the Bible is usually the definitive statement. With these two principles before us, we ask, "What was the first issue in the great controversy?" Isaiah 14:12-14. Ezekiel 28:2, 6-17; Matthew 2:13-18; 4:1-11; John 7:20; 8:30, 44; Revelation 12; etc, and EW 145 (for example), tell us that Lucifer and his followers "rebelled against the authority of the Son." Thus we can understand that the last and final issue of the great controversy is the "authority of Jesus." **True Sabbath [resting in Jesus] is the sign of accepting [or that we have accepted] His authority.**

"We need the authentic history of the origin of the earth, of the fall of Lucifer, and of the introduction of sin into the world." (RH 11-10-04) 2 MCP 742. As Satan introduced sin into heaven and earth, he seeks to introduce it into the individual and thus into the church. To do this, he needs to keep us as ignorant and blind as possible to his devices. 2 Corinthians 4:4.

When Satan was not included in the counsel to create man, he could no longer contain his growing jealousy of Jesus. It was his envy that brought on the crisis in heaven. "He became dissatisfied because all the secrets of God's purposes were not confided to him, and he entirely disregarded that which was revealed.... Now he seeks to imbue the minds of men with the same spirit [of discontent]." "It is a masterpiece of Satan's deceptions to keep the minds of men searching and conjecturing in regard to that which God has not made known.... It was thus that Lucifer lost his place in heaven." GC 523.

To mask his envy and jealousy of Christ, Satan introduced his rebellion in heaven with a form of pantheism. This hellish theory "pictures God, not as a great personal Being, but a mysterious essence—an impersonal influence pervading all nature including all the beings whom He had made." Satan "claimed that angels needed no law; but should be left free to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right...." After all, had not God made them? Then "their own wisdom was a sufficient guide.... All their thoughts were holy; it was no more possible for them than for God Himself to err." ST 01-09-79; PP 37 (see also GC 495). Instead of making the will and word of the Creator their great authority, the creature became supreme.

Many of the angels accepted the idea that they were free to determine for themselves what was right and wrong. The next step was logical: They did not need God, much less the authority of Jesus. "The

angels who fell were anxious to become independent of God.... They fell from their high estate through insubordination." 3T 418.

Satan introduced this same reasoning into Eden: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:5. Before telling them this, he uttered the first lie, "Ye shall not surely die!" (verse 4). Thus, connected with independence from God is the idea that one can sin and not pay-in other words, sin has no consequences.

On July 24, 1904, in a letter "To Our Leading Physicians," Sister White understood that in following the seductive sentiments of pantheism, which were being presented in the book *The Living Temple*, by J.H. Kellogg, many were "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1. "We have now before us the alpha of this danger. The omega will be of a most startling nature." AND "the omega would follow in a little while." 1 SM 197, 203. It was because of this, she said, that "we may have to remain here in this world because of insubordination many more years." Ev. 696.

The alpha of apostasy is the idea that is prevalent today in the New Age movement. It says you are your own god. Whatever is truth to you is your truth. Let each one decide for himself/herself what is right and follow that.

"In the rebellion of Korah is seen the working out, upon a narrower stage, of the same spirit that led to the rebellion of Satan in heaven.... Satan caused them to reject God as their leader, by rejecting the men of God's appointment....

"When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against the authority of Moses, they thought they were opposing only a human leader, a man like themselves; and they came to believe that they were verily doing God service. But in rejecting God's chosen instrument they rejected Christ; they insulted the Spirit of God." -PP 403, 635.

Korah's reasoning was much like that of Satan's in heaven- "All the congregation is holy...." Numbers 16:3.

As it was with Satan in heaven; with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden; with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; with J.H. Kellogg and almost every other rebellion, the alpha of apostasy is the idea that the creature has the right to put himself above the ordained authority of the Creator. **The omega is sure to follow the belief that one can sin and not pay.**

We see all these elements and more in the history of the church of the early 20th Century. The ideas of pantheism had "been accepted by so many as beautiful truth. But that which they think is light will lead them into dense darkness." SpTB #7 49, UL 336. But this was only an outward symptom of an underlying problem: Turning to man, instead of to God. "When we give glory to human agencies, when we have unlimited confidence in man, speaking of the excellence that we suppose him to possess, we worship we know not what." Ibid. Early in the century, the true condition of the professed people of God was revealed. "It is in a crisis that character is revealed." COL 412. The declaration "that we leave every man free to follow the dictates of his own conscience" heralded the sentiments of modern humanism. But God has consistently said, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." **God's church is those who agree with God.** But God has never said that you can sin and not pay. God's true church is those who preach and practice true liberty of conscience: Through the gift of God's Son on Calvary, man is free to serve Him or serve Him not. Jesus died to give us the power to make that choice ourselves. This is the Gospel. But God never said (and His true people will never say) that transgression

of the law is OK or find some excuse for sin. Jesus came to save us FROM sin, not to change the Ten Commandments into ten suggestions.

The message of Christ Our Righteousness encompasses the power to obey. When we reject that power, we have nothing left but to find some way to justify sin. Therefore, the most important question is not, "Am I in the right church?" The most important question is, "Am I in Jesus?" Jesus said clearly that He will gather His sheep into the one fold. John 16:10. And what is the fold? "The church... is the case which contains His jewels, the fold which encloses His flock [John 10:16]." 6T 261. "Who are these? God's denominated people, those who on this earth have witnessed to their loyalty, Who are they? Those who have kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; Those who have owned the crucified One as their Saviour." RH 08-04-04.

"But as for ourselves we are strictly denominational; we are sacredly denominated by God and are under His theocracy." 7T 109. Denomination means having a name or title, and when applied to a church, it is "a specified church or sect." Oxford English Dictionary.

God's church is that people who follow Jesus and live and work as He worked. If the Reform should learn anything from the way it was treated in 1914-1922, it is that it is important to go the Biblical way when dealing with differences of opinion. If the Adventist leadership had followed the instruction of Jesus and allowed open discussion on the subject of involvement of its members in the war, it would have saved the world many years of suffering. We still need to learn this lesson. God has laid out a way, and His people will go in that way. That means dealing with sin directly; not excusing it, not just talking about it, not ignoring it. Those who have the love of Jesus will not talk bad about sinners, but will go to them in humility and love and seek to restore. The gospel that brings salvation is to be heard by every soul, in every home, and through out every denomination, tribe, and nation. When we have the love of Jesus in our hearts, we have the courage to do for Him who has done all for us.

If we are going to be able to detect the devices of Satan in these last days, we need to be people of the word and be guided by the Holy Spirit. We must also move forward with a faith that works by love. Then we will find that "nothing is left unrevealed which is essential to a complete system of faith and a correct line of practice. Every duty that God requires at our hands is made plain.... None will err from the right path who meekly and honestly take the Bible as their guide, making it the man of their counsel." "Our only safeguard against the wiles of Satan is to study the Scriptures diligently," and "fully controlled by the Holy Spirit." 2MCP 784; 2SM 58.3 (2SM Chap. 6, pages 56-60 reveals that **"Our Safety Against Delusions" is not alone in sincerity or a theory of the truth, but "in the daily operation of the Spirit of God upon the heart,** which is manifested in outward a transformation of character," in an understanding of the doctrines, and in constantly looking to Jesus--Please read the whole); Australasian Record 04-15-12 (similar statements about being under the Holy Spirit are found in 3T 534; TM 514).

Summary:

When God in heaven honored Jesus above all others by including only Him in the planning counsel to create man, the envy which had been growing in Satan's heart overflowed into open rebellion. He told the angels that they were able to decide for themselves what was right and wrong. As for himself, he would no longer bow to the rule of God and respect the authority of Jesus as God's representative.

With this, open war occurred in heaven. One third of the angels followed Satan, but they lost heaven. Later Satan feigned repentance and desired reinstatement, but God said NO! With the creation of man,

Satan had the opportunity to prove whether his repentance was genuine or fallacious. If he had truly repented, he would have told Adam and Eve how dark and lonely it was out of God's presence, but he took another course and revealed his duplicity. Using the same pantheistic ideas he had used in heaven, he told Eve to follow her senses; and humanism was born in the idea that "In order to attain holiness, man has only to develop the power that is within him." 8T 291.

Today the people of God must meet these two deceptive ideas. One: that man is his own God; and two, that it is possible to sin and not pay. God's people are those who agree with God. It is only by a living relationship with Jesus that we have power to do God's will. So the most important question today is: "Am I in Jesus?" Those who are out of Jesus will need to excuse sin. Any who do this cannot claim to be the people of God.

What the Reform should always remember from the lessons of its painful birth is that following Jesus means being willing to give the opposition a fair hearing, but at the same time not conceding to sin. Like Christ and all His faithful followers, we must come to the point where we can endure the assaults of Satan's temptations, but not yield in a single instance to sin. (Cp. 4BC 1163.)



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Acceptable Prayers

Prayer is our connection with God, our only safety in this increasingly sinful world. Prayer is the secret of spiritual power. The strength acquired through prayer will prepare us for our daily duties and keep us from yielding to the temptations around us. For this reason, it is important for us to know that we are praying prayers that are acceptable to God.

We have heard many say that they believe that God listens and answers the prayers of everyone who prays to Him. However, the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy tell us that there are many prayers that do not reach any higher than the ceiling of the room where we are praying, these are the prayers that God does not hear nor does He answer them.

DISPLEASING PRAYERS

1) *"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men..."* Matthew 6:5. The Pharisees in Jesus' time had set times for prayers. They would pause wherever they were on the street and offer up these formal prayers in a loud voice for all to hear. Such worship for self-glorification, called for severe rebuke from Jesus. Public prayers are acceptable. However, making prayers public which should be spoken to God only in private is the work of a self-righteous individual, who hopes to gain praise from man and God. They were spoken to give others around them who heard them a high opinion of their piety. The prayer of the Pharisee in the parable of Jesus was full of self-praise. He judged his own character by the characters of other men. "I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." Luke 18:12. "His mind was turned from God to humanity and left him destitute of the divine blessing." COL p. 150 He was not humble but told the Lord all his good deeds. The pharisee stood and prayed to himself, and his prayer reached no higher than himself.

2) *"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."* Matthew 6:7. The heathen look on their prayers as having merit in themselves. They believe that the longer the prayer, the greater the merit with God. The Pharisees adopted this pagan idea of prayer having value in itself. They saw their prayers as being able to win favour with God. It is still the same with many Christians in the world today. They use a repetition of set, customary phrases while the heart feels no need of God. This is the same as the vain repetitions of the heathen. The most eloquent prayers are but idle words if they do not express true sentiments of the heart. We must be careful that we do not pray by rote the same prayers day after day without thinking about what we are saying.

3) *"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."* Prov. 28:9 *"When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin."* Psalms 109:7 Since 1844, when Jesus went into the most Holy place, "the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird." Sister White "saw great iniquity and vileness existed in the churches." With these people, "their prayers and exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God." They profess to be Christians and "over all their evil traits they throw the cloak of religion." EW 274 "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18 "Such petitions are prayers of form, lip service only, which the Lord does not accept." 4T 533. The Lord reads the hearts of all who pray to him. If we continue in sin, the Lord will not hear our prayers. We can communicate to the Lord with our mouths and with our tongues, but if our heart is not connected with God, our communications are in vain. Ps. 66:17. "I cried unto him with my mouth..." Those around us may see an outward act of piety, but God knows the heart and does not answer these prayers. "Prayer and preaching without exercise of living faith in God will be in vain." 5T 228

In the example of **Jacob** wrestling with the angel, had he not previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and preserved his life.

In Joshua's time, the army of Israel was defeated when they went against the Amorites. **Joshua** prayed to God to ask why this had happened. God told Joshua that there is work for him to do before his prayer can be answered. "And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which even I commanded them: for they have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff." Joshua 7:10,11. Achan had taken spoils after one of their battles which God had forbidden. As long as this sin was in their midst, the Lord would not be with them in battle and their enemies were able to defeat them.

"Praying and sinning, sinning and praying, their lives are full of malice, deceit, envy, jealousy, self-love. The prayers of this class are an abomination to God." 4T 534. Their prayers are mere lip service to God, as they have no sincere longing for Him. God reads our hearts and understands our motives and the reasons why we pray.

*"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the
Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18*

4) Another example of prayers not answered by God are prayers for **healing** when the one who is sick has suffered ill health through bad habits of eating and drinking and refuses to change his habits. Their transgression of nature's laws produces a sure result. Their prayers will not bring a cure for them. It is necessary for them to obey the laws of God and nature. Only by obeying God will they be healed. For others to pray urging healing for these sick ones without their submission to God's will is not appropriate. It is important that our petitions for healing not be in the form of a command. Many times it is not the will of God that someone be healed. We need to form our petitions by asking that God's will be done, and not that God concede His will to ours. We all have heard of examples of people praying for healing without asking that it be God's will. The individual is restored to health, and subsequently leaves God and loses his soul. Yet, had he died, he would have been counted with the saved. Many have expected that God would keep them from sickness because they have asked Him to do so. But God does not regard their prayers because their faith was not made perfect through works. "Those who will gratify their appetite, and then suffer because of their intemperance, and take drugs to relieve them, may be assured that God will not interpose to save health and life which are so recklessly periled." MM 14. God knows that if they should be restored to health, they would again sacrifice it upon the altar of unhealthy appetite.

PRAYER CAN NEVER TAKE THE PLACE OF DUTY

If men don't perform the duties that God asks of them, their prayers are not answered. "Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promises while they do not comply with the conditions, insult God." COL 143.

Sis. White also brings out the question--"Have we been honest with God or robbed Him in tithes and offerings?" God is the giver of every blessing. Thus, He claims a portion of all we possess. But if we withhold from Him that which is His own, how can we claim His blessing? If we are unfaithful stewards of earthly things, how can we expect Him to entrust us with things of heaven? "It may be that here is the secret of unanswered prayer." All the promises of God are on condition of obedience. "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest not knowledge?" Isa 58:3. The people of God mentioned here are in the habit of praying and they delight in religious exercises, yet there is a lack. They see that God does not hearken to them and they are wondering why? Their prayers are not being answered; their zealous, earnest efforts are not observed and they earnestly inquire why the Lord gives them no blessings? It is not from any neglect on their part in religious service. But, while professing godliness, they do not bear fruit to the glory of God. Their works are not what they should be. They are living in neglect of positive duties. Unless these are performed, God cannot answer their prayers. We can do all the things that God requires of us in our religious exercises, yet if

we neglect the performance of doing good works, all the prayer and fasting will avail us nothing. Isa. 58 goes on to let the people know what their duty is. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer." v.6-9.

Jonah tried to pray while running away from the Lord. He ran from the duty that God had given him and took a ship in the opposite direction that he was supposed to go. A storm came up and threatened to sink the boat and the mariners asked Jonah to pray that they not perish, thinking that he was a man of God. But "the prayer of the man who had turned aside from the path of duty brought no help." Jonah realized that the others were in peril because God was displeased with him, so he asked to be thrown overboard in order that the mariners' lives would be spared. He could not help them with his prayers because God did not hear him.

REVERENCE IN PRAYER

Reverence for the name of God should be shown in our prayers. We should never speak the name of God lightly. In prayer, its frequent or needless repetition should be avoided as it then becomes commonplace. We are to use God's name in reverence and awe. The words "God Almighty," used by some in prayer in a careless, thoughtless manner is displeasing to God. You have heard people pray who use God's name after every sentence. This is not acceptable to Him and He doesn't answer those prayers. "While praying, many use careless and irreverent expressions which grieve the Holy Spirit and cause their petitions to be shut out of heaven." EW 70. To grieve the Holy Spirit shows how irreverence in prayer is a serious sin.

LONG PRAYERS

"Many offer prayer in a dry, sermonizing manner. These pray to men, not to God. . . All such prayers are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. They are made no account of in heaven. Angels of God are wearied with them as well as mortals who are compelled to listen to them." Sister White calls these prayers "tedious" and brings out that "such prayers God does not hear." Mention is made of those people who spend 15-30 minutes praying during meetings when in reality "One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer." Loud and long prayers exhaust the strength and vitality. "One half that was said would have been better than more." Those who need to have long discourses of prayer in public are those who neglect secret prayer. "They hope to pray themselves into the favour of God." 2T p. 581,582

SPEAKING CLEARLY

Another important aspect of public prayer is that those who pray must pronounce their words properly and in clear, distinct, even tones. Prayer is power for good. But prayer is not what it should be because of the defective voices of those who utter it. "Satan rejoices when the prayers offered to God are almost inaudible" Prayer is used for communicating the precious treasures of his truth to people, and if they are unable to hear it, the prayer is in vain. So, when we are asked to pray in church, we should not take our duty lightly. God requires us to pray in a manner that is pleasing to Him.

MERELY ASKING

Many pray to ask God for earthly blessings. He does not answer these prayers, in order to show us the evil in our hearts and the need for His grace. "Our prayers are not to be selfish asking, merely for our own benefit." COL 142. Our mission in the world is not to please ourselves. We are to ask of God so that we can receive that

which we can use to glorify Him. Those who cease to work in God's vineyard lose the theme for their prayers, and then their prayers become selfish and personal.

There are those who, in the face of the most compelling commands of God, will follow the inclinations of their own hearts and then pray to God, hoping that God will consent to allow them to go against his expressed will. The Lord is not pleased with such prayers. We need to follow the will of God, and not deviate from it. Often, God grants men's desires and answers these prayers. We know of the example of Israel, who demanded a king "like all the other nations." In granting them their desires, He hoped that through the bitter experiences that followed they would be led to realize their folly and repent of their sin. They ignored all the warnings of Samuel telling them of the consequences they could expect, but they wanted to be like the rest of the world. These prayers, although unacceptable to God, are answered for our learning.

Prayer is a way for us to renew our physical and spiritual strength. We are cautioned against hurried prayers where we do not wait on God for our renewing. Our lives are busy, and how often do we rush our worship time as we hurry from place to place. If we continue this way, we will soon become weary and our spiritual lives will suffer.

Christ has given us an example to follow in his communication with His Father while he was on this earth. In the days of His ministry, He often went to a solitary place to pray for strength, especially in the time leading up to His crucifixion. He always prayed, "Thy will be done..."

Prayer to a Christian is like breathing. Without it we soon die spiritually. We need to ensure that our prayers are being heard by God and not being said in vain. Let us remember the counsels mentioned and to "pray without ceasing" is my wish and prayer. AMEN. Helen Marttinen



The new canvassing books are now available at the IMS Publishing

TO LIVE LIKE YOU ARE DYING

There is a song that I have heard many times that has a special message that causes me to think. The first verse goes: "What if this would be the **year** when Jesus comes? The year that we've been waiting for so long. . . . We'd have so little time to get our lost ones won, if this would be the year when Jesus would come. . . ." This is the best that I can make out the words on the cassette. The second verse begins with, "What if this would be the **day** when Jesus comes? The day that we've been waiting for so long...." And finally the 3rd verse hits even closer home, "What if this would be the **moment** Jesus comes? The moment we've been waiting for so long....."

Yes, what *IF* this were the year, the day, or the moment when Jesus comes? How would we react? Maybe we think that Jesus won't come for at least another 5 years, we have time. But, today Jesus could come for you. This may be the last day He grants you to prepare for eternity. Many lives have been taken unexpectedly through accidents of some sort that cut short a person's life in their prime. No one expected the end to come so soon. This person perhaps had a promising and bright future. How many young people I read about in the newspapers every week, sacrificed by the careless neglect of a person who drank too much and thought themselves competent to drive - or some other sort of accident. Many lament the loss of this young person. I know of one such young man who went to the same high school as I did. Shortly after we graduated he was riding his motorcycle and a careless motorist, neglecting to look carefully, turned out into traffic, hitting him and ending his life. So sad. If this person had known the Lord and been living a righteous life, the tragedy wouldn't be nearly so bad. We would meet this person again at the gates of paradise. But this young man loved the ways of the world and met with a tragic end. If we, as parents, would prepare our young people today, then no matter what Satan may try; he may even be allowed to kill the body, yet he can't touch the soul that is hid in Christ.

How would you react if you contracted a fatal illness like cancer and were told that you only have a month to live? Would you live your life any differently than you are right now? One Christian friend, when contemplating that question responded with this: "While I was driving to work, I was thinking what I would do if I had just been diagnosed with cancer and was given one month to live. I was thinking of something like stomach cancer. I thought about what I would do. I would not come here to work anymore because my last 30 days would be wasted in this humdrum job. Then I thought I would try to make things right with all the people I have offended and right all the wrongs that I could. Then I would spend the last days confessing my sins to God, and then do the best that I could do with my time. I thought I would go to church and tell others about the fact that I was going to die, how short life is, and that they should be more serious because their time is coming. Then I thought I would try to help those who were sick, to make them feel happier and tell them that I was about to die, but it's okay because I have come to terms with Jesus and that there is a great hope of eternal life. In the last month of life I would probably do more good than I had in my entire life."

If this person was given a month to live, at least the person would have the opportunity to make right what he had done wrong in his life. What about those who die suddenly? How can those who are not given the opportunity, make their peace with Jesus? Would it not be better for each person to live as though they were going to die shortly; whether it be a month, or a week, or even today? In reality if we are living in close communion with Jesus we would not need to change our ways when we hear of the possibility of death. Our natural life was already a life of self-sacrificing labour for others.

When this happens in a person's life, where he is given only a short time to live, it is often called a "death-bed" confession. Often this is what it takes for the Lord to wake some people up to the reality of salvation and eternal destruction. They are living so much for this world and ignoring all the messages that the Lord has been sending them over the years that the Lord has to do something to get their attention. When other means have failed it may take a terminal illness for the Lord to rouse us. People will react by either confessing and making things right, or by cursing God and pleading that it be taken away. We cannot judge a person's motives in this situation. Some confess only for fear of death and punishment, while others truly confess their life of sin and wish that they could make right what they have done wrong in their lives in the past. Only in eternity will we know the difference. Should they be miraculously cured the truth will be seen. Those that confessed for fear of punishment would continue on in their lifestyle of sin, while those that were truly repentant would acknowledge the goodness of God in the preservation of their lives and devote themselves to His service for the rest of their lives.

A famous saying goes:

"Live for this world as if you will live forever, and live for the other world as if you will die tomorrow."

Sometimes it may not be a terminal illness that would result in death. Maybe just an illness or ailment that will cause your life to be restricted to an extent. It is still a wake up call from the Lord. I am reminded of our dear Brother Johnny Cortez in New York City. He is paralyzed from his neck down and spends every day flat on his back in bed, in his own apartment. He has a health care worker come and take care of his daily needs. He is one of most cheerful people I have ever met. He ended up in this situation when he was in the world. He was not living a very good life and spent much time with companions that were living on the fringes of the law. One day a man emptied a gun into the back of his neck, intending to kill him over an argument during a card game. By the grace of God, Br. Johnny's life was spared even though he was far from knowing his Master. His spinal cord was severed, but this is what it took for Br. Johnny to find the Lord. He rejoices in his affliction because he knows that had it not been for that gun shot, he would not know the joy and peace of serving the Lord, and have the hope of eternal life. He would still be lost in the world. Someday he will know true joy and physical freedom. He will be able to walk, run and jump with the rest of us in God's eternal kingdom.

I recently read a book about Fanny Crosby - the famous blind poet. She wrote over 8,000 poems in her lifetime and many were put to music. She never lamented the doctor's error in causing her blindness when she was a child. She was so bubbly and energetic to her final days, always giving and helping others that she said, had she been given sight like the rest of us, she would not have led as useful a life as she did. Her sight would have been a curse to her. She thanked God that He gave her blindness because that is exactly what she needed for her spiritual welfare.

I have also read stories where people have gone through life-threatening situations of one sort or another and afterwards they have a greater appreciation for life. Also I notice that those that are handicapped in some way or another have a greater appreciation for life. They may be missing something, be it sight, hearing, a limb, or paralysis, they have learned to not look at the negative but have a greater appreciation for that which they do have. They don't look at what is missing, they look at what is there and use that to the best of their ability.

In every trial, in every situation in life, God has a lesson for us to learn. Maybe we already are serving the Lord and we become ill. It may not be a wake-up call, but a test. We don't know the reasonings

of God but if we truly learn to love Him, we can accept whatever comes our way, even if it means that our life is going to be over soon.

SPIRITUAL CANCER

There is even a more dangerous ailment than any physical ailment and that is, "Spiritual Cancer." Cancer is a disease that slowly attacks the cells in the body. Slowly, imperceptibly at first, destroying the person. Spiritual cancer is perhaps not detected at first, but many Christians have spiritual cancer without realizing it. Slowly this spiritual cancer will kill the spiritual life in the person. They may still be alive bodily, but spiritually dead. As long as a person keeps on willingly sinning, (while knowing better) he is feeding that cancer. That cancer will eat the spiritual life and finally eat away the eternal life. It might be only a month or two before the person is spiritually dead, never to be wakened. He has grieved away the Holy Spirit. Once a person has come to this point, his conscience is "seared with a hot iron." Spiritual life has been killed. Resisting the Holy Spirit is very dangerous. The Holy Spirit is resisted when the sin is cherished.

People today tend to be more health conscious. They try to find all kinds of cures for their temporal flesh to preserve their life on this earth, while at the same time they are killing themselves spiritually.

HEALING

Often when people are ill, there is a cure but the remedy is distasteful and disagreeable. They want to be cured but don't want the medicine. Yet it must be taken if we want to be cured. There is also a cure for Spiritual cancer but many don't like the cure. "They desire to be like Christ, but wish to avoid the poverty and crucifixion. They would gladly be with Him in glory, but do not love to come to Him through much self-denial and tribulation." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 650 The rich young ruler had spiritual cancer. He came to the great Master Healer for healing but he didn't like the remedy. ". . . go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Mat. 19:21 This man "went away sorrowful: for he had great possession." v.22

Is it enough merely to seek for the remedy? Do we go from doctor to doctor and passively check out what they have to offer? Physically that would be foolish. Were we in a life and death situation we would earnestly seek for the healing and apply the medicines given to us. Spiritually, it is equally foolish. "Those that merely seek to enter in will never be able. The entire Christian life of many will be spent in no greater effort than that of seeking, and their only reward will be to find it an utter impossibility for them to enter in at that strait gate. . . . The agonizing ones are the only ones who will urge their passage through the strait gate and narrow way that leads to life eternal, to fullness of joy and pleasure forevermore." Ibid, p. 480, 479 "He is a perfect and holy example, given for us to imitate. We cannot equal the pattern; but we shall not be approved of God if we do not copy it and, according to the ability which God has given, resemble it." Ibid, p. 549

Sometimes we are given a choice of medications and we have to choose. Recently, someone we know well found a lump in her breast. The doctors have given her several options: she can either have a complete mastectomy or since the lump is not that big, she can opt for a lumpectomy. There is also the option of chemotherapy to reduce the lump. She could spend her days in self pity, not knowing which way to go. As time goes on the cancer is slowly growing. She had to make a decision quickly. This is the type of decision you can't waver over. She has finally decided to first try the natural way. Altering her diet and lifestyle and using various herbs and natural remedies. But she was given choices.

In our spiritual life we too must not waver. "Some persons make their religious lives a failure because they are always wavering and do not have determination. They are frequently convicted and come almost up to the point of surrendering all for God; but failing to meet the point, they fall back again. While in this state the conscience is hardening and becoming less and less susceptible to the impressions of the Spirit of God. His Spirit has warned, has convicted, and has been disregarded, until it is nearly grieved away. God will not be trifled with. He shows duty clearly, and if there is a neglect to follow the light, it becomes darkness." Ibid, p. 263 Spiritually, we have only 2 choices to make, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21 Many are choosing Baal today; choosing to follow the gods of this world instead of the true and living God. The spiritual cancer is eating them away.

Then there are others who can't be bothered. It is too cumbersome to apply the remedy both spiritually and physically, "Some thought that too much was expected of them; and, instead of cheerfully moving forward to do what they could, they sat down in Satan's easy chair and refused to do anything." Ibid, p. 638. It may take a terminal illness to wake them up from this easy chair. Often, because we do not see what is happening "behind the scenes" we tend to forget the great battle that is being waged for our souls. "If you could see the pure angels with their bright, searching eyes intently fixed on you, watching to record how the Christian glorifies his Master or could you observe the exulting, sneering triumph of the evil angels, as they trace out every crooked way, and then quote Scripture which is violated, and compare the life with this Scripture which you profess to follow but from which you swerve, you would be astonished and alarmed for yourselves." Ibid, p. 171. I heard a preacher once say that Satan has two sign posts. The first one says, "Still Time". He is presenting that to the world today. Soon, very soon, he will turn it around and show the other side, which reads, "Too Late."

When we finally decide that God's way is the best way and realize that we have wandered in the wilderness long enough, we will want to pick up the cross that Jesus has laid before us. "Self-denial and the cross lie directly in the pathway of every follower of Christ. The cross is that which crosses the natural affections and the will." Ibid, p. 651 "The cross, the cross; lift it, . . . and in the act of raising it you will be astonished to find that it raises you, it supports you. In adversity, privation, and sorrow it will be a strength and a staff to you. you will find it all hung with mercy, compassion, sympathy, and inexpressible love. It will prove to you a pledge of immortality." Ibid, p. 47

Though we have sinned, God will have mercy and pardon, "Be not discouraged; be not faint-hearted. Although you may have temptations, although you may be beset by the wily foe, yet if you have the fear of God before you, angels that excel in strength will be sent to your help, and you can be more than a match for the powers of darkness." Ibid, p. 591

LIVE EACH DAY AS YOUR LAST

We are counselled to live each day as though it were our last. We are to "live like we are dying."

"Many say, "If I knew Jesus would come in five years, I would make it my first business to win souls to Christ; for this would be the all-important consideration." And these very persons may not live two years, or even one. We should first seek God, and his holiness. In his wise providence we are incapable of looking into the future, which often causes us disquietude and unhappiness. But one of the greatest evidences we have of the loving-kindness of God is his concealment of the events of the morrow. Our ignorance of tomorrow makes us more vigilant and earnest today. We cannot see what is before us. Our best-laid plans sometimes seem to be unwise and faulty. We think, "If we only knew the future!" but God would have his children trust in him, and be ready to go where he shall lead them. We know not the precise

time when our Lord shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven, but he told us that our only safety is in a constant readiness, -- a position of watching and waiting. Whether we have one year before us or five, or ten, we are to be faithful to our trust today. We are to perform each day's duties as faithfully as though that day were to be our last." *Review and Herald*, Oct. 25, 1881

If we live in this manner when our lives are taken, it will not be such a tragedy. It is merely a resting period for us in the grave before the great and wonderful day that we have looked for so long. May you, dear reader, be found watching and waiting, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest labour for the coming of our Redeemer in the clouds of glory.

AMEN

Wendy Eaton



Brother George Gowie with his wife and baby



Sisters Kathy and Nataly presenting a duet



Brother Chester Cosby Working in the Printshop

Field Conference in Jamaica

The Jamaican Field Conference was held from Dec. 25-28th, 1997. The theme of the conference was "Be ye reconciled to God". 2 Cor. 5:20. During this time the Jamaican field and three local churches were organized. We received rich blessings from God at this conference. Both brothers and sisters took part in this conference with great enthusiasm.

Brother Moodie Henry delivered a talk on current events and the church--its characteristics and role. Br. McNish gave a very deep and interesting talk on health. The children's, youth and singing programs were enjoyed by everyone. Sis. Marlene Campbell welcomed the Sabbath; Sis. Elliot and Sis. Campbell were the Sabbath School teachers. The Divine Service was taken from the theme of the conference, "be ye reconciled to God". In the afternoon we talked about proper Sabbath-keeping and stewardship. Baby Paul Horatio Daley was dedicated before the divine service.

Br. Derrick Hayle and his wife, Soveal Ann were baptized at the conference. After we welcomed the new members into the church, the Lord's Supper service was conducted. Sis. Wallace closed the Sabbath. The program, "Let's Talk" was led by Br. Gowie. The conference was a wonderful blessing for all of us and God's spirit was with us.

The Jamaican Field has three churches and one full time worker. This field needs more help, workers, finances and books, especially hymn books. The brothers and sisters said many thanks to Br. Timo Martin for sending books from the publishing house.

Please pray for the Jamaican field. AMEN.

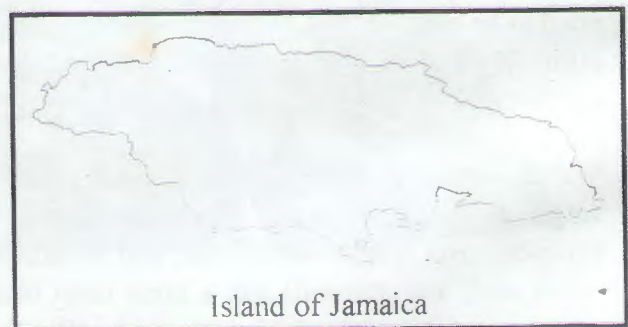
Br. P. Kanagarajah

Jamaican Mission Field Officers for the Year 1998

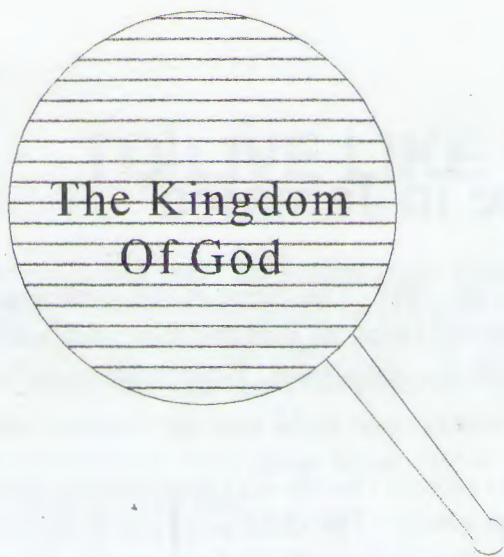
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|-------------------|-----------------------|
| President | Br. George Gowie |
| Vice President | Br. Moodie Henry |
| Treasurer | Br. Michael McNish |
| Secretary | Sis. Marlene Campbell |
| Missionary Leader | Sis. Elan Gordan |
| Youth Leader | Sis. Karlene Gowie |

Field Committee:

Br. George Gowie
Br. Moodie Henry
Br. Michael McNish
Sis. Marlene Campbell
Sis. Elan Gordan



Island of Jamaica



THE SEARCH

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”
Matthew 6:33

Everybody today is in search of happiness in their lives. What are we seeking for today that could give us happiness? Often after a couple gets married they notice that the happiness that they were expecting to find is not there. Please don't get me wrong, for those of us that are still single we should look forward to getting married some day. Everyday problems happen in the best of marriages. "For better or worse, until..." I have witnessed this promise for many. Thanks to God, He has kept them together.

Let us ask ourselves what it is that we are looking for? Is it:

wealth? Being rich would bring us a lot of tension, not to mention problems as well;

honour? Honour could make us proud.

recognition? It is fleeting; you will be forgotten by subsequent recognition of others.

None of the above give us true happiness. They can provide us only a very brief moment of joy that vanishes away when we daily confront the hardships and troubles if we choose to follow a worldly life. True happiness is only found in following Christ and doing God's will. By taking one step at a time, day by day, not looking back but looking forward to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we will be able to overcome every temptation.

Do you remember when Peter tried to walk on the waters of the sea of Galilee? "But straightaway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come." Matt. 14:27-29. Would it have been possible for Peter to walk on the water if he would have kept his eyes on Jesus? "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13. Peter started to sink and he cried as he sank, saying, "Lord, save me". If Peter had kept looking at Jesus he would have reached Him. By keeping our eyes upon Jesus at all times we will be able to accomplish every task in our lives.

We should not keep looking to our past, unless it is to see whether we have progressed. God has forgiven us our past sins. It is written in Proverbs 28:13. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. But whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Consider also what Jesus said, and you will feel a great calm like flowing waters within your soul after you have experienced this. John 4:14, Jesus said... "But the water springing up into everlasting life." This is what you feel after confessing your sins to God. Your conscience is clear now? What could be better than having a clear conscience? "How much more shall the blood of Christ... purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb. 9:14.

In order to maintain that stream of living water flowing within you, let us consider what Sis. White wrote:

"Walk continually in the light of God. Meditate day and night upon His character. Then you will see His beauty and rejoice in His love. You will be uplifted, as if borne by everlasting arms. With the power and light that God imparts, you can comprehend more and accomplish more than you ever before deemed possible." MH, 331-2.

"We need constantly a fresh revelation of Christ, a daily experience that harmonizes with His teachings. High and holy attainments are within our reach. Continual progress in knowledge and virtue is God's purpose for us. His law is the echo of His own voice, giving to all the invitation, 'come up higher. Be holier still.' Every day we may advance in perfection of Christian character." MH, 325.

We need to meditate Christ's character daily. We will be able to reflect Christ's character in ourselves. Like the moon receives the reflection from the sun, allow the sun of righteousness, Christ Jesus, to work in you. By reflecting to others His character, we make those around us partakers of the many blessings that we gain through Him. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12:14.

Let us refer back to what was mentioned in the beginning of this article about wealth, honour and recognition. The Bible tells us that it's possible to have all three by faith through Christ Jesus.

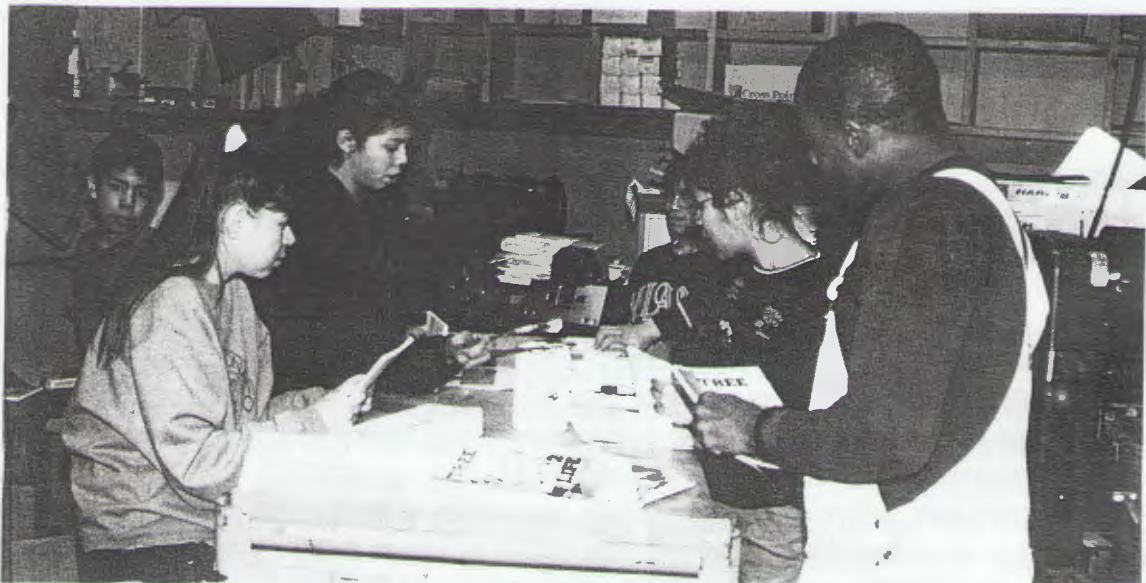
Wealth--Eph. 2:7 "...He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace..."

Honour--John 12:26. "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

Recognition--Revelation 7:13-15. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and have made them white in the Blood of the Lamb."

May the Lord be with you on your way to the everlasting kingdom of God, is my wish and prayer.
AMEN.

Your brother in the faith,
George A. Williams



Working in the Printshop



Current Scene



"Global warming: Here come the bugs:" (*Vancouver Sun*, Nov. 22, 1997)

"A rise in average planetary temperature—even by as little as one or two degrees over the next century—will expose vast populations in temperate regions of Europe, North America and Asia to exotic diseases previously restricted to a narrow tropical zone.

"In Florida, where public health officials are battling a tenacious regional outbreak of a mosquito-borne virus that can cause fatal brain inflammations, even Orlando's Disney World has been forced to take precautions. Hotel pools, water parks, golf courses, fishing and campfire areas are now closed to tourists during evening hours when the mosquitoes' bite is on.

"And Caribbean cruise ships now avoid ports where mosquito-transmitted dengue fever is prevalent, placing the region's \$12 billion US tourist industry at risk...

"Malaria and cholera—both associated with rising water temperatures—have returned to Europe with a vengeance on the heels of the hottest summers in recorded history.

"Europe had 200,000 malaria cases in 1995. The World Health Organization predicts millions of new sufferers by 2000. The range of malaria mosquitoes already extends as far north as Britain. Meanwhile, in the last four years, the number of registered cholera cases—a disease once thought eradicated—increased ninefold.

"North American public health authorities have similar headaches. Malaria outbreaks occurred in New Jersey in 1991 and in New York in 1993. Since 1980, mosquito-borne encephalitis epidemics have occurred in Florida, Mississippi, New Orleans, Texas, Arizona, California and Colorado."

To paraphrase a recent best-seller, *Outbreak*, (which tells the true story of the fears of bacteriological warfare in Washington, D.C. recently): With all of the mutation explosion of tropical diseases into new and more virulent forms, (Dengue, Malaria, Ebola, Yellow Fever, even Tuberculosis and AIDS) it seems that the earth has about reached the extent of what its own "immune system" can take and is about to vomit out its inhabitants.

Only those, who have obeyed the voice of the Lord in eating and drinking to His honor and glory, will have the physical, mental and spiritual strength to bear the pressures, danger and ugliness of the last days. May the Lord help us to discern His hand working in our lives and cooperate with Him in taking every possible precaution and having done that to leave the results in God's hands. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 5:23 "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation." Psalm 91: 5-7, 9

"AIDS ON THE MOVE:" (From the *Surrey News Leader*, November 29, 1997)

"A report released this week by a United Nations agency and the World Health Organization says HIV-infection rate is more than double what previously thought.

"According to the new figures, about 16,000 people become infected daily, one in every 100 sexually active adults worldwide is HIV positive, and of those infected, only one in 10 know it. Globally, 5.8 million people have been infected this year. In total, more than 30 million people worldwide are HIV positive or have AIDS. If the infection rate remains the same, 40 million people will be infected by the year 2000. About 70 per cent of those infected contracted HIV through heterosexual sex."

Now, more than ever before we see that God's way is life of health and peace. To be faithful to your spouse within marriage, or to be celibate, may just be a matter of life or death. Lord is showing the society that their way of free love is definitely costing too much. Only eternity can reveal the toll of lost souls. Let us pray

for the suffering and dying, go and seek them to bring the message of salvation to those willing to listen for God's voice in His word.

APEC-Unsteady economies of Pacific Rim a surprise: (From the *Vancouver Sun*, Nov. 22, 1997)

"APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) is barely nine years old, but its importance is hard to exaggerate. Its members account for nearly half the world's population and over half its economic production, and both numbers are growing steadily.

"Yet many members of APEC are in trouble-trouble that nobody expected before the financial crisis that began just a few months ago.

"Earlier this week, the Malaysian ringgit crashed to an historic low having already shed 30 per cent of its value in the previous two months. On the same day, the South Korean won dropped 10 per cent after having already fallen more than 10 per cent. Since July, the Thai baht and the Indonesian rupiah have fallen 40 per cent, the Philippine peso is down 30 per cent and the Singaporean and Taiwanese dollars lost over 10 per cent. Asian stock markets in the region have also crashed, triggering financial market turmoil in New York, London, Toronto and around the world.

"Asia's financial trauma could jeopardize APEC. It could slow the agenda for free trade. Exports from countries where currencies have plummeted will cost much less in countries whose currencies have not-and imports into these weak-currency countries will cost much more. This could increase resistance to free trade in the strong-currency members.

"A potential threat is retreat from financial liberalization. Some quarters in Southeast Asia suspect the West-primarily the U.S. and its 'agent' the International Monetary Fund-of pressuring them to open their currency and financial markets for foreign capital prematurely.

"The tens of billions of dollars flowing into Asia-Pacific countries seemed an unmitigated boon until last summer. That bonanza has proved fickle and transient and countries that prided themselves on their independence have become perilously dependent on the whims of Wall Street, the designs of 'greedy speculators' and, ironically, the largess of the International Monetary Fund."

Since Pope John Paul II has disclosed the assets of the Roman Catholic church in 1980, we have known that the Papacy controls the World Bank. Between the vast amount of funds available there and through the International Monetary Fund of the U.S. there exists enough wealth to manipulate every currency in the world through currency speculation, giving funds and then choking them off, as well as stock market manipulation (as is the case in Asia now).

"History testifies of her artful and persistent efforts to insinuate herself into the affairs of nations; and having gained a foothold, to further her own aims, even at the ruin of princes and people....She is silently growing into power....Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her."
GC 580-1

"And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." Rev. 13:12. Certainly we can see how the U.S. is now starting to bring the nations into line behind their political and soon to be religious agenda-to honor and exalt the Papacy through first, the National Sunday Law and then the Universal Sunday Law. May God grant that we can discern between those who serve God and keep His commandments and those who serve Him not.

The Lord will have a people to depend upon Him, not merely upon the availability of funds. Those in the world who love the money and are placing their faith in it are finding that their faith is founded upon something very transitory. "With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Isaiah 26:9 May the Lord help us to teach the inhabitants of the earth righteousness by our thoughts, words and actions.

By Jerry Eaton



CHILDREN'S CORNER

THE RICHEST MAN IN TOWN

The richest man in our town was the squire. He lived in a large house on the hill that overlooked the village below. The village was a cluster of cottages and neat farmers' houses. Many of the villagers admired that big house on the hill. It could be seen from all over town. When strangers came into town and looked up at the house, they often asked about it. The villagers proudly told of all the great treasures in the house. There was grand furniture and pictures, and expensive pieces of art that the squire had collected in his fancy rooms. Why, it was almost like a palace on the inside.

They were very proud to be able to say that so rich a man belonged to them, and lived among them. They even pointed out his fancy pew at church. It had expensive red cloth covering it and there were curtains around the sides and back. There was a great tombstone behind the church where many of his ancestors lay sleeping, with a list of all their good deeds written on it.

The squire knew that the people were almost worshipping him, and he liked it. This made him a very proud man. He was not proud of his neighbours, the villagers, but he was proud of himself and all his riches. Whenever he rode through town the people bowed to him and smiled. Everyone, from the rich to the poor, made way for him. Everybody admired him. A man with so much money and land, and such fine furniture, and pictures, and statues, and gardens, was not to be pushed into a corner and ignored. As he rode along the roads on his thorough-bred horses, he nodded to one man, and said, "Good Morning," to another. There was always a proud tone in his voice though. He knew they admired him for his riches and was quite happy to keep it this way. He didn't want anyone to think bad about him either so every year he gave a treat to his workers. He also sent money, coal, and blankets to the poor at Christmas, but didn't really care about these people. They were poor and he was rich and he made sure that everyone knew it and that they treated him as though he were different - of a higher class.

One summer morning he was riding his horse, Dandy, through the woods around his property. It was very hot, and in town the sun and the flies bothered him and his horse, so he decided to ride in the cool shade of the trees. He let his horse walk slowly on this hot day. He didn't make her run. He was completely absorbed with all the nature around him, the refreshing trees, the sun glittering through the trees here and there, and the plants and shrubs at the side of the trail. Then his mind drifted to the scenes that had taken place in his house the day before. It had been the birthday of his oldest son and he had held a feast for him. It was a very grand feast, like only rich men can give to their rich friends. The food was served on the rarest China dishes with golden utensils. He had put on the most splendid display. He remembered the laughter of the guests as they ate and drank; he remembered the speeches made, and the compliments that were given to him. And mostly, he remembered how it was said that no one in town had ever given such a grand feast.

Dandy walked quietly through the woods, making very little noise on the soft carpet of grass and old leaves that covered the ground. As they went along silently the squire suddenly heard a gentle sound not far away. He realized that there was another person in the woods so he stopped, hopped off his horse and listened a moment. He heard words that were half prayer and half praise. "Who can be praying here?" he thought to himself. Since the voice was near, he decided to check it out. He pushed through the thick bushes and stretched his head until he could see into a little shady spot not far from the roadside. There he saw the strange guest in the woods.

Ah! it was only an old man; a poor, old man. He had often seen this man before at the side of the highway, breaking stones.

But what was this deaf, old man doing? "*Praying!*" With his eyes shut, and his head lifted toward heaven, and his hat taken off, he folded his rough hands in prayer. He was praying for his dinner which was in front of him - a piece of dry bread, part of a small loaf, and a can of water by his side. Bread and water, nothing else; but the old man was thanking God for it, and was content. *More than content.* His face had an expression of peace and happiness on it as he lifted it to heaven. Such an expression the squire had not seen

on the face of any of his guests at his loaded table in many years. And this poor man was thanking God for bread and water, and was happy! The old man was a sincere Christian.

The richest man in town did not understand how, when a soul loves God, the smallest blessings from His hands are considered the richest blessings to the true Christian; he could not understand how bread and water, with a thankful heart, are sweeter to the taste than any food without it; and he felt humiliated. What right had that old man to thank God for bread and water, when *he* never thanked him for all his great possessions?

After awhile he quietly left the old man and rode on in the woods. He put his proud look back on his face, but he couldn't get the picture out of his mind of that old, stone-breaker who had thanked God for bread and water, and thinking of his own riches now did not bring the usual satisfaction that it normally would. Had his riches ever made him as happy as that old man was over his poor meal? He had to sadly admit that they had not. His pride was touched and his heart was troubled. The more he rode, the more uncomfortable and dissatisfied he felt. These were strange new feelings for him.

Soon, some dark clouds came up and covered the sun, making the woods look rather gloomy. Dandy walked on, happily. She was not troubled by nervous fears but the squire could not understand his feelings. There was a strange sadness in his heart and he felt as though something dreadful was going to happen. Then he suddenly heard a voice, a voice not from this world, but a voice that God sends sometimes to be heard for our good and guidance, and the words that this voice spoke were terrible to him. That voice spoke to him clearly and distinctly, "This night the richest man in town will die." Strange and fearful were these words. He did not look around to see where this voice came from; he knew it was an inward and spiritual voice that spoke, and he believed what it said. With a shudder he remembered the parable of the rich man in the Bible, to whom had come the same terrible warning - "This night thy soul shall be required of thee."

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? and what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" These Bible verses haunted him now, and cold perspiration covered him from head to foot. He felt that he had been an unwise merchant, who had exchanged his soul for very little - the cheap things of this world. He was unable to bear his own thoughts any more so he galloped home.

When he arrived home he was terribly agitated and his wife became alarmed and called for the doctor at once. To everyone who came and asked him what was the matter, he told them that he was about to die, and must prepare for it. In vain they tried to tell him that his health was as good as ever, that he should put away such foolish thoughts. The doctor arrived and laughed at his fears, but the squire ignored all the ridicule of the others around him. Some tried to encourage him to put away such silly thoughts. But, death was not a thing to be laughed at, or made light of. He knew that he was doomed to death. What did it matter what the world around him said about it? He must prepare for it. His lawyer was called in and his will was finalized. His wife and children were all provided for, houses and lands were given to his loved ones, and he had nothing left to do but prepare for his death. He found it impossible to prepare for that event though. In great distress he waited the coming of his great enemy, Death. As night drew on, his fears increased; every time the great clock in the hallway sounded the hour, he shuddered, not knowing if he would ever hear it again. The doctor and the lawyer stayed with him because he had asked them to remain, but they could not calm his troubled mind. They could only listen to what he said, and he sounded like a raving madman to them, for they had come to the conclusion that he was mad.

Hour after hour went by, and the richest man in town, lying in his fancy bed, expecting Death every moment, found how poor he had become, and of how little use his treasures were to him now. Midnight came and went. Early morning came and the light started to dawn on the distant hills. A faint colour came into the sky, and with it colour was again coming into the cheeks of the squire, and hope returned to his heart. Death had not arrived as he had feared; he was still alive. The night had passed, the morning had come, and the prophecy of the mysterious voice had not come true. His family gathered around him and with smiles congratulated him, telling him to rest now because the danger was over. But how could he rest after such a night like this? His whole life seemed turned upside down. All his cherished thoughts and aims

in life revealed to him the poverty of the love of riches. He decided instead to go for a walk and with heavy thoughts he walked toward the village. There he heard that Death had indeed been a visitor in one house during that past night, but instead of appearing in his fancy house, it had entered in the poorest cottage; the old stone-breaker had died during the night. With a still more thoughtful face he returned home - his heart pierced with his own wretchedness. He remembered the old man's simple dinner; he saw again the uplifted face, on which God's sunshine rested in a double sense; he heard again the words of his thankful prayer, and his own laugh of ridicule, and again he was humiliated, but this time for a better reason.

His wife met him at the door of his house, with a smiling face, she was glad to see him again, "in his right mind," for she too had feared that he would die. She accompanied him inside and sat beside him, gently rebuking him for his last night's fears, and what she called "superstitious fancies." "I hope now," she added, "you are quite satisfied that there was no truth in what that mysterious voice told you. The night is past, and you are alive, and well as ever."

"True, my dear," he replied, "the night is past, and I am alive and well. But nevertheless the richest man in the village *has* died. If you will take the trouble to ask in the village, you will find out that it is true."

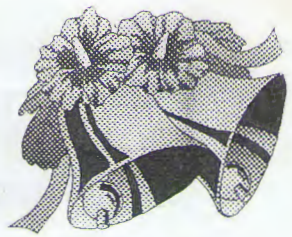
"How can that be?" she asked, and as she spoke, she looked around proudly, as though someone had appeared who was richer than they. "Who can be richer here than you are?"

"The man who can say to God, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.' I cannot say that, for I have desired many things and people besides God, and almost all things I want more than God. But there was a poor stone-breaker alive yesterday, who in possessing God, possessed all things. I call him poor according to the way of the world, but he was really rich - he will have eternal life when Jesus comes. Last night I was shown his riches and my poverty. He has treasure in heaven, I do not. People will tell you that he is dead, and he had no money left even to pay for his burial; but *he* was '*the richest man in town.*' "



Singing special songs at the
New Year's eve get-together

New Year's Eve Get-Together



In Mississauga, members and visitors of three local churches, Toronto, Streetsville and Hamilton, came together to welcome in the New Year. We began with a song service and a prayer. Brother Martin spoke about entering into a year that is unknown to us and made an appeal to everyone to prepare for approaching end. It is possible that during this year, 1998 the Lord will come. He mentioned that in 1961 he spoke a New Year's message in the Toronto church mentioning that Jesus may come that year. Now, 37 years have passed since that time and we are still here. The Lord has been patiently waiting for us to get ready.

Brother Unger thanked God that he is still alive. He has suffered a serious illness, but God, in His mercy, helped him. Many special songs were presented as well as a poem by brother Cosby, which he had written. The poem can be found on the back page of this issue of Messenger.

A delicious meal was then served for everyone's enjoyment. We want to thank all those who participated in the preparation of the food for their efforts and contributions.



New Year's Get-together



FOOD LABELING

"In this fast age, the less exciting the food, the better. Condiments are injurious in their nature. Mustard, pepper, spices, pickles, and other things of a like character, irritate the stomach and make the blood feverish and impure. The inflamed condition of the drunkard's stomach is often pictured as illustrating the effect of alcoholic liquors. A similarly inflamed condition is produced by the use of irritating condiments. Soon ordinary food does not satisfy the appetite. The system feels a want, a craving, for something more stimulating." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 339

"Health-Destroying Foods. Spices, mustard, pepper, vinegar, salt, condiments, . . . Tabasco sauce, Worcestershire sauce, gravies, fried or greasy foods, coca cola, all soft drinks, chewing gum, coffee, tea, cocoa, white flour and white flour products, cane sugar and products. The organs that make our blood cannot convert spices, pickles, etc. into pure blood." *Back to Eden*, p. 64 By Jethro Kloss

While knowing these things to be true concerning spices, I have decided to avoid using them while cooking for my family. There are other ways to make foods more palatable. I like to make as much as possible from scratch, but there are the times when time is short and a quick meal, like a can of beans, will fit the menu quite well. Also, there is not always time to make my own spaghetti sauce and the commercial product comes in handy. Lately, I have been reading the labels a little more closely on many of these canned products and have come across one ingredient called, "spices". This was seen on many tomato sauces that I purchased. For some time I gave no notice of it. The rest of the ingredients were fine, but lately I have been wondering what that "spices" meant? Could it mean, black pepper, mustard powder, MSG (Monosodium Glutamate) etc.?? Often, I saw MSG listed as an individual ingredient so it must not be MSG. I decided to investigate. Several of the companies listed a telephone number that encouraged comments or questions. They all have an address so the number can be obtained through directory assistance. I decided to call several of the companies and just simply ask them what was in their spice mixture?

First, I called Health Canada to ask what are the labeling requirements in Canada. They sent me a document that gave some interesting information. There are a few items that are not allowed under the "Spices" heading but must receive an individual listing. They are: Salt, MSG, Hydrolyzed Plant Protein (HVP), Aspartame, Potassium Chloride, any ingredient that has an effect on the food (alters its nature), and any peanut products. All other herbs and spices can be listed under the "spices" heading. Any spice from anywhere in the world can be listed there after it meets government approval. This is for the specific purpose of allowing companies to have a private recipe.

This is what I found out. First of all, none of them would give me a list of their spices out-right because they wanted to protect their recipe. That I can understand. They would, however, tell me if a particular ingredient was in their product. I chose to ask for black pepper and mustard on products that I saw the "Spices" listing, and here are the results of the telephone survey.

UNCLE BEN'S

I asked the lady about their marinara sauces. She responded with, "I can't say that there is no black pepper and if you don't tolerate it, I don't recommend you eat our products."

HUNTS

I asked about their Hunts Tomato Sauce. The lady simply said, "Yes, there is black pepper in that Tomato Sauce."

RAGU

All Ragu products include black pepper under their "Spice" listing except the Ragu Homestyle with Basil spaghetti sauce. There is no mustard, though.

YVES FINE FOODS

Yves is the name of a man who owns a factory that began by producing excellent Tofu Hot Dogs in North America. His headquarters is in Vancouver, BC Canada. He now has added more items to his product list. They are all very good and delicious. We enjoyed them for awhile until we started wondering about the "Spices". My husband spoke with Yves himself many years ago and he admitted that they put mustard powder and black pepper into their products.

LITE HOUSE

Lite House makes many salad dressings, often found in the produce section in Canadian stores. They said that the majority of their salad dressings have Mustard Powder and Black Pepper. The Black Pepper is visual though. You can see the black specks in the salad dressing. I also asked for MSG since it is an American company and I did not know what the labeling regulations are in the USA. They said that, because there has been so much controversy about it lately, they recently took MSG out of their products.

So be wary when you see the "Spices" heading. If you find you want to avoid these types of spices you need to simply make one phone call, or find an alternative.

Furthermore, if a company is willing to list their various spices on their label, they need not be listed in descending order, (as to how much of the item is present) as are the rest of the ingredients, according to this document from Health Canada. They can simply be added to the end in any order.

VINEGAR

Often, I have seen the ingredient "vinegar" on a product. Sometimes, I have avoided it but occasionally I have not on such products as Salsa dip for chips. You cannot find any without vinegar on the market. All salad dressings also have vinegar. Even in the health food stores these products all contain vinegar. I therefore make my own chip dip and salad dressing. What has convinced me never to try anything with vinegar again (if possible) is from this document from Health Canada. They have a list of "ingredients or components" and then the "Optional Common Name" beside it. Under the list in Appendix III, #23 is listed vinegar as the "Optional Common Name." Beside is the list of ingredients that can be listed as simply vinegar. This list is as follows: "wine vinegar, spirit vinegar, alcohol vinegar, white vinegar, grain vinegar, malt vinegar, cider vinegar or apple vinegar, singly or in combination." So any one of these vinegar sources can be in the product and the ingredient list needs to only say, "vinegar".

I personally avoid products that list "Spices" as an ingredient. I can buy some "Crushed Tomatoes" and add my own "Italian Seasoning" to make spaghetti sauce. It really doesn't take that much extra time.

Anyone interested in the regulations in your country as far as food labeling goes you call the Health Department responsible for labeling regulations. If you are in Canada and are interested in more information and you have access to the Internet, Health Canada does has a web site: <http://www.cfia-acia.agr.ca>.

You may also call Health Canada and request your own information.

"Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." I Corinthians 10:31

ASLEEP

I lift my voice to call them near,
Their lives, so dear, in danger I fear.
Surprisingly, none come unto Me,
My calls are not heeded, not even a cheep.
The reason be, in darkness they sleep,
In their disbelief, at ease and in peace.
I agitate the place where they lay,
And hope that they may, awake before day.
"Awake! Escape!" are the cries made with tears.
But they could not hear with the "stops" in their
ears.

I shine a light, to show them the plight,
They close their eyes tight, the light they dislike.
I am dismayed by their acts of delay,
As if they would say, "O please, go away!"
Before I end, I send them my friends,
Again trying to win, the hearts of these men.
Now I find, they can't read the signs,
They can't hear the time, they're deaf, dumb, and
blind.

Soon, they'll awaken, too late.
Realize the mistakes in the choices they've made.
And in that Great Day, I'll have only to say,
"My love, forsake. My love, forsake."
Forsake! Forsake!

Chester Cosby, Detroit