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Danger of Rejecting the Light

One of the most common forms of sin against the Holy Spirit that many professed Christians commit is rejecting the light that Heaven has sent to them through the Holy Spirit. And, the reason why many reject the light that God has sent to them is because they do not love the truth but rather believe a lie. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." Matt. 10:14-15. What was their sin? Because they did not love the truth, nor did not even want to hear of it, their punishment will be greater than the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrha.

When the Millerites preached the first angel's message, many rejected it. All the churches turned against it. Sister White writes that for this reason they became Babylon. After that the further messages of God could not benefit them anymore.

"As the churches refused to receive the first angel's message, they rejected the light from heaven and fell from the favour of God. They trusted to their own strength, and by opposing the first message placed themselves where they could not see the light of the second angel's message." EW 237.

"In refusing the warning of the first angel, they rejected the means which Heaven had provided for their restoration." GC 380.

The message which the Millerites preached had an error in it. Jesus did not come in 1844 to cleanse the earth from sin. Yet it was a message from God and those who rejected it sinned against the Holy Spirit and sealed their eternal destiny.

Another example we find are of the leaders of the Seventh-Day Adventist church who sinned against the Holy Spirit when they rejected the message of Christ's Righteousness. In 1888, at the conference in Minneapolis, two brothers, Jones and Waggoner presented the message of Christ's Righteousness to the Seventh-Day Adventist leaders.

Brother Alonzo T. Jones said, "This true faith will make every comer thereunto perfect. It will prepare him for the seal of God." *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection*, p. 127.

Brother E.J. Waggoner said, "Yes, faith does the impossible, and it is just that which God requires us to do... It is impossible for man to walk on water, yet Peter did it when he exercised faith in Jesus."

Sadly their messages were not accepted and Sister White wrote the following testimonies:

"I can never forget the experience which we had at Minneapolis, or the things that were then revealed to me in regard to the spirit that controlled men, the words, spoken, the actions done

in obedience to the powers of evil... They were moved at the meeting by another spirit, and they knew not that God had sent these young men, Elders Jones and Waggoner, to bear a special message to them, which they treated with ridicule and contempt, not realizing that the heavenly intelligences were looking upon them and registering their words in the books of heaven... I know that at that time the Spirit of God was insulted, and now when I see anything approaching to the same course of actions, I am exceedingly pained." Manuscript Releases, Book 15, p. 83.

"They began this satanic work at Minneapolis. Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, they hated it the more, because it was a testimony against them. They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right. They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews. They opened their hearts to the enemy of God and man. Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been moulding the work after their own similitude, as far as they possibly could." Test. To Min., 80.

By refusing to believe and accept the message sent by God they sinned against the Holy Spirit. Yet they held their positions in the very church of God and moulded the work after their own ideas. Eventually they all were put aside when the prophesied Reformation came. Not one of the leaders of the General Conference joined the Reform, but became enemies of the church of God.

To his church God sent a message by Sister White. "The Spirit of God is departing from many among His people. Many have entered into dark, secret paths, and some will never return. They will continue to stumble to their ruin. They have tempted God. They have rejected the light. All the evidence that will ever be given them they have received and have not heeded. They have chosen darkness rather than light, and have defiled their souls." TM, 90.

"The rejection of light and truth leaves men captives, the subjects of Satan's deception. The greater the light they reject, the greater will be the power of deception and darkness which will come upon them." Test. Vol. 1, 345.

"God gives sufficient light and evidence to enable man to distinguish truth from error. But He does not force man to receive truth. He leaves him free to choose the good or to choose evil. If man resists evidence that is sufficient to guide his judgment in the right direction, and chooses evil once, he will do this more readily the second time. The third time he will still more eagerly withdraw himself from God and choose to stand on the side of Satan. And in this course he will continue until he is confirmed in evil, and believes the lie he has cherished as truth. His resistance has produced its harvest." 6 BC, 1112.

We have the same danger today of rejecting the light that God has sent to us. If we believe that a sinless life is not possible with the help of God, we reject the message of 1888 as much as the leaders did at that time. Many other doctrines that God has given us we can reject and sin against the Holy Spirit without realizing it. Isaiah writes to us, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word." Isa. 66:2.

As we read the holy pages of the Bible, we must be careful and even tremble that we would not lightly regard it and reject its message.

AMEN.



MUDDY WATERS

Recently, on a trip that my family and I made to California, I was speaking with Sister Ruth Jennings. As we were conversing we spoke of the various concerns that we had with some of the members of the church. It seems that Satan is using the same deceptions amongst God's people today, in various different areas, and it is working for those who are not strong in their faith. We have seen, on occasion, members visiting other Sabbath keeping churches - especially the Seventh-Day Adventist church, and making no difference between that church and God's true remnant church today. In the minds of these people they are one and the same. Perhaps the Reform church is slightly stricter but other than that they see no difference. Sr. Ruth labelled this problem as "Muddy Waters". This is an unfortunate situation with some that can go back and forth with no thought that there is a difference. Wherever they feel like going to church that particular Sabbath - they go. It is especially sad when we see it occurring in the lives of those who were once so strong in their stand with God's people. It is a different situation for those visitors who are for the first time becoming familiar with the Reform church as opposed to the regular SDA church. The church members should be clear on this issue.

We have been given a warning in this regard. "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 "Satan can present a counterfeit so closely resembling the truth that it deceives those who are willing to be deceived, who desire to shun the self-denial and sacrifice demanded by the truth." *Great Controversy*, p. 528.

I have heard in passing, by some members, that they feel the Seventh-Day Adventist church is doing such a good work. Also, the many Independent Ministries that have branched off from the SDA church - they are praised for their many endeavours to proclaim the truth abroad - why not support them with some of our tithes and offerings? People have asked how we are different from the other Independents. They have classed us in the same class. And then there is the 1951 group that split off with Nicolici - are they not doing a good work also? - we hear. It seems that some people are unable to differentiate Satan's counterfeits with the true church of God. They are swimming in muddy waters - they cannot see clearly.

DARK WATERS

Dark waters are clearly dark. We would not swim in, or drink from dark waters. "What communion can there be between light and darkness, truth and unrighteousness? - None whatever. Light represents righteousness; darkness, error, sin, unrighteousness. Christians have to come out of darkness into the light." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 476

There are two types of dark water. There is the dark water of error that is pervading the Christian world and then there is the dark waters that sometimes we have to pass through in our Christian experience. "I was shown the case of Brother and Sister S. They had been passing through the dark waters, and the billows had nearly gone over their heads; yet God loved them, and if they would only trust their ways to Him He would bring them forth from the furnace of affliction purified." *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 2*, p. 97

We should not turn away from these people who are in the darkness of sin and error but rather seek them out, like Jesus did to the woman at the well, and offer them the living waters that Jesus wants to give to them. In order to do this efficiently we ourselves must drink freely from the living waters.

"We must sow beside all waters, keeping our souls in the love of God, working while it is day, and using the means the Lord has given us to do whatever duty comes next. Whatever our hands find to do, we are to do it with cheerfulness; whatever sacrifice we are called upon to make, we are to make it cheerfully. As we sow beside all waters, we shall realize that "he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 423

LIVING WATERS

"Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Find. Only the bread of life will satisfy the hunger of a hungry soul and the living waters will satisfy their thirst. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Matthew 5:6 Those that are seeking for the water of life as a thirsty man in a hot desert, are the only ones who will find the oasis and drink of the life-giving stream. Those that are passively serving the Lord at their convenience will never find the living waters. They will find the muddy waters and be satisfied. Their vision is not clear.

"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isaiah 55:1. Jesus is offering the living waters for free. The things of this world are often thought of as freedom but in reality they are abject slavery. Satan too wanted freedom from keeping the law of God. He claimed that he had a better system to offer his followers. God allowed him to prove himself after man fell into sin and what has been the result? This true freedom has not brought happiness, but rather sadness, sorrow, and eventually eternal death. That is not the kind of freedom I want. In order to have this true freedom we must eat of the Bread of Life and drink of the living waters.

Once we have drunk of this water we will long to share it with our other thirsty friends. "He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. The grace of God in the soul is like a spring in the desert, welling up to refresh all, making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life. In doing this a greater blessing is received than if we work merely to benefit ourselves. It is in working to spread the good news of salvation that we are brought near to the Saviour." *Ministry of Healing*, p. 102/3. There is also another blessing for the one who shares the living waters. What a wonderful experience it will be for them to be able to meet someone in heaven, to share in the glory of the Redeemer, with whom they shared the living waters while on this earth; to meet them at the tree of life and the water of life that flows out from the throne of God. The faithful workers will be blessed for eternity with the presence of these precious souls.

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Revelation 21:6 "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17.

MUDDY WATERS

If you find yourself unable to differentiate between the various Sabbath keeping churches then the danger signals should go up. There is a clear difference between God's church and the various counterfeits - to those that are led by the Spirit.

We may often wonder how someone, who was so clear concerning the truth, has lost their way and become caught in the muddy waters. Jeremiah wondered that also when the nation of Israel stubbornly refused the messages sent from heaven, which brought them into captivity. He wrote, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!" Lamentations 4:1,2

"I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Revelation 3:14, 15

HOW A PERSON TURNS TO THE MUDDY WATERS

A lukewarm Christian is one who is drinking from muddy waters. They are unable to differentiate clearly the truth from the error. Also they don't see the danger of their own situation. They think they are "rich, and increased with goods," when in reality they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev.3:17 Eventually they are spued out of the mouth of God. There are several ways that people end up in this condition - turning from the clear waters to drink of the muddy waters. We shall look at a few in this article.

1) One way is to become proud of their knowledge of the scriptures. Some feel they are so knowledgeable that they understand everything that is written in its pages. No one can teach them anything. They may even feel themselves above the Bible and seek to correct the errors they say they find within its pages. "In seeking to make plain or to unravel mysteries hid from ages from mortal man, they are like a man floundering about in the mud, unable to extricate himself and yet telling others how to get out of the muddy sea they themselves are in. This is a fit representation of the men who set themselves to correct the errors of the Bible. No man can improve the Bible by suggesting what the Lord meant to say or ought to have said." *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 16.

2) Sister White saw the danger of some Christians who were walking in muddy waters and were soon to go completely into darkness. She says, "the early Christians began to look for defects in one another. Dwelling upon mistakes, giving place to unkind criticism, they lost sight of the Saviour and of the great love He had revealed for sinners. They became stricter in regard to outward ceremonies, more particular about the theory of the faith, and more severe in their criticisms. In their zeal to condemn others they forgot their own errors. They forgot the lesson of brotherly love that Christ had taught. And, saddest of all, they were unconscious of their loss. They did not realize that happiness and joy were going out of their lives, and that soon they would walk in darkness, having shut the love of God out of their lives." *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol., 8, p. 241

3) Another cause, resulting in muddy waters is when members "indulge in too much jovial talk when in each other's society. Women professing godliness indulge in much jesting, joking, and laughing. This is unbecoming and grieves the Spirit of God. These exhibitions reveal a lack of true Christian refinement. They do not strengthen the soul in God, but bring great darkness;." Ibid, vol. 2, p. 455.

4) "Some persons make their religious life 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

5) "Some who have formerly loved God and lived in the daily enjoyment of His favour are now in continual unrest. They wander in darkness and despairing gloom because they are *nourishing self*. They are seeking so hard to favour themselves that all other considerations are swallowed up in this. God in His providence has willed that no one can secure happiness by living for himself alone. The joy of our Lord consisted in enduring toil and shame for others, that they might be benefited thereby. We are capable of being happy in following His example and living to bless our fellow men." Ibid, Vol. 4., 224.

6) I want to touch upon one final reason which leads people into muddy waters and that is, when they decide to attend various fallen churches to receive a blessing. If we know that we will hear a sermon that is only 95% truth it is dangerous to go. Often I have heard members say that they want to go and listen to this preacher or that in a fallen church because he is such a dynamic speaker and *most of what he says* is true anyway. That is a very dangerous position to take. "God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with darkness." *Early Writings*, p. 125 Our light becomes contaminated with darkness - or in other words the clear, living water becomes tainted with dirt - Muddy.

We knew a man many years ago who attended our church for quite some time. In his past life, before he met us, one day he went to a Pentecostal church without being sent by the Spirit of the Lord. He was a member of the Seventh-Day Adventist church at the time. He said that some other spirits were so strong in that church that he automatically started to speak in tongues with the rest of them - AGAINST HIS WILL. He was blessed that he saw his way clear from that, but still there were lasting effects. This man was left quite unstable after that experience and never did come completely out of it. Many never come out of it at all.

Then there is the problem today with the Seventh-day Adventist church openly practicing NLP

(Neuro Linguistic Programming). In other words, brainwashing. They are taught carefully how to brainwash their audiences, by their tone of voice, their mannerisms, facial expressions and words. It is a very effective tool of the devil as it reaches a persons subconscious mind without them ever realizing that they are being brainwashed. They suddenly feel that everything is good in this church. It cannot be a fallen church after all. I, myself would never dare to submit my mind to that kind of evil, lest I lose my way spiritually. I will not go where I know that the devil will be using these evil methods to convert souls. Who knows how many other fallen churches are doing likewise. It is no wonder that we see some members today unable to tell the difference between the two churches. They have given their mind to be fed by Satan's methods. I refuse to be willingly brainwashed.

We must go where we know we will be drinking from the pure, clean, living waters, to receive a blessing. That does not mean we become exclusive like the Jewish nation did in the time of Christ but we are to "sow beside all waters" and invite others to drink of the living waters.

"There can be no union between light and darkness. God intends that His people shall be a peculiar people, separate from the world, and be living examples of holiness, that the world may be enlightened, convicted, or condemned, according as they treat the light given them. . . Men of the world and men who are Christ's servants indeed may be alike in outward appearance; but they are servants of two masters whose interests are in decided opposition to each other. The world does not understand or discern the difference; but there is an immense distance, a vast separation, between them." Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 689, 690

"The different parties of professed Advent believers have each a little truth, but God has given all these truths to His children who are being prepared for the day of God. He has also given them truths that none of these parties know, neither will they understand. Things which are sealed up to them, the Lord has opened to those who will see and are ready to understand. If God has any new light to communicate, He will let His chosen and beloved understand it, without their going to have their minds enlightened by hearing those who are in darkness and error.

"I was shown the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a deadly poison to the soul and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. It influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth." *Early Writings*, p. 124

"If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 7:37; 4:14.

"If, with these promises before us, we choose to remain parched and withered for want of the water of life, it is our own fault." Ibid, vol. 9, p. 179

So if we find ourselves unable to tell the difference between God's true remnant church and the various counterfeits existing today it is time to fast and pray and search our hearts to see when we turned away from the pure living water to the muddy waters. God will lead us back if we are willing but unfortunately there is less hope for the one drinking muddy waters than for the soul in complete darkness - as John described the lukewarm condition existing under the Laodicean church. Those who are lukewarm feel they are fine and do not see their real condition - they are unable to tell the difference between the true and the error.

"Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it." *Testimonies to Ministers* p. 507

It is my wish and prayer that we will continue to drink of the living water - the pure, clean waters of the Word of God and not let ourselves to follow the avenues that the devil has put before and allow him to put some dirt in our water to make it muddy. AMEN.

Wendy Eaton.



The Reformer Martin Luther

“The Reformers whose protest has given us the name of Protestant, felt that God had called them to give the light of the gospel to the world; and in the effort to do this they were ready to sacrifice their possessions, their liberty, even life itself. In the face of persecution and death the gospel was proclaimed far and near. The word of God was carried to the people; and all classes, high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, eagerly studied it for themselves. Are we, in this last conflict of the great controversy, as faithful to our trust as the early Reformers were to theirs?” (PK., 627).

During 1996, the 450th anniversary of Martin Luther’s death, much was written about the life and the work of the Reformer in religious as well as in worldly publications, positively and negatively, according to the writers view. Some perhaps had through ignorance or lack of religious understanding, and disregard towards the circumstances at that time including the somewhat rougher use of language, drawn the wrong conclusions. And others deliberately set out to ridicule the work of the Reformer by distorting and misrepresenting his cause and among other things gambled on the notion that Luther separated from the Catholic Church only, because he wanted to marry and drink beer. Yet it were just the monks who invented the beer! These defamations are outright wrong, unjustified and unspiritual, for Luther had an altogether different goal before him and much nobler motives for his action.

He lived in the so called “Dark Age”, at a time when the apostate church took the Bible away from the people, and the few which possessed one or desired to have one, were on the penalty of death forbidden to read it. Exactly this spiritual declension was the cause for the Reformation. The Bible, the Word of God, was to be restored to all mankind.

From the various pieces of information before me, that often were put together in chronological order to the detail lack a real appreciation of the cause, therefore in this article the main points of the Reformation will be highlighted.

“Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. Zealous, ardent, and devoted, knowing no fear but the fear of God, and acknowledging no foundation for religious faith but the Holy Scriptures, Luther was the man for his time; through him God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world.” (GC, 120).

“The fear of the Lord dwelt in the heart of Luther enabling him to maintain his steadfastness of purpose and leading him to deep humility before God. He had an abiding sense of his dependence upon divine aid, and he did not fail to begin each day with prayer, while his heart was continually

breathing a petition for guidance and support. "To pray well," he often said, "is the better half of the study." (Ibid, 122).

What had urged the 22 year old Martin Luther to enter the monastery? It was this question: "What must I do that God will be gracious to me?"

After a long futile struggle there came at the turn of 1512-13 in Wittenberg the turning point, when his eye of faith was directed to the Redeemer, as the one Saviour of the world, and thus he became assured of God's grace. Justification by faith = obedience out of love! This is the ultimate aim of the Christian life.

The Reformation broke the spiritual darkness of the Middle Ages

After the ascension of Jesus, there came over the first Christian church which kept pure the doctrine of faith and truth a terrible tempest of persecution. When the Roman Empire lost supremacy, the church was gaining strength and influence. Because of apostasy - forsaking the pure doctrine of the Holy Writ, and the blending of truth with heathen practises - the church became a tool in the hands of Satan. Persecution of the faithful ones was the result. Nevertheless, God had in this trying time a remnant loyal to Him.

"Notwithstanding all the persecution of the saints, living witnesses for God's truth were raised up on every hand. Angels of the Lord were doing the work committed to their trust. They were searching in the darkest places and selecting out of the darkness men who were honest in heart. These were all buried up in error, yet God called them, as He did Saul, to be chosen vessels to bear His truth and raise their voices against the sins of His professed people. Angels of God moved upon the hearts of Martin Luther, Melancthon, and others in different places, and caused them to thirst for the living testimony of the Word of God. The enemy had come in like a flood, and the standard must be raised against him. Luther was the one chosen to breast the storm, stand up against the ire of a fallen church, and strengthen the few who were faithful to their holy profession. He was ever fearful of offending God. He tried through works to obtain His favour, but was not satisfied until a gleam of light from heaven drove the darkness from his mind and led him to trust, not in works, but in the merits of the blood of Christ. He could then come to God for himself, not through popes or confessors, but through Jesus Christ alone.

Oh, how precious to Luther was this new and glorious light which had dawned upon his dark understanding and driven away his superstition! He prized it higher than the richest earthly treasure. The Word of God was new. Everything was changed. The book he had dreaded because he could not see beauty in it, was now life, eternal life, to him. It was his joy, his consolation, his blessed teacher. Nothing could induce him to leave its study. He had feared death; but as he read the Word of God, all his terrors disappeared, and he admired the character of God and loved Him. He searched the Bible for himself and feasted upon the rich treasures it contained; then he searched it for the church. He was disgusted with the sins of those in whom he had trusted for salvation, and as he saw many others enshrouded in the same darkness which had covered him, he anxiously sought an opportunity to point them to the Lamb of God, who alone taketh away the sin of the world....

God raised up men to cry against the existing sins of the papal church and carry forward the Reformation. Satan sought to destroy these living witnesses; but the Lord made a hedge about them. Some, for the glory of His name, were permitted to seal with their blood the testimony they had borne; but there were other powerful men, like Luther and Melanchthon, who could best glorify God by living and exposing the sins of priests, popes, and kings. These trembled before the voice of Luther, and his fellow labourers. Through those chosen men, rays of light began to scatter the darkness, and very many joyfully received the light and walked in it. And when one witness was slain, two or more were raised up to take his place.

But Satan was not satisfied. He could only have power over the body. He could not make believers yield their faith and hope. And even in death they triumphed with a bright hope of immortality at the resurrection of the just. They had more than mortal energy. They dared not sleep for a moment, but kept the Christian armour girded about them, prepared for a conflict, not merely with spiritual foes, but with Satan in the form of men whose constant cry was, "Give up your faith, or die." These few Christians were strong in God, and more precious in His sight than half a world who bear the name of Christ, and yet are cowards in His cause. While the church was persecuted, its members were united and loving; they were strong in God. Sinners were not permitted to unite with the church. Those only who were willing to forsake all for Christ could be His disciples. These loved to be poor, humble, and Christlike." (EW, 222- 226).

The 95 Theses- a protest with consequences The Bible - God's Word - again given to mankind

"One of the noblest testimonies ever uttered for the Reformation was the Protest offered by the Christian princes of Germany at the Diet of Spires in 1529. The courage, faith, and firmness of those men of God gained for succeeding ages liberty of thought and of conscience." (GC, 197)

"The declaration had been made. It was written in the memory of thousands and registered in the books of heaven, where no effort of man could erase it. All evangelical Germany adopted the Protest as the expression of its faith. Everywhere men beheld in this declaration the promise of a new and better era. Said one of the princes to the Protestants of Spires: 'May the Almighty, who has given you grace to confess energetically, freely, and fearlessly, preserve you in that Christian firmness until the day of eternity.'

Had the Reformation, after attaining a degree of success, consented to temporize to secure favour with the world, it would have been untrue to God and to itself, and would thus have ensured its own destruction. The experience of these noble Reformers contains a lesson for all succeeding ages. Satan's manner of working against God and His word has not changed; he is still as much opposed to the Scriptures being made the guide of life as in the sixteenth century. In our time there is a wide departure from their doctrines and precepts, and there is need of a return to the great Protestant principle - the Bible, and the Bible only, as the rule of faith and duty. Satan is still working through every means which he can control to destroy religious liberty. The antichristian power which the protesters of Spires rejected is now with renewed vigour seeking to re-establish its lost supremacy. The same unswerving adherence to the word of God manifested at that crisis of the Reformation is

the only hope of reform today.” (GC, 204-205).

God has given us His word that we may become acquainted with its teachings and know for ourselves what He requires of us.

“The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions. At every revival of God’s work the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvellous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.

Those who endeavour to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honour Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defence of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?” (GC, 593,594).

A sad account in our days

As a result of Luther’s Reformation the word of God was again accessible to the world. The people were to earnestly study it and follow its instruction in their daily life. Errors which have crept in even among the true believers during those dark ages, God could not simply remove by a miracle. The believers were to diligently search the Bible for themselves, and would thus looking at it spiritually - come ever nearer and closer to God. That way rays of light could eventually evolve and increase. But alas, the very church that emerged in Luther’s time did not advance beyond its early steps. A standstill means decline and the church of today, 452 years after the death of Luther, experiences a spiritual decadence throughout, for she is adapting herself ever more closely to the church and doctrines of Rome. This applies in general to all the various denominations which call themselves Protestants.

“The great principles so nobly advocated by Robinson and Roger Williams, that truth is progressive, that Christians should stand ready to accept all the light which may shine from God’s holy word, was lost sight of by their descendants. The Protestant churches of America, - and those of Europe as well, - so highly favoured in receiving the blessings of the Reformation, failed to press forward in the path of reform. Though a few faithful men arose, from time to time, to proclaim new truth and expose long-cherished error, the majority, like the Jews in Christ’s day or the papists in the time of Luther, were content to believe as their fathers had believed and to live as they had lived. Therefore religion again degenerated into formalism; and errors and superstitions which would have been cast aside had the church continued to walk in the light of God’s word, were retained and cherished. Thus the spirit inspired by the Reformation gradually died out, until there was almost as great need of reform in the

Protestant churches as in the Roman Church in the time of Luther. There was the same worldliness and spiritual stupor, a similar reverence for the opinions of men, and substitution of human theories for the teachings of God's word." (GC, 297,298).

Thus the successors of Luther have severely backslidden and an interesting incident of that time proves this. It has been said that one day the Reformer Martin Luther during a religious conversation about Bible truths got into a heated discussion with another preacher. This preacher in his enthusiasm patted his hand upon Luther's shoulder and with energy declared: "I am a Lutheran!" The Reformer gave him a long, penetrating look and replied firm and very definite: "What, you are a Lutheran? I am Luther myself!" What do we learn from this example? The defender of Luther's Reformation had lost so far sight of the truths of the Bible, that he was even at variance with Luther himself. So it is still today! Many followers of the so called Protestant denominations have no knowledge about the former fundamental beliefs that were based upon the clear teaching of the Bible.

The beginning of Luther's Reformation leads to the victory of the Gospel

Martin Luther's posting of the theses unto the portals of the castle church October 31, 1517 in Wittenberg, marked not just a mere historical event we always ought to remember, but directed the entire course of the world's affairs in its last phase and has its consequences even until now. Yes, centuries have past since then, but the few faithful followers of Christ had the word of God in their hands for comfort and guidance for their faith and actions. Thus Bible truths were unfolding more and more in the following generations until the knowledge of the healing, restoring love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Mediator, would in the 19th century lead to Heaven's last message of mercy unto a dying world.

Consequently, the prophesied SDA Reformation in the last phase of the Laodicean period, may be said to be the true successors of Luther. For the Reformer said to his disciples in his time: "Keep on reforming!" Through diligent searching in God's word knowledge increased continually. The Proverb: "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4:8, is literally fulfilling. When those who follow with all their heart and live out the message of grace, then God will give of His Spirit like He did to the first Christian church, and pour out His fulness to finish His work on earth in righteousness. The wish of the Reformer will be fulfilled, who once uttered: "Give me four men, believing, devout men, men of prayer, with those the Lord will move the world!"

The Lord does not depend upon a multitude, but He uses men who are true and upright, who take His word to heart and with joy live by it. Dear readers, we should therefore today still be thankful for the work of the Reformation Luther had accomplished. For despite the fiercest opposition, slander and hard struggle, the Bible - which we ought to regard very highly - has again been given into our hands. The Lord left us in Matthew 24:14 a wonderful promise: "And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

And the prophet Isaiah testifies how the work of God will be finished on earth: "The Lord hath made

bare His holy arm, in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isa. 51:10. May the Lord grant us grace to partake in it. Amen

S. Schmidt, Germany.

Some important dates in the life of Martin Luther:

Nov. 10, 1483 Born in Eisleben, Germany
May 1501 Enrollment at the University to Erfurt
July 2, 1505 Almost struck down by lightning, Luther vows to become a monk
July 17, 1505 Enters the Augustine cloister in Erfurt
April 3, 1507 Ordination as Priest
Oct. 8, 1508 Transfer to Wittenberg for study and teaching
Oct. 19 1512 Graduation to Doctor of Theology
Oct. 31, 1517 Posting of the 95 Theses
Summer 1518 Opening of heresy charges against Luther in Rome
Summer 1519 Dispute with Dr. Eck, Professor of Theology
June 1520 Luther threatened with excommunication if he does not retract
April 1521 Hearing at the Diet in Worms, Luther refuses retraction of his writings
May 4, 1521 Arrival of Luther at the Wartbourg
May 20, 1521 Edict of Worms condemns Luther and orders burning of his books
March 1, 1522 Luther returns to Wittenberg
June 13, 1525 Wedding with Katharina von Bora
June 25 1530 Delivery of the Confession to Augsburg
1534 Edition of the first translated Bible into German
Feb. 18, 1546 Luther dies in Eisleben.

Martin Luther hammered the 95 theses upon the doors of the castle church October 31, 1517 in Wittenberg changed an era by its historical, social and cultural consequences. Out of a debate about indulgences and justification with the professors of higher institutions develops a revolution. However, there were already before Luther movements desiring a renewal in the papal church, because of her grave scandals and crimes. But it was the translated 95 theses, translated from Latin into German, his Bible translations, his writings and sermons, which helped the people to realize the need for reform which also altered their view of life.

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JOSEPH BATES

Joseph Bates was a mariner, reformer, Advent preacher, and one of the founders of the SDA church. He was born July 8, 1792, at Rochester, Massachusetts, near New Bedford. At the age of 15 he set out from his home to follow the sea. He experienced shipwreck, capture, forced service in the British Navy, and was for two and a half years a prisoner of war in England, being released in 1815. After being restored to his home and family, he continued his career as a merchant seaman, becoming a captain in 1820.

In 1818 he married Prudence Nye, a childhood friend. "Prudy" proved to be an exceptionally patient and loyal wife, and a godly influence upon her husband and family. To them were born five children, one son who died in infancy, another son who died at sea at the age of thirty-five, and three daughters who survived up to maturity.

Bates experienced the disappointment of 1844 without losing his faith. After reading T.M. Preble's article on the seventh-day Sabbath, published in "The Hope of Israel" in February, 1845, and checking the Bible evidence with his customary thoroughness, he made his decision to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. Five years later Prudence joined him in this. Characteristic of the man was his reply when, on the bridge between Fairhaven and New Bedford, upon being hailed by James Madison Monroe Hall, his neighbour and fellow Adventist, with the question "What's the news, Captain Bates?" He replied, "The news is that the seventh day is the Sabbath."

In 1846 Bates published a tract dealing with the Sabbath. In this 48-page tract entitled "The Seventh-day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign," he presented the case of the Sabbath almost exclusively on the basis of the Ten Commandments as the moral guide and rule for all mankind, including Christians. He touched only briefly on the prophesied change of the Sabbath by the papal little horn of Daniel 7.

Printing this book on the Sabbath brought Joseph into financial difficulties which is illustrated in the following story:

"Joseph," said his wife, coming in from the kitchen, "I haven't enough flour to finish my baking."

"That so?" commented her husband. "How much flour do you lack?"

"Oh, about four pounds," said she.

"All right." And shortly he rose and went out, and buying four pounds of flour, came in and left it on the kitchen table while she was temporarily out. But immediately she was at his door again, I fancy with a suspicion which she hoped he might disprove.

"Joseph, where did this flour come from?"

"I bought it. Isn't that what you wanted?"

"Yes; but have you, Captain Joseph Bates, a man who has sailed with cargoes worth thousands of dollars, gone out and bought just *four pounds* of flour?"

"Wife, for those four pounds of flour I spent the last money I have on earth."

Her apron flew to her eyes, as the tears flowed, and with sobbing voice she cried, "What are we going to do?"

Joseph Bates rose to his full height. "I am going to write a book on the Sabbath, and distribute it everywhere, to carry the truth to the people," he said.

"Yes, but what are we going to live on?"

"Oh, the Lord will provide."

"Yes! 'The Lord will provide'! That's what you always say." Exit with sobs and tears.

Well, Joseph Bates couldn't do anything about it, that he knew. So he turned from his husbandly duties to his apostleship duties, and began to write. Within half an hour he was impressed that he should go to the post office, for a letter with money in it. He went, and found the letter, which contained a ten-dollar bill, from a man who said he felt impressed that Elder Bates needed money. With this he purchased ample supplies, sending them ahead to a surprised wife. When he arrived at home, she excitedly demanded to know where they came from.

"Oh," said he, "the Lord sent them."

"What do you mean, 'The Lord sent them'?"

"Prudy," said he, "read this letter, and you will know how the Lord provides."

Prudence Bates read it; and then she went in and had another good cry, but for a different reason.

Bates continued his ministry to the end of his life. In 1871, the year before his death, he held at least one hundred meetings, besides those at his local church in Monterey and the conferences that he faithfully attended. He died at the Health Institute in Battle Creek on March 19, 1872. He was buried by the side of his wife in Poplar Hill cemetery in Monterey, where about a hundred of his Adventist brethren also await the call of the Lifegiver.



Sister Lucy with a group of interested souls



Bow Down

“As I live, saith the Lord, Every knee shall bow to me.”
Romans 14:11

Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, “our Redeemer”, the Lord of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel.”¹ We know that “in the volume of the Book”, the Bible, “it is written” of Him, Jesus Christ.² And if we “searchest for” Him “as for hidden treasures”, then we shall “understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.”³ We would find Him to be “a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth,”⁴ “which exercises lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.”⁵ And as it is written “freely ye have received, freely give.”⁶

It was Tuesday, February 24, 1998 when I boarded the bus for a ride to my place of pilgrimage. I was reading from the book of Isaiah, chapter 40, especially verse seventeen, when these thoughts entered my mind. I thought that if I am able to “endure until the end,”⁷ and then sit “at meat with Him,”⁸ “to eat of the hidden manna,”⁹ I might say unto Him, Friend, “why camest Thou?”¹⁰ (See Jeremiah 31:3). But that is another story. Maybe it is my imagination, but I often notice that when someone is reading the Bible, few people sit next to him. So, I was surprised when a woman sat next to me, when there were other available seats. I asked this woman, “Do you study the Bible?” She said, “Sometimes. I mainly study the Koran.” Please, don’t misunderstand me. It is God’s will that “all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the Truth.”¹¹ And do we not have the Truth? But the Record states, that “all men have not faith.”¹² “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”¹³

Even as I “set my affection on things above,”¹⁴ and meditate on “heavenly things,”¹⁵ and “stand before the judgment seat of Christ,”¹⁶ I am not ready to cry out “to the mountains and rocks, ” fall on me, and hide me “from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne.”¹⁷ “For our God is a consuming fire.”¹⁸ But, I hope to see Him. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” 1 John 3:3. Now I understand why they “cast their crowns before the throne.”¹⁹ (see Ecclesiastes 3:20 and Revelation 4:11).

I related to the woman about the time when I worked for a company that delivered auto parts. Two men that worked for the company asked me if I was a Muslim (the appearance of my beard). I said, “No, I am a Christian.” Then one man questioned, “Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Bible is the word of God spoken to man?” I said, “Yes,” and he laughed at me. I learned from him the different sect of Muslims. He was of the orthodox Muslim. She was of the sect that followed Louis Farrakhan. The woman stated that she could not speak on what others believe, but her opinion was that Jesus was not her Saviour, was not a Saviour, and that the only God was the god of the Koran! (See Exodus 23:13).

Then suddenly a car jolted in front of the bus. The driver quickly stepped on the brakes. The woman grabbed the chair in front of her and cried out, "Jesus!" "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." Proverbs 1:26.

Chester Cosby

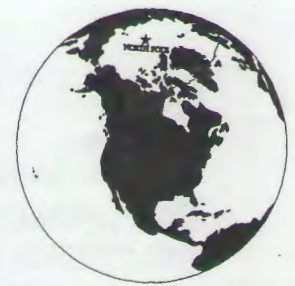
1. Isaiah 47:4.
2. Hebrews 10:7.
3. Proverbs 2:4,5.
4. Psalms 86:15.
5. Jeremiah 9:24.
6. Matthew 10:8.
7. Mark 13:13.
8. Luke 14:15
9. Revelation 2:17
10. Matthew 22:12.

- 11.1 Timothy 2:4.
- 12.2 Thessalonians 3:2.
13. Romans 3:18.
14. Colossians 3:2.
15. Hebrews 9:23.
16. Romans 14:10.
17. Revelation 6:16.
18. Hebrews 12:29.
19. Revelation 4:10.



Our missionary, Sister Lucy in Belize

Current Scene



Oprah versus the Mad Cow Boys

From *Common Ground*, Feb., 1998

"On the 20th of January a trial began in Amarillo, Texas. On the one side were Oprah Winfrey and Howard Lyman. They were accused of costing the cattle industry and particular individuals in that industry significant money losses. How? Howard Lyman suggested that grinding up dead cows and feeding them to live ones could create the conditions in which Mad Cow Disease could spread to humans. He based his assertion on the experience in Great Britain where exactly this practice has been blamed for numerous cases of this devastating and incurable illness. On Oprah's show, the Cattle Industries' Representative had defended the practice of 'feeding cattle to cattle' with the idea that a limited amount of that was being done in the United States. But the answer came from Lyman:" The same thing that we've heard here today is exactly what was heard for ten years in England. 'Not to worry, we're on top of this'...If we continue to [feed] animals to animals, I believe we are going to be in exactly the same place....**Today we could do exactly what the British did and cease feeding cows to cows. Why in the world are we not doing that? Because we have the greedy that are getting the ear of government instead of the needy...**What it comes down to is, about half of the slaughter of animals is non-sellable to humans. They either have to pay to put it into the dump or they sell it as feed. So they grind it up, turn it into something that looks like brown sugar, all of the road kills and euthanized animals, add it to them, grind it up and feed it back to other animals. It's about as simple as you can be. We are doing something to an animal that was never intended to be done.

"Oprah was disgusted. She said she had eaten her last burger. On the commodities exchange the price of beef dropped. (Along with the prices of coal, natural gas and crude oil. Commodities overall were down that day.) A number of cattlemen lost money. One of the largest, Paul Engler, was so angry at Oprah that he sued her for his supposed stock market trading losses. He used the provisions of a new Texas law which prohibits people from defaming certain food products. This law provides for triple damages, that is triple the loss that Engler alleges he suffered.

Mad Cows

"In March 1996, the British government publicly acknowledged that consumption of beef from cows afflicted with Mad Cow Disease was the 'most likely' explanation for a rash of cases of the human variation of the disease. Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease. CJD is incurable and fatal, riddling its victims' brains with spongy holes.

"What prompted the British government to reverse a decade of denial? What caused them to openly make statements that would cost the British beef industry billions of dollars?

"CJD, which had heretofore only occurred rarely and in older people, was now occurring with alarming and increasing frequency in young people, including some children. The evidence linking these deaths to consumption of beef from infected cows was mounting rapidly. And it was becoming indisputable that the disease had become epidemic among England's cows thanks to the practice of feeding protein derived from rendered cattle back to cattle.

Into the Courtroom

"A group of Texas cattlemen who were particularly displeased with the show decided to sue Lyman and Harpo productions (Oprah's production company) for \$20 million. The suit is based on 'food disparagement' laws now on the books in Texas and 14 other states. Under these laws, food producers can sue you for disparaging their products as unsafe, even if you clearly intended no harm.

"Under the Texas law, Lyman must prove that the on-air concern he voiced about beef is based on 'reliable scientific inquiry, facts, or data.' Disparagement laws place the burden of proof on the defendant. It won't be enough for Lyman to produce scientists who validate his statements. He can be convicted if the cattlemen can convince a rural Texas jury that his statements deviated from 'reasonable and reliable scientific inquiry, facts, and data.' What makes this so chilling is that what constitutes 'reasonable and reliable scientific inquiry, facts and data' is often a matter of opinion and interpretation. The advance of science has always proceeded through hypothesis and change.

'Such laws,' says Rhoda Karpatkin, President of the Consumers Union, 'give the food and agriculture industry the power to choke off concern and criticism about food quality and safety. People who voice concerns about Mad Cow Disease in beef-certainly appropriate at this moment-can be required to spend huge sums of money

defending litigation brought by powerful ranchers.

"The penalties for food disparagement vary. In Texas, the penalty is triple the damages. In Idaho, defendants can owe an amount equal to the plaintiff's claimed financial damages. In Colorado, 'food disparagers' can be fined and sentenced to a year in jail.

"These laws seem designed to prevent people from expressing opinions that might discourage consumers from buying particular foods. The industries that have the most to gain by such legislation are the ones with the most to be lost by free debate and public criticism over food quality and safety. The meat, dairy and egg industries have been the prime sponsors, advocates and supporters of food disparagement laws.

" 'Agricultural disparagement statutes represent a legislative attempt to insulate an economic sector from criticism. They may be strikingly successful in chilling the speech of anyone concerned about the food we eat,' observes David Bederman, Associate Professor of Law at Emory University Law School. 'The freedom of speech, always precious, becomes ever more so as the agricultural industries use previously untried methods as varied as exotic pesticides, growth hormones, radiation and genetic engineering on our food supply. Scientists and consumer advocates must be able to express their legitimate concerns. The agricultural disparagement statutes quell just that type of speech. 'At bottom,' says Bederman, 'any restriction on speech about the quality and safety of our food is dangerous, undemocratic and unconstitutional.'

'Unconstitutional? United States' First Amendment begins with the declaration: 'Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press...' " (And of course, ends with Congress not making any law respecting any religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof-which the Founding Fathers saw as related to the freedom of speech, apparently.)

"The Bill of Rights recognizes how fundamental the right of free speech is to a democracy. Citizens must have the right, unimpeded by the bullying of vested interests, to hear all sides of a controversy. The glory of a democratic, free society is that we can express our differences in public, without worrying that the speech police will arrest us. If the right to voice freely one's concerns about food safety and quality continues to be jeopardized, the very basis of democracy is undermined.

"There can be no democratic form of government when controversial opinions are forbidden, when people cannot publicly disagree and dissent. A defining characteristic of authoritarian regimes is intolerance of perspectives that challenge the official point of view. A classic tool of tyrants is the censorship of those who ask uncomfortable questions, or otherwise threaten the official viewpoint."

Conclusion

This latest case of the erosion of our rights and freedoms just goes to show the truth of the saying, "Not man or beast is safe while the legislature is in session." Who had any idea that these laws even existed until this court case became public? The media has largely trivialized these issues, just as they will other more profound spiritual issues like the Law of God, as compared to the whims, wishes and laws of man. Thankfully Oprah has recently won this lawsuit and was acquitted by the court in Texas, but remember, this biological time-bomb is still ticking. How long until the vested interests of big business, big churches, and big governments unite to push the Sunday laws amidst the calamities of the Last Days? Which calamities, man will largely have brought upon himself by his own lust and greed. **There are so many pressures in society today to limit the freedom of any and every one that does not agree with the accepted viewpoint, even if this viewpoint is exposing literally millions of people to grave danger.** This case just underscores the fact that the Holy Spirit is slowly but surely withdrawing from this earth, and that the angel of mercy will soon fold her wings to no longer plead with the guilty inhabitants of the earth. No one knows how long mercy will linger of course, but this rapid erosion of our right to free speech just underlines how close we are to the angels ceasing to hold the winds, and then all of the consequences of the influence of selfish special interest groups, (e.g. drug companies, arms manufacturers) and the worst that Satan can do in the elements, will culminate with the Mark of the Beast.

Incidentally, there will certainly be an environmental aspect to the Sunday Law. Have you noticed in the last few years that the media buzz-words are "how we have to preserve the environment"? Now, many scientists are openly stating that the earth could heal itself if we only gave her about a 15% reduction in water, earth and airborne-pollutants-just the amount that a one day a week cessation of work world-wide would accomplish. By Jerry Eaton



ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

"Who would steal a wheelchair?"

This is a question that Jim's dad asked on that Tuesday afternoon but no answer came.

"You wait here," Jim's dad told him. Of course Jim couldn't go anywhere without his wheelchair anyway.

Jim watched his father disappear up the aisle again. He glanced around and saw that the concert hall was almost empty. Jim had come to watch a piano concert with his father and they had been waiting for most of the people to leave before going to retrieve the wheelchair. It was easier than trying to maneuver the wheelchair around crowds of people. And now, someone had stolen his only means of getting around while they had been enjoying the concert. Jim couldn't believe that anyone could do something that cruel. Fear and bitterness filled his heart.

A few minutes later, Jim's father returned with a security guard, pushing a battered, flimsy wheelchair. "We can take you to the car in this," his father said, apologetically. "At least we'll be able to get home."

"Then, what? How will I get into the house?" Jim's family could not afford two wheelchairs; the stolen chair was the only one he had. The obstacles he was facing seemed insurmountable in Jim's mind.

"I'll ask our neighbour to help us. You can sit on our crossed arms and we'll carry you .. we'll work it out, somehow."

Jim's mind was racing in twenty different directions. What was he going to do? His wheelchair allowed him to get around and be fairly independent. Without it, he couldn't even attend school!

Jim rode home in silence, barely hearing his father's description of reporting the theft to the police. He was too upset to pay attention.

The next morning, Jim stayed in bed. He couldn't go to school; he couldn't even go to the kitchen table without help. He still felt the humiliation of having to be carried into the house like a child the previous day. In his depressed state of mind, he didn't hear the commotion going on outside his door until his mother walked in.

"Jim, look! It's . . . wonderful!"

Jim slowly turned toward his mother and saw a gleaming, brand new wheelchair!

"How? . . . Where did it come from?" Jim suddenly felt alive again. He struggled to get out from under his blankets and reach for his clothes at the same time.

"Let me help you," his mother said, her eyes bright and shining. "Someone is waiting to talk to you."

When Jim wheeled himself into the living room, a man stood up and introduced himself as a reporter for the local television station. "You're famous," he told Jim, showing him the front page of the local newspaper. There was an article on the wheelchair theft.

"When your report reached the police station, people immediately started sending in money. One of the reporters picked up on the story and called it in to his editor so it would make the early edition of the newspaper. By six o'clock this morning, we received this new wheelchair from an anonymous donor, plus calls and pledges from all over the city and county . . . everyone wants to help."

The television reporter interviewed Jim, and his helpers stood around with the lights and equipment. Within minutes, before Jim could fully absorb what had just happened the reporter and his crew had gone. But, the wheelchair remained . . . sturdy, solid proof that this whole thing was not just a dream.

Mail began pouring in the next day, cards and letters from strangers who wanted to show their support. Many envelopes had money in them. They were donations to be used for needed medical equipment, or to further Jim's education. Before the story died down, there was a large trust fund set up for his future.

Jim and his family were overwhelmed by this outpouring of love and kindness. But, even more importantly, Jim discovered that God would always take care of him! No matter what happened, Jim would never lose his trust again.



“The adversary of souls is not permitted to read the thoughts of men; but he is a keen observer, and he marks the words; he takes account of actions, and skillfully adapts his temptations to meet the cases of those who place themselves in his power. If we would labour to repress sinful thoughts and feelings, giving them no expression in words or actions, Satan would be defeated; for he could not prepare his specious temptations to meet the case.” Ellen G. White, March 22, 1887.

“If Satan can succeed in leading men to place value upon his own works as works of merit and righteousness, he knows that he can overcome him by his temptations and make him his victim and prey... The enemy of man and God is not willing that this truth (that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, not because of any merit on our part, but as a free gift from God), should be clearly presented; for he knows that if the people receive it fully his power will be broken.” Ellen G. White, September 3, 1889.

“The east is not farther from the west, than are the children of light, in customs, practices, and spirit, from the children of darkness. This distinction will be more marked, more decided, as we near the close of time.” Ellen G. White, Jan. 8, 1884.

SOFT DRINKS



Nutritionally, soft drinks are low in value. Their food energy comes solely from refined sugar. Every element of nutritional importance except calories, is zero.

Soft drinks have much in common with hard liquor, claimed the discoverer of insulin, Dr. Charles Best. Used excessively either may create a protein deficiency by providing no nutrients and lessening the desire for nourishing foods. Among other effects, prolonged protein deficiency ultimately damages the liver. Cirrhosis of the liver has been found among teenagers who drink large quantities of soft drinks, as well as among chronic alcoholics.

As well with all empty foodstuffs, soft drinks may displace nourishing items in the diet. Nutritionists write that "Americans spend more soft drinks... (money) which could more wisely be spent for milk, vegetables, eggs, cereals, etc. (Food for Life). Where the budget cannot afford both, malnutrition results; where it can afford both, the result is obesity."

Soft drinks contain large amounts of refined sugar (or, until banned, artificial sweeteners). New artificial sweeteners have appeared which are equally as bad, or worse; some acting as carcinogenic agents or producing mutations (genetic changes). Soft drink manufacturers are among the top commercial users of sugar. An eight-ounce bottle of a soft drink contains about five teaspoons of sugar.

All soft drinks contain a sizable amount of acid, usually phosphoric or citric. Both erode tooth enamel, and impair the appetite as well as the digestive processes by creating excessive acidity in the stomach. Even mild acids from citrus fruits can erode tooth enamel, and the stronger ones in soft drinks are far more destructive. The problem is compounded by the high sugar content in the soft drink, which acts on bacteria present in the mouth, and forms additional acid to that already present in the beverage. Soft drinks are drunk frequently between meals, so the sugar remains in the mouth and is readily converted into acid. So, the teeth are being constantly subjected to both the acids present in the drink and those formed in the mouth.

Dr. Clive M. McCay and his associates were astonished when studying the composition of cola drinks, at the high amounts of phosphoric acid present in all soft drinks but especially in the colas. The strong acid taste is masked by the high sugar content. His experimental animals lost enamel, losing much of the calcium; some had their molar teeth dissolved down to the gum line.

This study is significant and clear. Many teenagers admit that they use soft drinks almost to the exclusion of water. Sadly enough, many of these young people are not so well fed as were the experimental rats.

A high intake of phosphorus, in any form, can upset the body's calcium-phosphorus balance. This is an especially important factor in children with rickets. There is also evidence that excessive phosphate prevents the absorption of iron, a mineral essential to the diet.

Soft drink processors may use many different colourings, flavourings, preservatives, anti-foaming agents, emulsifiers, and fillers in their beverages. Both coal-tar colours of "certified dyes" approved by the federal government and "de-certified" ones (which may still be used within the confines of certain states with impunity) offer unnecessary risks. Similarly, objections can be raised about the inclusion of artificial flavours and other additives, as well as the drug caffeine.

To date, the consumer is largely uninformed regarding the ingredients used in soft drinks and colas. The soft-drink industry has had a long record of resisting attempts to bring about informative labelling.

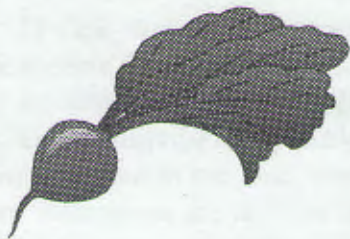
Soft drinks not only contain additives but also caffeine, a drug. This drug is contained in all cola drinks without being stated on the label.

We as health reformers must avoid using soft drinks. Fruit juices and plain water are natural substitutes for these harmful beverages.

John S. Theodorou, D.D.S., M.S.



Bookbinding at the IMS Publishing House



Beets

The most common beet is red and round. But beets can be long and tapered or even oval-shaped. And beets come in different colours: golden-yellow, white and in the case of an Italian variety, candy-striped!

How to buy

- The best time to scout for beets is in early summer when you'll find small beets the size of golf balls. These tender delicacies cook up much faster than their larger counterparts.
- When you buy a bunch, look for beets of equal size so that they'll cook up evenly.
- Check out the tops. Perky greens indicate freshly picked beets.
- Avoid overly large beets (over 2 inches or 6.3 cm in diameter). They may be tough and woody. And when buying tops, the smaller the leaves the better.

Nutrition

- Beets are a good source of vitamin C and folacin. Beet tops offer even more nutrients: high levels of beta carotene, vitamin C, calcium and iron.

Preparation Tips

- It's best to cook beets whole. If you cut them before you cook them, the deep crimson colour will leach out and your beets will turn a dull brown.
- To prevent excess bleeding, leave two inches (5 cm) of the stem attached to the root and don't trim the tap root until after it's cooked.
- Wash beets carefully. The outer skin can tear easily and the beet will bleed.

Cook it right

- When cooking grated or precut beets, add a little lemon juice to preserve the colour. You can steam, boil, microwave or bake beets. All the colour and sweetness is retained when beets are baked rather than boiled.
- One of the easiest ways to cook whole beets is wrapped in foil, like a potato, in 350 degree oven until tender.
- Cook beet greens just as you would spinach or chard: saute until wilted or steam lightly. Beet greens are great raw in salads.

Storage

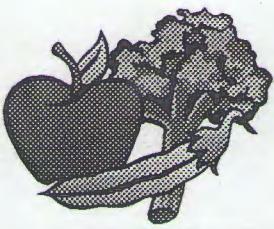
- If you have bought beet roots with tops attached, cut them off and store them separately. Greens are highly perishable. Eat as soon as possible. The roots, stored in a plastic bag in the crisper, will last up to three weeks.

Beet Creations

- Compatible ingredients include bitter greens, potatoes, carrots, cucumbers, walnuts
- Favourite beet creations include borscht, warm or cold beet salads.



Our church in New South Wales
Australia



Pesticides

According to the July 1997 issue of the Nutrition Action Newsletter, roughly half the fruits and vegetables tested have pesticide residue on or in them, and about 40 percent have multiple residues. Pesticides have serious, harmful effects on our health. Prolonged exposure to pesticides raises the risk of cancer and can weaken the immune system. People who work with pesticides are at greatest risk. Eating food that contains pesticide residues is less risky, but it is still a risk. On the other hand, many experts point out that the evidence that fruits and vegetables help protect against heart disease and cancer is far stronger than the evidence against pesticides.

The safest and best solution is to buy certified organic fresh produce. Health food stores, co-ops, and even many supermarkets carry it. While it may not look as pretty as conventionally grown produce, you can eat organic produce worry-free. This is especially good news for infants and vegetarians who are at greater risk from exposure to pesticide residues.

When buying non-organic produce there are ways to reduce the risk. Eat a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. This helps to minimize the exposure to any one pesticide. Eat local produce when it's in season whenever possible. Imported produce is more likely to be contaminated because more agri-chemicals are used to stop fruits and vegetables from rotting en route. And, many pesticides that are banned in Canada are still used abroad. Wash all produce in a sink full of water with a few drops of mild, dishwashing liquid and a good, strong vegetable brush. After you've done that, give it a thorough rinse in cold running water.

Wax can appear on apples, cucumbers, squashes, sweet and white potatoes, tomatoes, sweet peppers, beets and rutabagas. The wax itself is harmless, but it forms a seal over the skin that prevents pesticides from being washed away.

Peel all fruit and raw vegetables. If you are cooking vegetables, keep the peels on, then remove after cooking. Trim the outer leaves of lettuce and cabbage. Peeling away the skin from fruits and vegetables means discarding the portion richest in fibre and some nutrients, but if you buy organic you can still eat the skin.

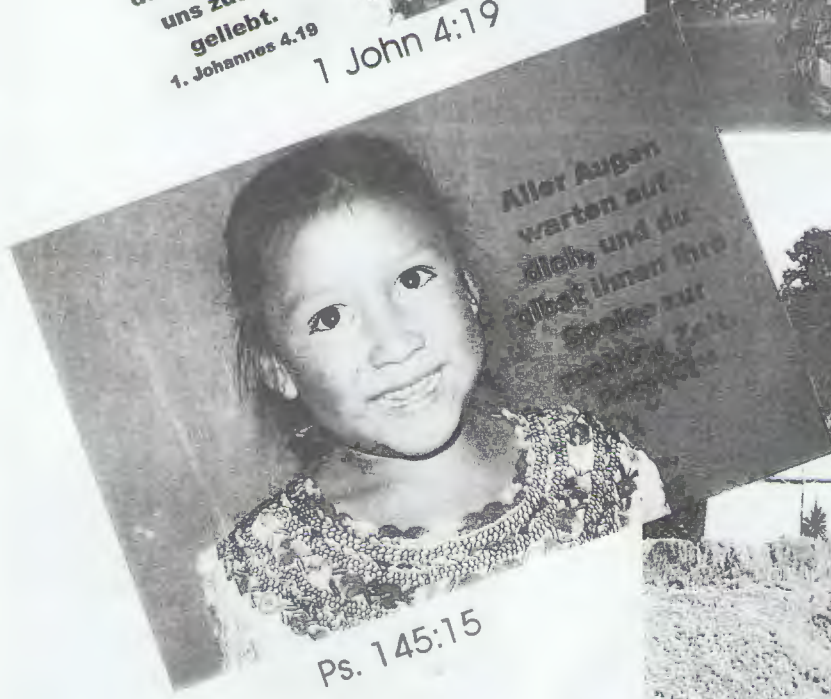
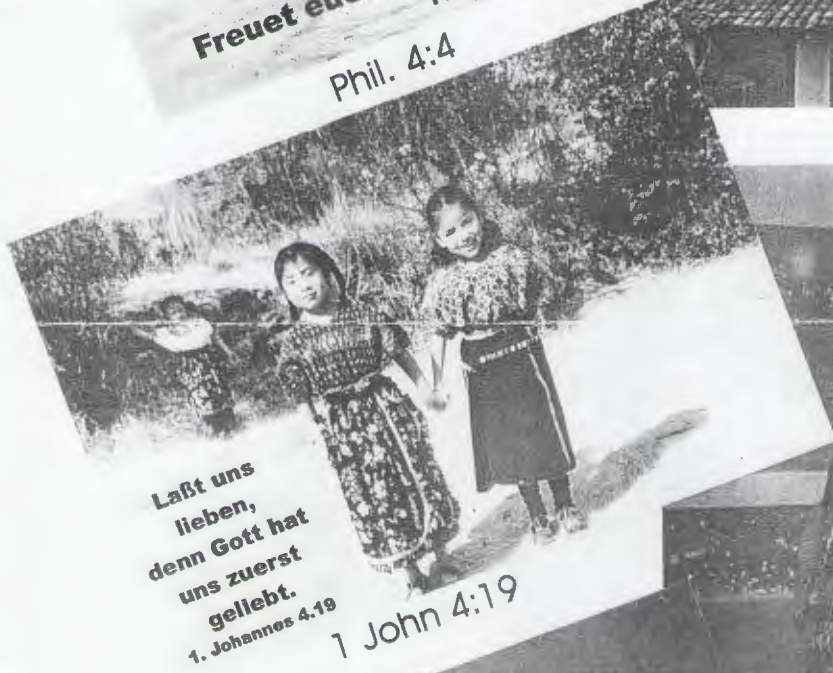
Although pesticides are widely used, we can reduce their effect on us by these simple methods.

Correction

*The IMS publishing regrets the error that appeared in the March Messenger.
The article entitled "Time" was written by George Williams and not by
Richard Lapense.*

Our School Called "Reformation" in Totonicapán, Guatemala

The existing school building ↓



Breaking the ground for the new school building

SWEPT WITH THE TIDE

O LORD, MY LORD
I'M SWEPT WITHIN THIS TIDE I FIND
HAS CLAIMED MY SOUL, MY HEART,
MY MIND.....

CONFUSION DRAGS ME
TO THE DEPTHS
AND LEAVES MY HOPES
AND DREAMS BEHIND...
I NEED YOUR LOVE AND MERCY KIND,

AM I LOST ALREADY,
HOPELESS, BLIND?
WHAT CAN SHOW THE TRUTH
BUT ONLY TIME....

HIS ANSWER:
MY CHILD, YOU ARE A FLOWER
TRODDEN UPON
BY THOSE SO DEEPLY HURT
WITHIN THEIR SOUL
THEY CANNOT, DARE NOT SEE...

WITH LOVE, MY LOVE,
YOU TAKE THEIR GRIEF
AND SEEK TO UNDERSTAND
HOW IT CAME TO BE...
YOU STRIVE TO GIVE THEM
ALL THAT MIGHT RELIEVE,
YOU TURN FROM PRAISE
AND HOPE OF VICTORY
AND PRAY SO DEEP WITHIN
THAT THEY WILL BELIEVE...

MY CHILD, MY CHILD,
YOU ARE A JOY TO ME!
YOU ARE COVERED
WITH THE MANTLE
OF MY PEACE!

By Darlene Forbes