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The Last Supper



"You Must be Born Again"

These words of Jesus to Nicodemus have a deeper meaning than many realize. Nicodemus, who was a religious teacher had failed to see the importance of the new birth. He had kept the commandments outwardly, thinking that he has earned the eternal life but the words of Jesus opened his eyes to see his wrong ideas of salvation.

"The learned Nicodemus had read these pointed prophecies with a clouded mind, but now he began to comprehend their true meaning, and to understand that even a man as just and honourable as himself must experience a new birth through Jesus Christ, as the only condition upon which he could be saved, and secure an entrance into the kingdom of God. Jesus spoke positively that unless a man is born again he cannot discern the kingdom which Christ came upon earth to set up. Rigid precision in obeying the law would entitle no man to enter the kingdom of Heaven." *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, p. 132

Then there must be a difference between the religious person who is born again and the one who is not. John writes, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:9.

Sister White comments on this text. "The standard which is to test every doctrine, every theory, every profession, is the law of God. 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin,'--break the law of Jehovah. If a man is born of God, he will respect the principles of the divine

government, and will not wilfully transgress the law of God in thought, or word, or action. 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.' 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.' Jesus prayed that His disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and added, 'Thy word is truth.'"

The Signs of the Times, April 30, 1896.

The clear difference between the two classes of professed Christians is: One keeps the commandments of God and does not commit sin. The other class struggles on in human weakness. "For the good that I would do I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Rom. 7:19.

Of such professors of religion, John writes, "He that commiteth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." 1 John 3:8.

The life of a Christian reveals if he is truly born again or not. Jesus said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. 7:16.

Sister White continues to explain the new birth further. "Christ overcame every temptation of the enemy, because in him divinity and humanity were combined; but there is no safety for any soul who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness, a round of ceremonial exactions. To attend services on the Sabbath, to pray occasionally or regularly, makes no one a Christian. The important thing is to become united to

Christ, to believe in Christ as a personal Saviour, to live by faith in the Son of God. The question to ask the soul is, 'Am I a partaker of the divine nature, represented as being born again? Has a new moral taste been created?' If not, the soul is in deadly peril. He who is born of God is a new man. 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' The old, imperious will is gone. The pride is cleansed from the soul. Selfishness is uprooted. The quick, passionate temper no longer masters the man; for Jesus Christ has brought the thoughts into captivity to himself. Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let no arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. 'Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'" The Signs of the Times, Sept. 26, 1892.

Many professed Christians are not even sure of themselves if they are born again or not. Paul asks the believers to find out if they are truly converted. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." 2 Cor. 13:5. And Sister White adds one more

evidence of the new birth. "The most powerful evidence a man can give that he has been born again and is a new man in Christ Jesus, is the manifestation of love for his brethren, the doing of Christlike deeds. This is the most wonderful witness that can be borne in favour of Christianity, and will win souls to the truth..."

Sons and Daughters of God, p. 293.

The next question that comes up is, how can I be born again? What must I do to have this experience? The first requirement is prayer. "Pray that you may be born again. If you have this new birth you will delight yourself, not in the crooked ways of your own desires, but in the Lord. You will desire to be under His authority. You will strive constantly to reach a higher standard. Be not only Bible readers, but earnest Bible students, that you may know what God requires of you. You need an experimental knowledge of how to do His will. Christ is our Teacher." Test. Vol. 6, p. 161.

One occasional prayer is not sufficient. We must "pray without ceasing" as Paul writes to us. "I saw some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale and marked with deep anxiety, expressive of their internal struggle. Firmness and great earnestness was expressed in their countenances; large drops of perspiration fell from their foreheads." EW, 269.

This kind of prayer will bring results and the soul is renewed by the new birth experience. We also need to pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "There is nothing the Lord has more frequently told us He would bestow upon us, and nothing by which His name would be more

glorified in bestowing, than the Holy Spirit. When we partake of this Spirit, men and women will be born again. There will be a firm pressing together. A firm, unwavering faith in God will be seen. The Sun of Righteousness will be in our midst, with healing in His wings. Souls once lost will be found, and brought back and kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Manuscript Releases Vol. 7, p. 388-389.

Another requirement for the new birth experience is obedience. "From a sense of thorough conviction, you can then testify to men of the immutable character of the law manifested by the death of Christ on the cross, the malignant nature of sin, and the righteousness of God in justifying the believer in Jesus on condition of his future obedience to the statutes of God's government in heaven and earth." Rev. & Her., April 24, 1888.

"Is he now free to transgress God's law? Says Paul: 'Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.' 'How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' And John declares: 'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.' Romans 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3.

In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then 'the righteousness of the law' will be 'fulfilled

in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' Romans 8:4. And the language of the soul will be: 'O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.' Psalms 119:97." Great Controversy, 468.

Justification takes place on condition of our future obedience. If there is no future obedience to the law, there cannot be a new birth either. The law of God must become our joy and delight.

Because of these requirements very few professed Christians do have this wonderful experience of the new birth. Many members in the very church of God may not be born again.

"The minds of many are clouded with unbelief because those who unite with the church as the chosen of God do not reveal the virtues that are the fruits of the Spirit. Joining the church is not a sure evidence that a man has joined himself to Christ. The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ." Manuscript Releases, vol. 12, p. 51.

Sis. White wrote, "The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world." Many do not even know what it means. "There are many who know nothing of the new birth. They do not know that the truth will test them, and make manifest whether they really are in the truth or not. We should see to it that we are not deceived. We should know that we are really rooted and grounded in the truth.

The Lord wants us to have the fullness of His blessing, that we may not be on the side of the questioner and doubter, but have spiritual discernment, and be able to know the voice of the True Shepherd from the voice of a stranger. We must have an individual experience. Do not flatter yourselves that because you have made a high profession, you are the light of the world. The question is, 'Are you the light of the world, or are you the darkness of the world?'" Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Jan 10, 1889.

By accepting Christ as our personal Saviour divinity will combine with humanity and the mighty power of God will come upon us and all things will become possible to us. We can move mountains.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1: 12-13.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.' 2 Cor. 5:17. The old nature, born of blood

and the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The old ways, the hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up; for grace is not inherited. The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit, have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. When men who claim to be Christians retain all their natural defects of character and disposition, in what does their position differ from that of the worldling? They do not appreciate the truth as a sanctifier, a refiner. They have not been born again..." Maranatha, p. 237.

Let us not delay any more but turn to God in prayer and confessing our sins, pleading for the Holy Spirit. We must make a promise for future obedience and keep this promise. Then the wonderful experience of the new birth will take place and we move from death to life and then we truly enjoy our new life in Christ.

AMEN.



"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 skilfully 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.

DUTY VS. NEED

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth . . . And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good . . ." Genesis 1:1,31

God created Adam and Eve perfect in the Garden of Eden and gave them everything they needed to lead a happy, successful life, without sin and sadness. He laid out His plans for them and the way they were to live in order to continue in their happy, holy state. He gave them pleasant duties to perform to keep them busy, and they needed each other's company. They also had the animals to care for, and they spent time communing with their Creator to whom they could look for guidance and strength. He was a Creator whom they could worship with praise and adoration for the life He had given them. As long as they fulfilled their duties, God had promised to take care of their needs.

However things did not remain this way. Sin entered and things started to go wrong. The right way to live in peace and happiness was lost, and in came a world full of violence, injustice, thievery, deception, sadness, misery and pain. Man started to forget about his duties and obligations to God and started thinking only of his own needs. Then he went on to devise ways to fulfill these needs without any thought of God. They reversed the role of duties and needs. Now only glimpses of the former beauty can still be seen, in nature or in the character of a converted soul (a child of God).

God's original will was for mankind to live forever in peace and happiness, in harmony with all of heaven. He wanted man to lead a life of hard, but pleasant work where he could reap the benefits of his toil; a life where he could develop bonds and friendships with others, where he could marry and have families. His needs would be perfectly taken care of as he faithfully performed his duties. It is when men start to think of their own needs ahead of their duties to God that trouble starts. While it is well and good to acknowledge our needs, we must not let our needs have preeminence in our minds to the exclusion of our duties to our Maker. We all have needs and He has promised to fulfill our needs as we faithfully perform the duties that He has outlined.

Sometimes what we think are needs, are not really true needs. Eve thought she needed the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge in order to arise into the sphere of God as the serpent deceived her into thinking. It was not a true need because it led her to neglect her duty. True needs should lead us closer to the Lord and His purpose for our lives – never into disobedience. We must submit our needs to the Lord instead of taking things into our own hands and trying to fulfill our needs in our own way. Many have gone astray in this fashion.

One of the biggest deceptions of the Adversary regarding needs are those of the divorced person lamenting the fact that they will have to remain single the rest of the life of their spouse. They feel they are so lonely and have a desperate need to be remarried for companionship. This may be a genuine need since they are lonely but this need must be submitted to the Lord because too many have taken this need into their own hands and re-married, thus severing their connection with the body of Christ – His church. While they may still fellowship with God's people they are prohibited from full fellowship because they put their needs before their duty to the Lord. The Lord is the best comfort and strength to a lonely person. How does this person know that God did not allow the divorce so that they could learn to lean on Him for comfort instead of a spouse, to the exclusion of the Lord? Perhaps they were putting their spouse before the Lord and He removed that obstacle. We cannot second-guess the ways of the Lord. Only in eternity will we know why He allowed things to go as they did in our lives. Our duty to God must be unflinching and He will faithfully take care of our needs. Yes, a person may be lonely for awhile after a divorce but it is not God's will that they remarry. They are to submit this loneliness to the Lord.

GOD'S REQUIRED DUTIES

Today we are on this earth to learn of our Creator's original plan for mankind. He wants us to be thankful to Him for all that He has done for us. If we have been faithful He has promised to fulfill our needs. In return He asks for loving obedience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. The Lord has given His followers duties to perform and we must willingly follow Him, not only because we love him, but also because we acknowledge that the keeping of these commandments will lead us to a happy, joyful life. God created man and knew exactly what it would take to keep him happy.

Though we are sinners, Jesus has promised forgiveness to every repentant sinner that comes to Him for pardon since we live in this world of sin. Once forgiven from our past burden of sin and given a new heart, these commandments guide us and keep us in the right way, they keep our hearts pure from sin, and make sure our lives do not have regrets. God wrote these commandments for our benefit, not for some kind of senseless form worship. There are many cults in our world that have leaders who are on the verge of insanity. They are controlled by the devil and they place ridiculous restrictions on their followers. The innocent people love their leaders and are willing to perform some of these senseless ceremonies and sometimes go as far as to commit suicide to please leaders. The restrictions and ceremonies in these cults more often than not will harm the followers rather than help them. Often God's church has been classed with cults by the theological geniuses in our world because they say we make restrictions for our followers. There are restrictions on health, on dress, on the forms of entertainment we indulge in, on the keeping of the commandments, and so on. The major difference, though is that God's

restrictions are for the benefit of mankind. They all make sense and if everyone followed these duties and obligations on this planet, we would be living in heaven. If we worship any other gods that we find in this world we will be unhappy for they do not have any good results and they take time away from time we could spend with our Creator to uplift and strengthen us. "God does not require us to give up anything that it is for our best interest to retain. In all that He does, He has the well-being of His children in view." *Steps to Christ p. 46*

***"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments:
for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13.***

The whole duty that God has placed on mankind is in the keeping of His commandments. They are 10 simple commandments but oh, so hard to keep in our own strength. The Pharisees had perfected the keeping of the letter of the law but fell far short in the keeping of the spirit of God's law.

God's law is not a law of senseless restrictions but rather a guideline, showing us how we can have our needs met and live happy, fulfilled lives. If we steal, we hurt others and we do not feel peace with what we have taken. Perhaps the person or organization we stole from has no knowledge that something has been stolen from them but if we claim to be followers of the Lord *our* hearts will feel the guilt. No longer can we hold our heads high and come to the Lord, thanking Him for everything that we have; that we say the Lord has given to us. How can we pray to God in the night and say, "thank-you for life and all what you have given and the extra \$50 the government mistakenly gave to me for my tax return that really they shouldn't have? But thank you Lord, I really needed the money right now. You sure saw my needs and met them." It creates a barrier between your Saviour and you. Your happiness is marred, because, as I said earlier, God will never fulfill our needs in disobedience.

If we covet something we do not have, it creates a jealousy in our heart, which destroys contentment with life. We feel that the Lord has not fully taken care of our needs. There is something still that we need badly in order for life to be just right. It gives the unhappy feeling of discontent and misery, and in the end may lead us to steal or deal dishonestly.

If we do not keep the Sabbath but choose to work 7 days per week we lose out on a day of communion with Jesus and His Holy angels. They are at church to meet us on Sabbath and if we are at work, who is with us? Are we not neglecting an appointment with our Creator? But we *need* the money, we may say, to support our families and pay our bills. The Sabbath is a day of rest from physical labour when we can concentrate on the greatness of God. It is a time for sharing with our fellow believers. We not only come to receive strength but also as we meet our brethren we strengthen and encourage them. It is here that the Lord gives us strength to perform our duties in the coming week. Without this strength, we will be weak in the face of the trials that the enemy will put in our way. God will supply our needs only as we are faithful to our duties. Our money will stretch further if we are faithful, and our expenses will not be as large.

"The Lord has no place in His work for those who have a greater desire to win the crown than to bear the cross. He wants men who are more intent upon doing their duty than upon receiving their reward – men who are more solicitous for principle than for promotion." *Ministry of Healing, p. 476, 477.* I would like to compare this statement with the taking of a test at school. Some students study little by little as the school semester progresses. Every evening they take time to commit their lessons to memory. There are others who do little or no study until the night before the test. They spend half the night filling their mind with the facts needed to pass the test. Both types of students may pass the test in the morning and do well, but when they graduate, who will be a better worker in their field? It is obvious that the first type of student would. The second group of students will probably remember all the necessary facts for the test but after the test they will slip from their memory since they were not faithfully committed there. They studied only to pass the test, not to have a better knowledge of the subject for themselves. The first students weren't thinking of the test so much as they were of learning the subject well. The first group is conscientious in doing their duty, the second group is only thinking of their needs. They need to pass this test in order to pass the course and receive the degree. It doesn't matter so much how well they do their duty once the test is passed.

Jesus is looking for the type of Christians that the first students represent. He wants those that are daily doing their duty and surrendering their lives to Christ so that they can be a better person and can serve in their appointed field more faithfully. He doesn't need those who are seeking to better themselves, only thinking of how they can be good enough for the reward of eternal life, with little thought of their whole duty to God and also to their fellow man.

LOVE AND DUTY

We have to learn to keep the spirit of the law, of which the Pharisees in Christ's day had little knowledge. The Ten Commandments show our love to God and to man. If we appreciate the law we will see it as a necessity rather than simply a duty to perform to appease an angry God. That is exactly the spirit of the Pharisees and they did not appreciate or enjoy its restrictions. "There is such a thing as overdoing the matter in performing strict duty to individuals. Duty, stern duty, has a twin sister, which is kindness. If duty and kindness are blended, decided advantage will be gained; but if duty is separated from kindness, if tender love is not mingled with duty, there will be a failure, and much harm will be the result. Men and women will not be driven, but many can be won by kindness and love." *Test. For the Church, Vol. 3, p. 108.*

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3. "You have a duty to perform, which is to make yourself cheerful, and to cultivate unselfishness in your feelings until it

will be your greatest pleasure to make all around you happy . . . Cheerfulness without levity is one of the Christian graces. . . Remember that Duty has a twin sister, Love; these united can accomplish almost everything, but separated, neither is capable of good." *Test. For the Church, Vol. 4, p. 62.*

"Love has a twin sister, which is duty. Love and duty stand side by side. Love exercised while duty is neglected will make children headstrong, willful, perverse, selfish, and disobedient. If stern duty is left to stand alone without love to soften and win, it will have a similar result. Duty and love must be blended in order that children may be properly disciplined." *Test. For the Church, Vol.3, p. 195.*

WHEN DUTIES SHOULD NOT MOTIVATE OUR ACTIONS

1) **While doing missionary work.** The Lord also gives us the duty of helping our fellow man. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Romans 15:1. "Among the members of our churches there should be more house-to-house labor in giving Bible readings and distributing literature . . . Women as well as men can engage in the work of hiding the truth where it can work out and be made manifest . . . God's messengers are commissioned to take up the very work that Christ did while on the earth. They are to give themselves to every line of ministry that He carried on. With earnestness and sincerity they are to tell men of the unsearchable riches and the immortal treasure of heaven." *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 9, p. 127, 128, 130.* If we start to feel that it is *our duty* – a way to recommend ourselves to God, a way to win salvation, instead of *our need* – we have lost our way. Missionary work was given to be a blessing for the giver as well as the receiver.. It was God's original will that we help one another.

Many people whom we thought to be sincere Christians will be lost. They were good and kind but they did not recognize their need. In the end they will come and cry to the Lord saying, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?" and Jesus will say, "I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:22, 23. You were too busy performing your duties to recognize your need. You felt you were good enough. I have seen it in the past when leaders have been caught in the snare of thinking that the work of God is dependent on them, that no one else is capable of fulfilling the duties in a certain area or position as they are. This snare has led many "bright stars whom we have admired" to go into outer darkness. God doesn't need you – you need Him.

2) **Our personal devotions.** Salvation is not simply attending church on Sabbath and paying our tithes because it is a required duty of church members. God doesn't need our time or our money, but we need the Sabbath and we need the self-denial involved in tithe paying. Salvation is a complete change of lifestyle that takes up every second of our lives. There is no such thing as a part-time Christian. Happy Christians are full-time Christians who change every detail of their lives in order to be in harmony with God. Their motives and reasons for performing various duties are also changed and this change will be reflected in the countenance of a true Christian.

In the case of the two groups of students mentioned above, the meticulous ones saw their need, their lack of knowledge and desired to fill this void by being faithful in their duty. The second group of students did not see their need and therefore chose to simply perform their duty without seeing any needs.

This problem can arise in other areas of our spiritual lives also. We can get into a rut of performing our spiritual duties without seeing our needs. It can creep very subtly into our Christian life. We are used to praying every morning and evening; we have set times for Bible Study and perhaps are very faithful in performing these duties. But if we start thinking of it as a *duty* only, a ritual that we must perform to keep God happy and on our side, we have started to think only of the test and not of the knowledge of which we are in need. If something unexpected comes up during the hour we have set aside for our study and prayer, we become angry or frustrated because this was God's time and now it is lost. We simply have not learned to make *every* moment of our time God's time. If God's moments are all of our moments we can be flexible to grab every minute available to fill our minds with God's Word. There will be so many extra moments to spare that we will wonder why we ever restricted our study to only one hour a day. "Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking the streets you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in the mind." *Steps to Christ, P. 90* Instead of reading the worldly magazines in the Doctor's office or sitting mindlessly staring out the window on the bus, have your Bible with you and read a passage here or there. You can be a tremendous witness also for those around you. Those that lead extremely busy lives can find the few moments here and there to fill their minds with the truths of God's word. Paul encourages us to "Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5:17

We come to Jesus because of our great need, not because it is simply our duty to do so or we will become like the Pharisee. "The Pharisee goes up to the temple to worship, not because he feels that he is a sinner in need of pardon, but because he thinks himself righteous and hopes to win commendation. His worship he regards as an act of merit that will recommend him to God. . . His worship is prompted by self interest." *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 150* We have often heard this famous story of the Pharisee and the Publican but it is an easy trap to fall into. Perhaps we don't condemn others, like the Pharisee did, but we still might be in the process of falling this way. Ask yourself, why do you go to church? Is it because Jesus said you must in order to be saved? Or is it because you feel you are a sinner in need of healing and you know that you can find healing in being amongst God's people? Do you feel that God will simply save me because I did this and I did that? Do you do missionary work because it is a requirement for salvation? While these duties are very important – duty should

not be the motivating factor or we will be as the Pharisees. Our great need should be the motivating factor. As we see our need we are pointed to the love of Christ – our hearts melt and we will utter, “What must I do to be saved?” Then we will follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Ask yourself another question, would you go to church and follow the ways of right living that are pointed out in the Bible if there was no heaven to win or hell to shun? If we can answer yes to this last question we really do understand truly that God’s way is the best way for us. We have learned the essence of salvation.

HE WILL FILL OUR NEED

If we are like the Pharisee it is because we do not fully understand our need. “As we see so little burden of the work resting upon ministers and people, we inquire: When the Lord comes, shall He find faith on the earth? It is faith that is lacking. God has an abundance of grace and power awaiting our demand. But the reason we do not feel our great need of it is because we look to ourselves and not to Jesus. We do not exalt Jesus and rely wholly upon His merits.” *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 167*

Instead we must be like the Publican, recognizing our need. “Overwhelmed with a sense of guilt, he stood as if alone in God’s presence. His only desire was for pardon and peace, his only plea was the mercy of God.” *Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 152* “When Satan tells you that you are a sinner, and cannot hope to receive blessing from God, tell him that Christ came into the world to save sinners. We have nothing to recommend us to God; but the plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition that makes His redeeming power a necessity.” *Desire of Ages, p. 317* “Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our only claim to His mercy is our great need.” *Ministry of Healing, p. 161*

What we need to learn is **How to live a Christian life**. It is a work of a lifetime – sanctification. We are here, on this earth, to learn the lessons God wants to teach us. He has a right way for us to live. We must learn what our true needs are and what our duty is, having them in right perspective and not reversing them. Both our needs and duties can be summed up in the keeping of the commandments and meditating upon them for they are the rules for living a happy and a joyful life. We have been given a lesson book for life – the Bible. How few treasure it as they should. It was treasured and studied in greater earnest when it was an outlawed book. Now we have many Bibles and they sit on shelves more often than they should. The Bible should be studied in greater detail for it will teach us the way to lead a purposeful life in harmony with God and it will fulfill our every need. We will also learn of salvation and of the love of our Saviour who died on the cross. We will learn from other people’s mistakes, and other people’s victories. We learn how God took care of man in his hour of greatest need. He has never forsaken any of His followers and they were duly blessed for faithfully performing their duties. As we study the Bible we will find out what our duty is before God and He will supply the strength to fulfill this duty. We have a need – we need His help

Many people think of Christianity as “don’t do this,” and “don’t do that” religion. They are only thinking of their duties. There certainly are things that we should not do, but these restrictions are only for our own good, so that we can *live* and reflect the character of Jesus in our daily life, our daily dealings, and in our relationships. There are many *more* things that we can and should do and we should dwell on those. We should never think of our salvation as either “I am saved” or “I am not saved.” We must think of it as either, “I am living right” or “I am not living right”. Jesus is merciful and willing to save, but we must do our part to learn this salvation and live it out with the power of the Almighty.

If we learn how, with the help of Jesus, to live right we can live eternally in Heaven with Him, but if we can’t get it right after years of trying, we have been trying in our own strength without Jesus and we won’t be in heaven. If we are not there it is because we have not recognized our need and come to the Lord so that He can help us to perform our duties. We are given the gift of life, not just any life, but we are promised a full life of joy and contentment, which will continue into eternity.

Jesus has promised us eternal life. That is His gift to us, but he wants to prepare us for translation. We all have defects in our characters that need to be put away in order to enter the heavenly Jerusalem; otherwise heaven will be no different than this earth. The people who are willing to learn to live this lifestyle and see their need will go to heaven and the stubborn ones who refuse to learn will not. Yet if they are lost it is not God’s fault because His, “hand is not shortened, that it cannot save;” Isaiah 59:1. They have rejected the way of God. If we love Jesus so much for the gift He has promised to give us, we will not hesitate to recognize our need and come to the Master Teacher to learn the ways of the redeemed so that we can be fitted to walk among them. There will be no question in our mind when Jesus tells us, “This is how we eat in heaven; this is how we dress in heaven; this is how we act in heaven; I will help you learn this way so you can be ready.” Our answer should be, “Yes, Jesus, I will. Is there anything more?” There is a perfect way of life which God intended for us and we need to wake up and follow that way or else our religion is in vain. God wants to restore in man what was lost in Eden.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27.

AMEN

Wendy Eaton



He Leadeth Me

***"But the path of the just is as the shining light,
that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4:18.***

In my childhood I learned about the existence of God and Jesus in my parent's home. It was far from the city and without any church to attend. My family and I grew up on a farm in Cuba. We worshipped God according to the light we had received, worshipping images of "saints". On some occasions my brothers and I, together with our parents, visited a place where a group of people used to meet once a week to celebrate a meeting, holding their hands and walking in a circle, singing very softly first and then higher to invoke the so-called "spirits of the dead". Looking at those people falling to the ground, rolling over, standing and talking, telling the past and predicting the future to the people who had come for that purpose, wasn't a pleasant experience. Although it was very scary to see this kind of service I believed that it was the spirits of the dead that spoke through those mediums. At home I used to pray to different images of "saints" which my mother had in one corner of the bedroom that I shared with one of my older sisters. The enemy was doing his work, but at the same time God was also working in my life. My parent's farm was like a paradise with different kinds of flowers, fruits, vegetables and animals. These things were our entertainment during the day. During the night the starry sky, like a gigantic screen, showed the marvellous creations of God.

Time was about to change. ***"He that sustains the universe, that changeth the time and the seasons, that removeth kings and setteth up kings..."*** Daniel 2:21, was about to change the direction of the events in my country.

It was December 2, 1956 when a group of about 83 men arrived on the coast of Cuba in a small yacht on the beach of Las Coloradas

to battle against the ruling government. Some of them died in the attempt, and the rest including the leader, Fidel Castro, fled into the mountains to save their lives. About two weeks later all of them were at my parent's farm hidden in the coffee plantation where my parents and other relatives took care of them for one week. On the night of December 24th they started walking into the forest and mountains to continue the revolution. Before their departure, Fidel Castro and others of the group visited us. A Bible that we had and never before read, was signed by all of them.

Two years later, on January 1, 1959 they took power. A new system of government was in its beginning. At that time my brothers and I were studying in the city. We started attending the Catholic church. Some years later, Castro's government was throwing the nuns and priests out of Cuba. Somebody told me that I needed to be baptized before all the priests leave Cuba, if not, I would be a heretic. One of my classmates, who was a fervent Catholic, was my Catechism teacher. On one occasion while she was teaching me the Catechism and she said to me that we have to "sanctify the feasts", I asked, "What feasts?" She answered, "the feast of the virgin of Caridad del Cobre (this is the virgin patroness of Cuba) and the feast of other saints". I was sixteen years old when I was baptized in the Catholic church by aspersion.

The situation became worse in Cuba. Many people focussed their eyes on a land of freedom and opportunities, the United States. About two years after my baptism in the Catholic church, when I was at my parent's farm, I took the Bible that was there and read this passage that touched my heart,

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31.

Time passed. One day while I was in the city someone rang the doorbell. I opened the door and met a young man and a woman. They were members of the congregation of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Gladly I accepted to study with them. The young woman would come every week to study the Bible with me. Several months after this my boyfriend arrived in New York; from there he sent me the documents to be wed by proxy. After getting married he filled an application in New York to bring me to the United States. Two and a half months later I was leaving the land of oppression to come to the land of freedom in the so-called "flights of freedom". The future ahead looked very bright and beautiful. We make plans, but God decides. **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my way, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8,9.**

Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. They wanted to get rid of the dreamer. Genesis 37:19, 20, 28, but God was leading the events to preserve the life of the family elected to be the chosen people of God through Joseph, who became the governor of the land of Egypt.

The Jewish people expected the Messiah to appear as a powerful prince at the head of a mighty army, to vanquish all their oppressors and bring the world under Israel's power. DA, p. 236. But, God had better plans for His people, sending the Messiah to free them from the slavery of sin. John 1:29.

Saul of Tarsus, in his zeal for a cause that he thought was the right one, saw in the followers of Jesus the enemies of Judaism

and travelled to Damascus to persecute them. God's plans were different. **"...for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Acts 9:15.**

Far from my family I was longing to go back to my country, but I was married and had to stay with my husband. One day I knew that a friend from my country, who was studying to become a nun moved close to my place. I bought a Bible from her. At that time my first daughter was two years old; I stayed at home with her and had plenty of time in my hands. I began to read the Bible and got closer to God. I found there my Father and my Saviour, Jesus. In searching the Scriptures, I **"found some things hard to be understood..." 2 Peter 3:16.** Once again the Jehovah's Witnesses came to my door, this time in New York, and again I began to study with them. Several months after this my husband invited me to Elizabeth, New Jersey to visit one of his aunts and a cousin who had come from Cuba. They were both Seventh-Day Adventists. For the first time in my life I heard that Saturday was the day of rest. So far the Jehovah's Witnesses had not mentioned to me the Ten Commandments and because I had learned them from the Catechisms, I never knew about the fourth commandment, **"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy..." Exodus 20:8.** I started questioning the Jehovah's Witnesses and was very surprised when they told me that we don't have to observe the Ten Commandments any more because Jesus abolished them. Never before had I heard such a thing! According to my knowledge and understanding, the Ten Commandments were the moral rule given to mankind by God. My searching of the Scriptures became deeper, but some parts were very confusing, especially the parts that pertained to the law. I kept asking the Jehovah's Witnesses. One of them told me, **"If I have to observe the Sabbath, I prefer to be lost, but I don't observe the Sabbath."**

I was very disappointed and decided to write to my husband's cousin in New Jersey to ask the same questions. Her reply **"was a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."** Psalm 119:105. She gave me all the answers I was searching for, explaining the difference between the ceremonial laws (which I didn't know) and the law of the Ten Commandments; the ceremonial Sabbaths and the weekly Sabbath of rest. Six months later I was baptized in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. But soon after, more disappointments headed my way. I began to see the worldly customs being integrated into the church, participation in war and politics, divorce and remarriage. I began to ask my fellow brethren, which I believed had more knowledge about these things. Not having anyone to turn to regarding this, I turned to my Heavenly Father in prayer. One Saturday the pastor said from the pulpit that the church is in great need of reform, not a reform outside, but inside the church.

About a year after hearing this, a missionary of the International Missionary Society of the Seventh-Day Adventist Reform Movement was canvassing in Elizabeth, New Jersey. She rang the doorbell of a house. The name of the missionary was Elsa Argueta; the house where she rang the bell was my

husband's aunt's house. They began to study about the Reform message. Several weeks later both of them visited me in Brooklyn, New York. That day I received the first study in which God was finally answering all the questions that I have been searching for. After several studies, my husband's aunt and I shared the Reform message with the Seventh-Day Adventist churches where we were members in New Jersey and New York respectively. The pastors and most of the members rejected the message. Others, like the Bereans, searched **"to know if these things were so."** Acts 17:11. Several of them accepted the message and we became members of the International Missionary Society of the Seventh-Day Adventist Reform Movement. After 24 years since my baptism I don't see any reformation among the Seventh-Day Adventists (the big church); on the contrary, they have become more worldly.

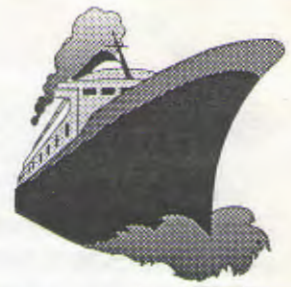
As I review my past life I know that **"He leadeth me, O blessed thought! What-e'er I do, Where'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."** AMEN.

Nidya Sanchez



Brother Xavier Chelliah with a group of interested souls in Sri Lanka.

TITANIC



As the mighty ship *Titanic* sailed proudly across the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, the unexpected happened. The ship hit an iceberg and was going down. No one expected this and they certainly were not prepared on board for this disaster. As the ship was sinking the women and children were boarding the lifeboats while their husbands and fathers were left behind. The women were crying and pleading with the ship's crew to let their husbands come with them, but they refused. Some women decided to stay with their husbands because they couldn't bear the thought of living without them. These women were mainly concerned with the temporal lives of their husbands but how many Christians today are concerned about the eternal life of their friends and family members? Are they crying and pleading for their salvation as were these women crying for the temporal lives of their husbands? Are the Christians going out to do missionary work in their neighbourhoods to save the perishing souls? The people in the world are perishing and many do not even know it. It is the Christian's duty to point out their true condition to them. Do they pray in earnest for these souls? Have they simply given up hope for their relatives? Should they not cry and plead with them? I think people should focus their concerns more on the reality that if they don't help these people, and these people don't turn to the Lord, the people will perish and not have salvation. I don't know why people are so afraid to warn others

that they are in danger and if they don't repent and be saved they will go to hell. How can we be shy about telling them of salvation and eternal life? You would be offering them more than this whole world can offer. Wouldn't it be fun to deliver 10 million dollars to someone and say here, it is yours? Of course their responses would be grand. But if you teach them salvation even though their responses are not great at first, if that person makes it to heaven, you will be their best friend; they will be thankful for the rest of eternity that you disrupted your busy life and in earnest pleaded with them to at least take a little time to hear what you have to say. They will be ever sorry that they were rude or tried to brush you off, but will be grateful for your persistence. And if a Christian has an opportunity to share with someone and they don't, subconsciously they are saying, "I don't care for you, I want you to die. I am going to heaven and I don't want you to be there." It is not a light thing that we are giving news about. It is the most important truth for a human being to understand. It would be better for them not to have lived, than to have lived and end up being destroyed in hell fire. I hope we can all be true Christians and sound this warning.

Submitted Anonymously





The T.I.E. Syndrome

By Jerry Eaton

“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” James 4:17

There’s something even more deadly than AIDS stalking the streets out there. Do you know what it is? The T.I.E. syndrome—let me explain. Take It Easy—T.I.E. Everything in the universe is under law—so we can trace from cause to effect in this life. For example: If you don’t use your body and you take it easy on the couch—what happens? Well, of course, you start to get flabby, start to have problems with your back and all sorts of other problems—probably physical and perhaps even mental and spiritual.

What was the situation in the days of Nehemiah? Did the T.I.E. syndrome exist even back then? Of course it did...because I is the middle letter of T.I.E and it is also the middle letter of sin. When the time came to build the wall of Jerusalem, everyone was asked to help, but there were some people that felt that they were too important to bend their backs to the work. Or maybe they thought that the work wasn’t important enough for them. Never mind that it involved their spiritual and physical survival. And you know what is recorded of them in the Bible? “And next unto them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.” Neh. 3:5 And forever the Nobles of Tekoa are shown to be victims of this syndrome and are recorded as sluggards for the world to see.

The T.I.E. syndrome always leads people to the path of least resistance. And that path will always be the path to hell-fire. Idle hands almost always end up doing the devil’s work, as the saying goes.

Only those who are willing to pray long and perseveringly will find the way to heaven. Only those who have educated their appetites, inclinations and desires to be in harmony with heaven will find any pleasure in doing the will of God when the majority forsake us and make sport of the Truth that they once embraced. Because those are the people that will be our worst enemies—the ones who have given into the T.I.E. syndrome and left the truth.

This is especially true for parents—because unless children learn in their youth to find pleasure in self-denial and even self-sacrifice, they will never

find any pleasure in any thing but the empty frivolities of this life. *Child Guidance* pgs. 97, 156-7. You see, children must learn to have their passions subdued and evil temper checked if they would be happy. Children will naturally go the path of least resistance if we allow them to—because the T.I.E. syndrome isn’t only for adults.

The time in which we live is a very self-righteous, lukewarm, self-satisfied time of self-sufficiency. Do you notice all the rage in popular religion is to essentially dare God to bring judgment upon us—because most make money, numbers or power their God? I praise God that here in Vancouver and actually all over the world, God’s church only has the truth to offer the people. No, if you’re looking for lots of institutions, lots of money or even lots of people, you better go to another church. But if you’re looking for the Way, the Truth and the Life, you have come to the right spot.

All the rage in popular religion is to teach and preach that we can sin and get away with it, that the law is no longer necessary. What are the people saying when they teach this? They are putting themselves as higher than God, and really making gods out of themselves, aren’t they? Now, the ironic thing about this kind of religion is that it actually becomes very self-righteous. Not having God’s pure standards to follow, they begin to substitute the things, ways and laws of men instead. Self becomes the criteria by which to judge others. So it becomes self-righteous. Those that perceive themselves as okay can take it easy, right? And those that are easy upon themselves, will of course, be hard on others eventually.

Now where is God in this picture? He doesn’t really exist for those who are taking it so easy that they have forgotten their duty before Him. Remember: the voice of duty is the voice of God. And unless our consciences are continually instructed by His word we will go more or less in the pathway of the T.I.E. syndrome.

“And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.” Zephaniah 1:12 This is exactly the attitude that is so prevalent in the religious world, isn’t it? It is almost impossible now to find any kind of

reference to holy living and overcoming sin in the fallen churches. "Oh,

don't worry-tomorrow will be like today-only much more abundant," they say. It doesn't matter that millions are perishing without hope and without God in the world - "just take it easy." God is going to judge us, not only by the bad deeds that we do, but also by all of the good that we could have accomplished with His grace strengthening us; we must remember when tempted not to give into this syndrome so prevalent in the religious world.

The T.I.E. syndrome will tell you: It doesn't matter that you have many sins, or that your children have many sins that are not going beforehand to judgment. Let us remember that neutrality in a time of religious crisis is a great sin in the eyes of God. That's exactly what the apostasy of the Adventist church is all about, isn't it? First neutrality, and then apostasy. Make no mistake about it, the T.I.E. syndrome is stalking through the land today, seeking whom it may devour. It comes to us in a thousand different forms: In our families it comes in the form of letting our children develop actions that will help form their characters; and character is the only thing that we can take from this world into the next.

It comes to us in the church when it's time to sustain missionary work-whether in our time, our talents or our money-but we prefer to take it easy and go the path of least resistance and keep ourselves to ourselves, because seeking for the things of this world is so much easier, right?

The T.I.E. syndrome comes to us in our own minds-because that is where the real battleground of the Great Controversy is-thinking that, why not indulge ourselves just a little bit? Why not let down those high standards for just a little while? It comes to us in the form of false doctrines that will deny the existence and perpetuity of the law of God.

I'll never forget, by the grace of God the experience that I made in this kind of religion coming to Christianity after years of wandering in the falsehoods of eastern religions. And I became interested in Christian philosophy, so I read the various different authors that everyone was talking about. They had beautiful thoughts like, "it's faith and faith alone that will save you from the wrath to come," or, "once you're saved, you're always saved-it doesn't matter what you do." Great, I thought, I have faith and and nothing will change that because I love God and thank Him for what he

has done for me. But you see, the problem was, that I did not maintain my relationship with Him through communication (prayer); I did not spend time with Him in meditating upon His wonderful works to me and in the world around me, and I did not do Him service by talking about His person, work and soon coming to others. So I lost my indistinct faith that I barely had. (Even that which you have will be taken from you and given to others, Jesus said.) And I went even further into the things of the world, the flesh and the devil. Of course, I finally got to the end of my rope and hopes in this world-and I praise and thank God that He was right there to pick me up when I was at the end.

So what is the solution? "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Eccl. 9:10 See also Romans 12:11; Heb. 6:12 Not with slothful service, not as men-pleasers, but as serving the Lord. Now, if you were serving the Lord of the universe with your work, do you think that you would take pains to make sure it was good work? I believe that you would. You'd be doing exactly the opposite of the T.I.E. syndrome. You'd be doing the heart service syndrome of a genuine Christian. You'd have a living, loving relationship with your heavenly Father that nothing could break up. And every time you worked, every job that you did-whether for yourself or for somebody else, you would remember that you were a worker for the Lord.

Let's then find more joy than pain in serving the Lord. Even if we have to go through a little rejection or pain down here in this dark world, let's remember what Jesus went through for us. What do we have to go through in comparison to what He has done for us? "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. 12:10 If we would always keep the face of our Savior in front of us, we would find pleasure in reproaches, in tumults, in strivings-whatever we would have to suffer for the truth's sake would be a blessing to us.

May the Lord deliver us from the T.I.E. syndrome and help us to discern His voice in our duties, our responsibilities, our consciences and the word of God. This is the pathway of true happiness, for it is working out our salvation with fear and trembling, learning to suffer for the truth's sake that we enter the kingdom of God. AMEN.



Current Scene

A Refuge of Lies: The Presidency a Mockery

Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.... Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." Isaiah 28:15,17

Gennifer Flowers, Paula Jones, Monica Lewinsky, who will it be next? As Bill Clinton's Presidency disintegrates by one sex scandal after another, a moral and mental vacuum is being created by the media's coverage of this ugliness. (Everyone seems to acknowledge that Clinton is guilty of one or more incidences of adultery and the media are all acknowledging the cover-ups done by the President's staff and Clinton himself-so where do we go from here?)

Since America had no qualms about electing a confirmed adulterer and possible sex addict to its highest office two times-what could be expected but this? The Bible says: "because sentence against an evil is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Ecc. 8:11 Clinton's dealings in Arkansas are well-documented by *The Clinton Chronicles*, (a video available at Christian bookstores) and other sources. They include: counter-accusation and character assassination of anyone that would "blow the whistle" on his suspicious dealings, (which included possible drug-dealing, money laundering, murder and much immorality). "Iniquity shall abound and the love of many shall wax cold." Matthew 24:12 Today, there seems to be so much sexuality, but so little love and the President's situation is symbolic of our whole society's. Unbridled sensuality is always a result a lack of the true love, which is based on commitment.

Any leader, to be effective, has to be an effective moral leader, providing a good example himself in his own actions and character, as well as having insight into the issues that confront his leadership. Bill Clinton has never had this kind of morality in his leadership, for at least as long as he's been in public office. Just the fact that a confirmed adulterer could be elected to the highest office of the U.S. is an indictment of America's claim to be "the land of the free and the home of the brave." (Inspiration tells us that the only true freedom is freedom from sin, and moral bravery is the best, truest kind of all.)

Now the leading Protestant nation on earth is rapidly descending into a moral morass of accusation and counter-accusation, half-truth and cover-up. Bill Clinton has said that he will never resign, no matter what is found out about his private transgressions. Into this moral vacuum, the papacy or his agents will find no problem to step in as the opportunities are presenting themselves. Nature hates a vacuum, as the saying goes, and this is especially true of the political realm. "Rulers are actuated by desire for gain and love of sensual pleasure....Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance." GC pgs. 586,592

Nuking our Food

From Natural Life #59, Winter 1997

"The idea of using radiation to kill bacteria and other micro organisms in food has been around since early in the century. But it's only been in the past few years that irradiation has been taken seriously as a way of preventing contamination of food. The food processing and nuclear industries have been actively pushing it as a solution to the increasing incidences of food-borne disease. In addition, concern about the safety of the food supply has been brought to the forefront of the public agenda by recent outbreaks of illness linked to a dangerous strain of E. coli in meat, lettuce and alfalfa sprouts, and hepatitis A in strawberries.

"The United States already approves irradiation for a variety of foods, including potatoes, poultry, pork, fruits, vegetables, grains and spices. The Canadian government has moved much more slowly, however...

"Many opponents say that a better approach would be to focus on prevention of food contamination, starting at the farm or ranch...Irradiation is no silver bullet for improving the safety of meat products. It is a high-tech, end-of-the-line solution to contamination problems that can and should be addressed earlier. Consumers prefer to have no filth on meat than to have filth sterilized by irradiation."

Just the fact that this kind of manipulation of our food sources can go on without any kind of public input, shows how far our society has gone in eroding our rights and freedoms. If they can expose millions of people to

unknown dangers with such ease, how will they do when it comes to the commandments of God as compared to the traditions of men?

Experts: Same-sex books are harmful

From *The Surrey Now*, March 4, 1998

“Three picture books portraying same-sex parents could do primary-aged children more harm than good, experts say.

“Experts-ranging in disciplines from education to psychology-have filed affidavits in B.C. Supreme Court on behalf of the Surrey school board, stating five and six year olds “lack the knowledge, experience and conceptual ability” to understand same-sex families.

“The books-*Asha's Mums*, *Belinda's Bouquet* and *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads, Blue Dads*-may also conflict with their own moral, religious or family values, experts add.

“From the experts’ point of view, the experts’ evidence we have indicates the three books proposed for kindergarten and Grade 1 are not appropriate for these classes, said lawyer Bob Kuhn, of Baker Newby [School], who is representing the school board.

“The main reasons are they create confusion for that age group and create a potential conflict with family values and ... fail to reflect community values.”

“The community itself should be able to make the decision, not based on special-interest groups.”

These three books mentioned in this article have caused quite a stir in the Vancouver area. There has even been a recall attempt for the Education Minister that threatened the elected Surrey School Board, (this board banned these three books from early education classrooms.)

The attempts to legitimize the sin of homosexuality was what made Sodom and Gomorrah court the judgments of God; now our society is well down a similar road of accepting same-sex couples as family, offering them benefits financially, etc. The political agenda of the homosexual groups is clear: redefine the family and undermine it in every way possible. Muzzle any one that says their lifestyle is sinful, while pushing their own view of “normality”. Unfortunately, the over-reaction to this agenda of many Christian groups has created a backlash of hate and misunderstanding on the part of some homosexuals.

While we are to give the trumpet a clear and certain sound concerning the sinfulness of sin, we must ever show love and understanding to sinners. May the Lord help us to be part of His solution, rather than a part of Satan’s problem.

Europe a step closer to single currency

From the *Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 1998

“In a display of budgetary discipline deemed impossible just a few month ago, France, Germany and Italy announced Friday that they’ve met the tough budget-deficit target for the planned European single currency.

“Coupled with other announcements Friday and earlier this week, it’s now almost certain that the nations that will use the currency, to be chosen in May, will comprise all 11 European Union nations that want to participate.

“The announcements were another indication that Europe’s unprecedented experiment with blending the German mark, French franc, Dutch guilder and other currencies into one-the euro-will get under way on schedule Jan. 1, 1999.

“The fiscal successes announced Friday were better than predicted at the end of last year, when it was thought that the EU member countries wouldn’t quite reduce their budget deficits to the three per cent of gross domestic product called for in the 1991 Maastricht Treaty that set out the timetable for monetary union.”

It seems that Europe, the age-old seat of the Papacy’s power, is soon to have no barriers economically to him ruling over them. We know from Revelation 17 and Daniel 2 that this union only appears to take place, but then all of the calamities of the last days come upon those who have rejected the commandments of God in favour of papal errors. God’s people are yet to be brought into strait places to answer for a faith that will not support the popular religion and worldwide prosperity movement that is afoot. May God help us to give the trumpet a certain sound and resist this union spiritually, by uplifting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

By Jerry Eaton



Report from Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka came into the possession of Britain from the hand of a defeated Dutch army. The British force raised their flag on the walls of Columbo City on February 16th, 1796. In 1948 the British administration granted independence to Sri Lanka, not by violent disruption but by the peaceful settlement of democracy. After the departure of the British people, this country is still struggling with an economic crisis.

This beautiful island is situated in the Indian Ocean and its total area is 25,500 square miles. Tamil and Sinhalese speaking people are living here. The country is poor financially; tea and rubber provides the main revenue to the island.

This island is still experiencing military unrest. While I conducted my religious activities the fear of a revolution was prevalent. Soldiers were searching everyone on the highways. I was stopped at many checkpoints while travelling, and at each one the luggage and bags were searched.

For many years the 7th Day Adventist Church has played a main role in many places on this island. In 1975 the Reform Movement's work was presented to the public in the northern province where the civil war was going on. It is unfortunate that our work was neglected in this place. I am very grateful to our Lord who showed me a way to share the Word of God with these wonderful people. In November 1997, I made a six month visit to Sri Lanka where my widowed mother, sisters, brother and their children are living. During this unforgettable visit, I constructed a big house and while building this house, I started prayer meetings, Bible studies, house visits and healing prayers. I invited people to my house for worship on Sabbath.

The place is called "Nawalapitiya" where I

built my house and conducted our church programmes on Sabbaths. The capacity of this worship hall is such that approximately 50 people can sit very comfortably. Every Sabbath morning I preached and taught and was encouraged by new visitors. I was very happy that our living Lord has helped and revealed me His purpose in this area. In every house in this area, I talked about Jesus Christ, His second coming, our present situation, Sabbath, and prophesy fulfilment.

The Sri Lankan people are very generous and hospitable. This blessed work will prosper and go forward. This remarkable high calling is for a deeper sacrifice to our living God on the part of every visitor and member. We must trust in divine, not human power. No reformation has ever taken place without sacrifice and self-denial.

In Sri Lanka our work is taking place in only two areas. In the city area a small work is occurring. I started my work in tea plantation country. Its elevation is 1,500 m above the sea. Br. Larry Watts has already visited this area and my house. It is our main goal to plant the banner of truth in every place. This place calls for dedicated workers like me and you to bring more souls to Christ in these last days.

India is our next target. Here also our message has been presented in Madras (city in the Tamil Nadu state). But, the Reform Movement's work did not bring results. Why? Because there are no dedicated workers. With the help of our Lord we must find our missionary spirit to bring our Lord's message to the rural areas. Let us ask the Lord for wonderful things and see that our five loaves and two fishes will feed the hungry souls in Sri Lanka.

Our Lord has been working miracles in the new souls reached in the past six months.

They have now dedicated to give their hearts to the Lord and have become members of the family of God. What a marvellous commitment! About six Seventh Day Adventist members are very anxious to become Reformers. I was very happy to welcome these brothers and sisters to our church and they have already been a tremendous blessing and support for the new church.

My future plan is to hold monthly health seminars in the Nawalapitiya area. Every Sabbath there were 30-35 souls visiting the newly built worship hall. In this group are two young Muslim brothers also interested in our church programmes, and a Buddhist lady who was also paying regular visits to the church. At the same time, three young Hindu ladies are also ready to have their baptism in our church.

Many young people accepted our teachings. There is a great need for more who proclaim the message of Reformation. The Reform message is new to this area of the country and there were a lot of misunderstandings regarding who we were. The Seventh Day Adventist church has been present for 35 years in this area and is growing rapidly; their members at times condemned us to others. But, our living God is so wonderful and he is bringing people from the same Seventh Day Adventist church to our worship hall. At present, about five Seventh Day Adventists are very much interested to join with us. There are others who wish to study more about our message. I am sure that we can get a good harvest in this area if we can work honestly and systematically.

Every Sabbath I used to bring 50-60 chairs to the worship hall from various houses in the village. The village people showed their interest in giving their chairs to the worship

hall. After the Sabbath service, we would give a complete free meal to every visitor. Young and old people gave special songs and testimonies which touched everyone's heart. The two Muslim boys helped me put our church banner and board in front of the worship hall.

Terrorist activity is still present in Sri Lanka, but in my area I preached freely without any interference. Despite the political unrest, we even formed a youth Reform Movement group in this area. The prospects for further growth are tremendous, but the souls and our Lord need a worker to continue this ministry.

All those who attend the Nawalapitiya church send their greetings and wishes to all the Reformers in the Canadian-Caribbean Union. This new work is progressing, but it urgently needs a worker and financial help to purchase land or to extend the building for the worship hall. We also have many young ladies here without employment. We plan to start a garment factory which will be connected with the church.

We would like to ask for your support and help with this project. We must buy song books, literature, Bibles and Sabbath School lessons, a vehicle, chairs, an extension to the worship hall and a telephone. "A little one shall become a thousand and a small one a strong nation; I the Lord will hasten it in His time." Isaiah 60:22.

Please continue to pray for the work in Nawalapitiya, Sri Lanka. Though we are few in number if we are united with God and dedicated in our hearts to this work, I know that the Lord will do mighty things for his chosen people. AMEN.

Xavior Rajah Chelliah

"The request, 'Will you pray for me?' has become simply a form of speech; you should pray to God for yourself, believing that He listens to every word you utter." Ellen G. White, August 26, 1890.

God With Us

God has always been with His people, helping and protecting them. He was with them at the exodus from Egypt and at the crossing of the Red Sea, in a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. Let us look up Psalms 27:1. In this verse we can see how He is our light as he was to the Israelites. He is our light in darkness.

This light shows us the way and leads us to the cross; it is a lamp unto our feet. In Psalms 121:5 it says that God is our shade at our right hand the same way he was to the Israelites. An example of His being our shade can be seen in the time of the martyrs. He will be our shade in the time of trouble and will make sure nothing harms us.

No nation could stand against Israel when God was with them. They defeated the Hivites, Jebusites, Amorites, Perizites, Ammonites, Canaanites and

many more. When they sinned they got delivered to their enemies.

To keep their eyes on Him, God had leaders, judges, messengers, and prophets. Yet from all these God was their supreme example; He was the leader who brought them out of Egypt and will be also our leader who will bring us out of darkness. He was their judge who judged them when they had turned away from Him and He will be ours in the time of judgment and now. He was their messenger and will be ours. He was their prophet to tell what was going to happen to them and to tell what was right and wrong.

He also is our prophet who will tell us and let us be aware of the things that are to come to pass and to warn us.

Deborah Conde
13 years old



Our Church group in New Caledonia with Brother Hecquet the Church Leader.



The Youth

The youth are often underestimated and thought of as a bad influence. Many believe that the youth are up to no good and that time shouldn't be wasted on them.

Jesus did not come down to this earth to only save the elderly. He came to seek and save that which was lost. Jesus cares for the youth and wants to be their friend.

In the Bible, we have the example of David, a youth who was underestimated. King Saul tried to prevent the young shepherd from fighting Goliath. His confidence in the youth was small. "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." 1 Sam. 17:33.

There are many examples in the Scriptures that give an account of youth that accomplished great things, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Daniel and his friends and many more.

James White was preaching at the age of 21; and in six weeks, 1,000 souls were converted. J.N. Loughborough began preaching the advent message at 20 years of age. Ellen Harmon was chosen as God's special messenger when she was but seventeen.

K.H. Wood reminds us, "Many great exploits of history were accomplished by young people. Alexander of Greece conquered the world at 33. Sir Isaac Newton discovered the law of gravitation at 23. Joan of Arc achieved fame and was burned at the stake at the age of 19. Lindburgh flew the Atlantic at 25.

Young people have also been in the forefront of many religious advances. Martin Luther posted the theses that gave impetus to the German Reformation when he was 34. John Calvin added the force of his life to the cause of the Reformation at 19.

The Lord loves the youth so much that He inspired His loyal servant, Ellen G. White to write a book entitled, "Messages to Young People". This book is specifically for the youth, and if they read it along with the Bible, they shall find rich blessings that point the way to eternal life.

Reyna Esther Conde Guevara

IMS Publishing
54 Newcastle St.
Toronto, Ontario, M8Y 1A3
CANADA
Tel: (416) 252-1197
E-mail: tmartin@netcom.ca
Fax: (416) 252-6625



SAVED BY SHARKS

Most of the time when we hear of sharks and people, it usually means that a shark has attacked someone. Here is a story of a young man who was actually saved by some sharks. This boy's name was David

David lived in the country of Fiji. Fiji is a group of islands in the south Pacific, close to Australia. The weather is nice and warm most of the year, with the occasional heavy rains and possible hurricanes blowing through. David loved to swim and snorkel in the clear waters of the ocean, and he went out into the water often since there were several different beaches near his home.

One day when David was packing up his bathing suit and snorkel gear, his mother, watching him, frowned and sighed, "I wish you wouldn't go to that beach, David, you know there may be sharks along the coast."

"Yes, Mother," David replied, "I know, but they never come near the shore, really. They always stay far in the distance. No one has ever been harmed by a shark on that beach for years." He picked up his beach bag impatiently and started walking out the door ignoring his mother's final words.

"Yes, I know all that," she was saying, "But someday, someone will be attacked. It seems to me they are closer to shore this year than last."

"Parents worry about such silly things," David grumbled to himself after he left the house. "I know perfectly well how to take care of myself. Besides, I am meeting my friend Sammy there."

David ran off to the beach, arriving a few minutes before Sammy. Sammy had a habit of always being late. He looked up and down the beach but didn't see his friend. He then decided that Sammy's tardiness would not prevent him from getting on with his fun. He would not wait for Sammy this time. He sat down, fastened his flippers to his feet; adjusted the snorkel and took one last look around for Sammy. No sign of Sammy so David waded into the surf. It was just a beautiful day. David felt great as he walked out to meet the waves. Soon he forgot all about Sammy as he dove happily into the green, cool water.

What fun he was having! The waves were a little rougher this morning than usual. They were rocking him up and down while he was straining to get a glimpse of the bottom of the ocean. The water was a little too wild this morning to get a good view of the bottom. He then looked toward the shore again looking for Sammy. Still Sammy was nowhere to be seen. Well, maybe he forgot to come. He now decided that he would have to move to quieter waters if he wanted to see any sea life under water, so he swam to an inlet where the water was shallow and the waves more gentle.

For a long time he examined the coral and shells. Small tropical fish darted here and there, peering at him through bulging eyes. David paid no attention to the fact that time was passing and that Sammy still was not there. Neither did he notice that he had floated further and further out into the ocean.

Suddenly a thrill of terror passed through him. Below him, he saw this shadowy form, and then another. SHARKS! There were two of them and perhaps more. Instantly David started swimming for shore. He then realized that he was no longer in shallow water, but had drifted out beyond the edge of the coral reef, to the green depths where the vicious creatures made their home.

Frantic with fear now, David struggled to get onto the reef, where the sharks could not follow; but when he tried to climb onto it the sharp edges of the coral cut his arms and slashed his legs. In his terrified state it was impossible to find an opening where he could swim through the reef to safety. Coming to the surface, he screamed for help. He then felt the excruciating pain as great teeth grabbed his arm. Wildly David struggled in the deep water, flailing with his free arm and kicking at the monster that was attacking him.

Then the free arm was made useless as the mighty fish snapped his cruel jaws again, cutting through to the bone. David knew it was the end. And the worst of it was that he was not ready to die. "O God, save me!" he cried out. "I will serve You the rest of my life if You will only save me!" Then, feeling himself being pulled out to sea, he lost consciousness.

Hours later David awoke. He was in a hospital and Sammy was standing beside his bed, his eyes wide with fright, his body scratched and bandaged.

David looked at his own bandaged arms. Then he looked again at his friend.

Sammy shook his head. "Both your arms are gone, David. I'm sorry. It was all I could do to save you."

The next weeks were torture for poor David. Not only was he in physical agony, but a battle raged in his heart. He remembered making a promise to God. "I will serve You," he had promised. But how? He would never be of any use to anyone again for as long as he lived. How could he possibly serve God in any useful way?

Months passed, and finally David was able to get up and around. True, he would always be handicapped, always needing help to do the simplest of tasks, but he was able to walk. Then an idea struck him. He could walk and he could talk. If he could just figure out some way of distributing literature, that would be the way he could serve God.

It was Sammy who finally solved the problem. "Look, David, I'll get the papers ready for you and put them under your arm. When you see someone to whom you want to give a paper, just tell him to pull one out and read it."

So David started his missionary work. Each morning someone would roll up the papers and put them under what was left of one of his arms. Then he would head for the city park.

"Good morning," he said to another young man one day as he sat on a bench in the beautiful park in the capital city of Fiji. "Would you like something to read?" He smiled. "Just take the paper from under my arm. It won't cost you anything."

Of course the young man happily took one, but couldn't help looking curiously at the stumps on each side of the David's big body. He smiled again and said, "Sharks. They got my arms, but they saved my soul."

"Prophecy represents Protestantism as having lamb-like horns, but speaking like a dragon. Already we are beginning to hear the voice of the dragon. There is a satanic force propelling the Sunday movement, but it is concealed. Even the men who are engaged in the work, are themselves blinded to the results which will follow their movement. Let not the commandment-keeping people of God be silent at this time, as though we gracefully accept the situation. There is the prospect before us, of waging a continuous war, at the risk of imprisonment, of losing property and even life itself, to defend the law of God, which is being made void by the laws of men. This Bible text will be quoted to us, 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers... The powers that be are ordained of God.'" Review and Herald, Jan 1, 1889.



SOYMILK

Soy milk is a Jack-of-all-trades drink that has recently become perhaps the hottest selling item ever in natural food stores. For the growing portion of the population that, for various reasons, is choosing to avoid dairy products, soy milk comes as the perfect alternative: it looks like milk and although it doesn't really taste like milk, it can be used in many of the same ways.

A cholesterol-free, low-fat, vegetable-based beverage, soy milk has distinct advantages over commercial dairy milk. Many individuals cannot tolerate lactose, the primary sugar in dairy milk – soy milk has none of this. Saturated fats, like those found in cow's milk, contribute to buildup of arterial plaque and lead to cardiovascular disease – soy milk contains mostly unsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. The antibiotics and other medicines that many modern dairy farmers regularly include in the rations of their animals can be passed on to the human consumer. In addition, environmental contaminants become concentrated as they work their way up the food chain and high levels are found in the fat of animals, including the butterfat in cow's milk. Soybeans, on the other hand, are generally grown with relatively small amounts of agricultural chemicals; those that are used are applied at such times that high levels of residues would not be found in the soybeans themselves.

The actual amounts of nutrients in a given variety of soy milk will vary according to the additional ingredients included in the formula and the amount of water used in the processing. But when prepared with the same amount of water as is present in dairy milk, and without added ingredients, soy milk has more protein, less fat, fewer calories, and more iron than cow's milk. It also contains significant quantities of several of the B vitamins, and no cholesterol. However, while soy milk is a relatively good source of calcium, it has only 18 percent of the calcium found in cow's milk and just over half as much calcium as mother's milk. If soy milk is used as a direct substitute for either of these, it is important that adequate calcium be obtained from other dietary sources.

One drawback about soy milk is the price. Unfortunately it is far more expensive than cow's milk even though soybeans themselves are quite cheap.

Another drawback is that some of the soymilks on the market have added ingredients to enhance their flavours. It is important to read the ingredient list to see if there is anything in the milk that you object to. Only the plain varieties can be considered as true milk substitutes for drinking or cooking – although some people have found that the carob varieties make delicious puddings.

If soy milk becomes too expensive for you but you would like to have it as a substitute, perhaps you can make your own. It is quite a simple process--for a price of about \$.04 for six ounces is what it will cost you, and 30 min. of your time (including clean up). You can double the recipe also and the time will increase slightly.

Ingredients:

*1 cup soybeans, rinsed three times and soaked overnight.
4 cups (approx.) water*

Equipment:

*Cooking pot (saucepan, 3-quart or larger)
Pressing pot (saucepan or bowl, 3-quart or larger)
Colander
Cotton or linen dishtowel
Rubber spatula
Wooden spoon
Blender*

Put 4 cups of water in the cooking pot and bring to boil over high heat.

While waiting for the water to boil, drain the beans and cover with hot tap water. If your blender is not heat resistant, use hot tap water for the next step instead of boiling water. Boiling water is preferable, if possible, as it helps to eliminate the strong soybean flavour.

Just as the water comes to a boil, drain the beans and place in the blender. Cover with enough of the boiling water so that the water is at least two inches above the beans – more if you have room, as long as you leave at least an inch at the top of the blender. Put the pot with the remaining water back on the burner with heat reduced to low. Blend the beans until smooth. Heat the water in the pot to boiling. Pour the bean puree into the boiling water, and return the heat to high. When the foam begins to rise lift the cooking pot from the burner, reduce the heat to a simmer, replace the pot, and simmer the puree for five minutes. During this time place the colander over the pressing pot and line it with the dishtowel or bag. Then pour the hot puree into the cloth-lined colander.

After pressing, the soymilk requires further cooking, so if you are using a bowl rather than another pot for a pressing pot, rinse the cooking pot quickly but thoroughly. Carefully twist the towel closed, and press with a potato masher or the bottom of a strong jar. When no more liquid comes out, open the cloth and stir the pulp with a wooden spoon, fluffing it up. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water over the pulp, reclose the cloth, and press again to extract the last of the milk. Return the milk to the burner, bring back to boil, and simmer for fifteen minutes. And there you have it – a quart of rich, creamy, dairy-like soymilk in less time than it would take to milk a goat. And for only seventeen cents worth of soybeans.

This soymilk can be sweetened or otherwise flavoured and drunk as a beverage. Fresh soymilk is also ideal for us in cooking.

*Information taken from: Shoppers Guide to Natural Foods
From the Editors of the East West Journal*



Baptism in Montreal

With great joy we witnessed the baptism of Jennifer Cabral. For several years she has visited the church in Montreal and now she joined the Remant Church of God in which her parents also are members.

May God richly bless our new sister Jennifer.

Montreal Church..





Serenity Prayer

*God grant me the
Courage to change the things
I can change, the Serenity
to accept those I cannot change
and the Wisdom to know the
difference. But God, grant me
the courage not to give up on
what I think is right, even though
I think it is hopeless.*