

*The Reformation* 

# Messenger

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# HEART POLLUTION

*"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? "*  
*Jeremiah 17:9*

Our earth is not a clean planet anymore. The ground is polluted and therefore it does not grow wholesome, nourishing food anymore. The water is not clean anymore. The pollution in the rivers, lakes and even oceans cause diseases in the fish and the people who eat them become sick. Even clean drinking water is hard to find. I saw signs on small islands in the middle of the sea that no swimming was allowed because the water was polluted. Clean air does not exist anymore. Even at the north and south poles the scientists found air to be contaminated. In Mexico City 30,000 children die annually from air pollution.

The Bible brings out that the earth is defiled and therefore God will in the end cleanse it with fire. "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Isa. 24:5.

Yet the greatest pollution which is most damaging and causes the greatest suffering to people is heart pollution.

Jesus recognized this and said, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come from within, and defile the man." Mark 7:21-23.

The first thing that Jesus mentioned was evil thoughts. Our thoughts produce words and actions.

God destroyed the world in the time of Noah because their thoughts were evil, "Every

imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:5.

The heart is the fountain from which the rivers start out, which are our words and actions.

The dangerous thing of our heart is that we do not know the condition of it. Jeremiah said, "Who can know it."

"Know yourself is considered as a divine oracle by the philosophers.

Peter did not know himself when he said to Jesus, "though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." Matt. 26:35.

The Pharisees did not know themselves when Jesus told them that they are the children of the devil. (John 8:44)

The Laodicean Angel does not know himself when saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Rev. 3:17.

We can see easier the mote in our brother's eye than the beam that is in our own eye. For this reason heart pollution continues. We will not seek a remedy unless we see the sickness.

On our property was a large strong looking maple tree. It had withstood winds and storms for 50-60 years. Then suddenly one day it fell down from the wind. When I examined the stump, I noticed that all the inside had decayed and only a thin layer of solid wood remained on the outside. Therefore it had no strength to stand the heavy wind. This decay had not happened in one moment but during the years it had developed to the point that the strength was finally gone.

This often happens in our spiritual life. When a person is converted he is strong. In a short time he overcomes bad habits and changes his life completely. But then the progress often stops. If he is not careful, slowly he starts backsliding.

Little indulgences, neglected duties, little roots of bitterness and vanity start growing in the heart and destroys the love to God and to his fellow man. The empty form only remains but there is no Christ living in his heart. That time he is ready to fall and to lose his faith.

The heart is stronger than our knowledge. Adam and Eve followed their heart rather than their knowledge. Judas followed his heart and not his knowledge. Also David committed sin against his knowledge.

If our heart is deceitful above all things, it will easily deceive us and lead us into sin.

Where does this evil come into our heart? We read of Judas, "And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him." John 13:2.

Satan put it into the heart of Judas to betray Jesus. Adam and Eve were pure and holy, but Satan put it into their hearts to do sin. When the desire was aroused in the heart of Eve, it was not pure anymore. Now this polluted heart deceived her and she did eat of the forbidden tree.

Can Satan do this to our heart? Can he put sinful desire into it? By looking at the tree and watching the serpent eating the fruit aroused the desire in the heart of Eve. Satan knows this and therefore he tries to get us to look at sin and a desire will be aroused in us also. Many Christians are not careful in guarding their eyes and ears from worldly influences. By watching television and videos, Satan plants a sinful desire in the heart and the result is an act of sin. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Matt. 5:8.

A pure heart is the condition for our salvation. Therefore our lifework here is to cleanse our hearts from pollution. To empty it from selfishness, love of the world, pride, covetousness and envy is the purpose of a Christian's life. Trials and afflictions have a purpose to remove these sinful characteristics from us.

We are born with a natural heart and it has always a tendency downwards. It is always seeking opportunities to gratify the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and ears. The natural heart seeks for human recognition and praise. It is revengeful, unforgiving and selfish in all its motives.

Paul said, "For I know that in me (that is my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:18.

Then it is not for a man to cleanse his heart alone. He needs God's creative power to put into him a new heart. A new birth is necessary and then man can change his whole life.

To hunger and thirst after righteousness means to seek a pure heart that is filled with God's spirit. The Holy Spirit will not live in a divided heart. We cannot love the world and the things of this world and hope that God's Spirit would dwell in us. This is impossible.

When the heart is pure, it is full of love and peace. When Jesus was nailed to the cross from His pure heart came only a prayer for His murderers. This is the condition that we also must reach.

Our heart is like a garden. We need to attend to it constantly. Satan is trying to plant weeds in our heart garden; which if allowed to grow will choke the good seed.

Almost all of old Israel perished in the wilderness for the hardness of their hearts. Every time we hear a rebuke or admonition and do not obey, our heart becomes more hardened. Finally the strongest appeals and warnings have no effect on us. The heart becomes hard as a stone and the Spirit of God cannot work on it any more.

Let us pray daily for a new heart and close all the avenues to the heart that no worldly influence can enter. Then with a pure heart we can see God and walk with God as Enoch did. AMEN

Timo Martin





# GOD'S ARMOUR

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

The word of God here in our opening verse of Scripture describes the walk of the Christian as warfare, a deadly conflict in which he is engaged against the power of Satan and his hosts. Because this walk is warfare, as it is here described, a Christian must be prepared and equipped.

God shows us what wonderful provision He has made for His warriors. He is, in fact, even represented as a fully armoured warrior Himself. "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war, He shall cry, yea, roar, He shall prevail against His enemies." Isa. 43:13. God is further described in destroying the weapons of me. Ps. 40:9. Although the weapons He employs for the benefit of His children are spiritual and not material, "For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon His head; and He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak." Isa. 59:17. You can be assured, that, "He will cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." Ps. 91:4. Further, "If He turn not, He will whet His sword, He hath bent His bow and made it ready. He hath also prepared for Him the instruments of death; He ordained His arrows against the persecutors." Ps. 7:12, 13.

The Apostle Paul speaks to us of having a defensive armour. Armour is equipment worn to defend its wearer against offensive weapons. "My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart." Ps. 7:10. Paul speaks further of this defensive armour, which he uses to good effect, "In truthful speech and in the power of God with weapons of righteousness in the right

hand and in the left." 2 Cor. 6:7. He continues, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:4.

So, Paul here encourages every Christian to put on this kind of armour. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." Rom. 13:12-14. "Let us bravely and cheerfully enter, however, this warfare against natural inclinations; pride, ambition, deceit, hatred, and selfishness," (MYP 14, 5T 115) and diligently strive to "make virtue desirable, and vice hated." 2T 238. Don't learn Satan's methods of warfare, (TM 248-9) for you will lose!

Paul is writing from prison; he knows all about the Roman soldiers, whose armour he is describing, naming the different parts of armour. It is descriptive of the heavy-armed soldiers, who had to sustain the fiercest assaults of the enemy; both of a defensive and offensive nature; an armour that is almost invulnerable and well-calculated to answer its purpose in any assault. Paul was bound to such soldiers by a single chain. Every six hours the guard was changed. He ministered to each one, in jail, "I am an ambassador in chains." Eph. 6:20. Here he was in a repulsive prison, yet some of the world's most famous literature originated in, of all places, in a prison cell, Paul Bunyan for one. Suppose you were put in such

a prison. What kind of letter would you write? To whom would you write? Think about it!

Paul is not giving us a picture of how to fight, but of how "not to fight". If you have not put on the armour, you will have to fight, but "having on the whole armour of God," then, Paul says, "stand"! There are times when God's servants are sent out to defend the truth, to defend the church and its principles, but Paul's counsel here is how we are to hold the position, which has been already gained.

God provides the armour, but the individual Christian has the responsibility of putting it on. That is, he must consciously take or appropriate the power Jesus Christ makes available to him. Without this armour of God, the Christian cannot stand. The Christian that is walking with Christ must now also take a stand against the wiles, the methods, the strategies of the devil, to "stiffly" stand, not "wobble-kneed" or fearful.

What is the reason, furthermore, that we need the whole armour of God? The Israelites under Joshua had to fight against real flesh and blood in order to conquer the land of Canaan. Ours is a spiritual warfare rather than a physical one. "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood"; if we do we are "out of it", we're lost! Our war is against the "spiritual lusts of wickedness"; which the world does not see! We can easily forget that the enemy is unseen, invisible, a power that is supernatural. There is a heavenly warfare human beings no very little about. Angelic forces are fighting over your souls, a great controversy between loyal and disloyal angels; good angels and evil angels.

Daniel in his prayers, said, "But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days." Dan. 10:12,13. When prayers are unanswered for long periods, much more may be involved than we can ever dream. Those under God's control will be able to discern or

differentiate the crafty workings of the unseen powers of darkness. Those who desire to be in harmony with heaven should be intensely, and seriously in earnest to do God's will, and not man's. In addition, give no room whatsoever to Satan and his angels.

If only the curtain of heaven could be rolled back and each one see the constant activities, workings, goings on in the heavenly courts, and surroundings, to preserve and save the people of the earth from Satan's seducing strategy, they would then lose their self-confidence, and self-assurance. The warfare continues in heaven for those who don't sense their danger and are indifferent.

"Don't make any mistake", Paul says, "you're not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against tremendous powers. You will not be able to understand, unless you put on the whole armour of God." When you see people doing and saying terrible things, remember you are not wrestling against them; they are only the "cat's paw", the tools of the rulers of the darkness of the world. They have been duped! They are doing the "dirty work"; the unlawful pursuits of Satan. We have a more difficult wrestling; against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, which prevent us from seeing God, when no one understands the tricks, strategies, ploys of Satan but God. Where are these heavenly places that spiritual wickedness abounds? Why, any place the saints are gathered; be it the church, Sabbath school, Bible study, worship service, prayer time, fellowshiping, home and the family, witnessing, canvassing, and anywhere else God's work is "in progress" or "in danger".

Well, dear brethren and friends, at such times what do we do? Simply this, stand steadily, shoulder to shoulder for God, an undaunted front—a "line of battle". How often the Spirit of God emphasizes the "togetherness" of the saints. God has honoured us by choosing us as



His soldiers. Let us, then, fight bravely for Him, keeping whatever is right in everything we do and say in all things, for the good of the soul. "The wounds and scars of our warfare will be as trophies of victory (ML 326).

What, then, is the purpose of a soldier? To fight battles! And that is exactly what God is doing to us and through us right now. He has given us the great privilege of serving on the battlefield upon which His great victories are won. In a certain sense we can say we are the battlefield.

This is the essence of the story of Job. Here is a man that dearly loved God and was struck by a series of tragedies. All in one day he lost everything; everything that mattered to him, including his family, except his wife. He didn't understand what was happening, but God used Job to be the battlefield for a war with Satan. Job was affected physically, mentally and materially. A mighty victory was won by God and Job against the invisible power of the heavenly realms. Job was a soldier in a spiritual battle, and so are we!

John, too, is telling his young friends, "you have learned how to fight in a spiritual war, how to avoid the confusion of the decaying world, and not be conformed to the age you live in. In so doing, you have overcome Satan and glorified God." 1 John 2:14.

Daniel, too, as a teenager was a prisoner in a foreign land, trapped in a pagan culture, and had to fight the battle day by day, counting only on God to defend him. The pressure on him and his friends were incredible, but they met the tests again and again. They won the battles and defeated Satan and gave God the glory. Daniel was a well-trying and faithful soldier.

This is the spiritual battle God calls us to as our drowsy world is nearing the last real battle...

Armageddon. This is the privilege of God's calling us today in a world of unrest and increasing darkness. God is calling us to be soldiers, to walk in the steps of those who have won the battle before us. They have shown us how to remain faithful, even unto death.

The Lord is willing to do great things for us. There is a lesson for us in the story of Gideon's army. Gideon felt inefficient for the great work before him. The Lord doesn't always choose for his work, men of the greatest talents, but those whom He can best use. Before honour is humility. God uses those who recognize their unworthiness, and insufficiency. He will teach them to have the courage of faith and to be strong. But, what are they to be strong in? In their own might? No! "Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might." "The good fight of faith is a lifelong warfare and conflict with Satan." ML 313.

The Lord said to His frightened disciples on the stormy sea, "It is I; be not afraid." John 6:20. To Gideon, the Lord said, "Peace be unto you," and he said the same to the sorrowing ones in the upper room. Gideon went out to fight the Midianites with an army of only 300, blowing trumpets and carrying empty pitchers in their hands, and shouting, "The sword of the Lord". The way of carrying on the warfare, in such an extreme way seemed utterly ridiculous and unreasonable. How unscientific, and inconsistent, too were thought the movements of Joshua and his army at the taking of Jericho.

It is essential to know the truth, for how else can meet its opponents? Study the Bible, not alone for the doctrines it teaches, but for the practical every-day lessons, "in a warfare in which there is no release, no rest, and we are individually responsible for its outcome." MH 453.

Remember, you should never be surprised! You should never be without your whole

armour of God on; "that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." Be prepared for any emergency and call of duty.

Paul encourages the Ephesian brethren to be "strong, not feeble, not wavering, tossed to and fro like waves of the sea." Eph. 4:14, Jam. 1:6. The ground of the Spirit-filled warrior's strength is in his position "in the Lord". What is your position "in the Lord"? When the Christian takes a firm position in Christ and appropriates the provided armour, the Holy Spirit gives power to this "new life", "yes, a new life" to resist Satanic attacks. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." Jam. 4:7.

The believer's have been described under the figure of a Roman soldier's equipment in full battle dress. The believer's secret of victory in spiritual battle is reckoning or counting by faith on those resources, which are actually his in Christ, the Victor. Col. 1:13, 2:15. "Take unto you the whole armour" emphasize? the responsibility of the believer to count on it. The Christian warrior is to use those resources in the spiritual conflict.

"In every soul two powers are fighting for the victory in this 'soul-war'. Unbelief marshals its forces, led by Satan, to cut us off from the Source of our strength. Faith marshals its forces, led by Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. Hour by hour, in the sight of the

heavenly universe, the conflict goes forward. This is hand-to-hand combat, (street fighting at its worst) and the great question is, which shall obtain the mastery? This question each must decide for himself. In this warfare all must take a part, fighting on one side or the other. From the conflict there is no release... We are urged to prepare for this conflict. Let us not talk of the great power of Satan, but of the great power of God." SDG 328.

Prayer is the capstone of the believer's armour in that it is to be his uninterrupted activity. It is in this particular realm that the armour Christ has provided is appropriated, set apart, exclusively possessed for the immediate conflict being ruthlessly waged. Remember, "the warfare against self is the greatest battle ever fought" (SC 43), for the conquest, too, "over self is a lifelong struggle". 8T 3 13.

General Douglas MacArthur's concluding address at the ceremony of the surrender of Japan, Sept. 2, 1945, stated, "A new era is upon us... We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door."

"The church is to conduct aggressive warfare" (5T 395), and "must be advanced aggressively by God's people" (6T 22) and "must be maintained extensively against the powers of darkness (3T 388). "The church is now engaged in a warfare that will increase in intensity." MM 96.

In the final conflict the church will wear an armour of light. God has honoured us by calling us His soldiers, his warriors. What a calling! "Do not lay off your armour or leave the battlefield (or church) until the victory is gained." ML 103.

AMEN.

John Theodorou  
Athens, Greece

Those who abide in Jesus  
will be happy, cheerful, and joyful in God.  
A subdued gentleness will mark the voice,  
reverence for spiritual and eternal things  
will be expressed in the actions, and music,  
joyful music, will echo from the lips,  
for it is wafted from the throne of God.

FLB 226



# DELAY

*"Have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes."*

*3T, p. 497.*

Upon coming to Australia a year and a half ago, there is one character trait common among the general population that was particularly annoying to our family at first. It was that no one seemed to have any worries about getting things done on time. If things didn't get done today then they would get done tomorrow and if not tomorrow, then the next day. There was no rush to get anything done. The country seems to continue on in its leisurely pace. Why worry? Enjoy life and relax a little - tomorrow is another day.

We found this true also in the people's spiritual condition. When canvassing and meeting people, often they are very friendly and don't mind having a religious conversation, but when asked to make a commitment...? Then come the excuses and there is very little interest in having Bible Studies or making any further commitment spiritually. They are, "rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing."

There is a definite danger with these types of people who see that: life is good, we have peace in our country, how could anything ever disturb our peace? Yet something will, Paul wrote, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5:3. Jesus will come suddenly to wake them out of their lethargy, but unfortunately for most, it will be too late to do anything about it then. They will make concerted, untiring efforts to make up for lost time, spiritually, but to no avail. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land,

not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." Amos. 8:11,12. Truly, to be lacking in this spiritual famine is far worse than lacking food in a physical famine.

Is there also danger of delay amongst God's people today? If we read the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25, what do we find the virgins doing when the bridegroom comes? They were all sleeping. Is there danger that some in God's church are sleeping and delaying in their preparation for this final event? There most certainly is. Delay can be deadly. Delay can be done by individuals who feel there is not such an urgent need to prepare for the final events, just yet. The church, as a whole, can also be guilty of delay, thus hindering and delaying the Second Coming of Christ.

## THE CHURCH

When Peter was praying on the housetop in Joppa in the house of Simon the Tanner, he saw a vision of unclean beasts (Acts 10: 9-16). Upon waking up and contemplating the meaning of the vision, several men came to the door of the house. They were Gentiles, sent by Cornelius to ask for Peter. An angel had told Cornelius to send for Peter to come and preach the gospel to him. Peter understood the vision when the men came to the door. He had the men come in and spend the night. The very next day he left with several brethren from Joppa to do the Lord's bidding. Peter could have reasoned with himself and the others that it would not be proper to go until

they called a committee meeting first, discussed the need and bring to light the new mission of bringing the gospel to the Gentiles. They could have gone on to discuss what would happen to the Jewish believers who were not completely free from their prejudice. They could have voted on who would be the best men to accompany Peter on this trip. Many issues they could have discussed and the whole process could have been delayed by months. However, the time was right. Peter followed the leading of the Holy Spirit and didn't even let these questions arise in his mind. He just went, leaving the results in the hands of the Lord. He saw that there must be no delay at this point.

"Sometimes various ways and purposes, different modes of operation in connection with the work of God, are about evenly balanced in the mind; but it is at this very point that the nicest discrimination is necessary. And if anything is accomplished to the purpose it must be done at the golden moment. The slightest inclination of the weight in the balance should be seen and should determine the matter at once. Long delays tire the angels. It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be continually in a wavering position, to be hesitating, sometimes inclined in one direction, then in another. More perplexity and wretchedness result from thus hesitating and doubting than from sometimes moving too hastily." 3T, p. 497.

"God wants men connected with His work. . whose judgement is at hand, whose minds, when it is necessary, will act like the lightnings. The greatest promptness is positively



necessary in the hour of peril and danger. Every plan may be well laid to accomplish certain results, and yet a delay of a very short time may leave things to assume an entirely different shape, and the great objects which might have been gained are lost through lack of quick foresight and prompt dispatch." 3T, p. 498.

When there is war in the land, the armies are very prompt in making their decisions. They know that delay can lead to defeat. "In the warfare and battles of nations there is often more gained by good management in prompt action than in earnest, dead encounter with the enemy." 3T, p. 499. How much more do we have to be prompt and ready for action in the Lord's army.

"To defer work which needs immediate attention until a more convenient time is a mistake and results in loss. The work of repairing sometimes amounts to double what it would had it received attention in season. Many fearful losses and fatal accidents have occurred by putting off matters which should have received immediate attention. The season for action is spent in hesitancy, thinking that tomorrow will do; but tomorrow is frequently found to be too late." 4T, p. 452,453. May God help us to not defer any work that we see needing immediate attention in our churches.

## THE INDIVIDUAL

What did Paul mean when he said, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts"? Heb. 3:15.

I am reminded of the story of Dwight L. Moody in one sermon he preached in Chicago. He was talking about not delaying in the matter of giving your heart to the Lord. He told the people in his audience that he would return and preach in one week and they should think about surrendering to Christ during the week and the

next week he would pray with those who had decided to commit their lives to the Lord. The very next day the Chicago fire occurred and many who were present at the meeting lost their lives. Moody had a difficult time forgiving himself for that sermon. In the future, he always preached, "Today" give your heart to the Lord. Don't delay because you are not promised tomorrow.

I remember a young Spanish lady in the Toronto church named Lucy. She was brought up in the home of a church member and taught the ways of the truth. However when she was old enough, and when the opportunity arose, she decided to leave the home and also she left the faith. She did not disbelieve the truth, but she did not want to live the truth, just yet. She wanted to enjoy some of the things of the world first. Sad to say that Lucy never had that opportunity to return to the Lord. She died in a car accident not long afterwards. Her delay cost her not only this life, but also her eternal life. It is never safe to delay in giving your life to the Lord because you never know how long your life will last.

When I was growing up in the faith, I encountered other young people who were slow of heart to make their commitment to follow the Lord. I remember one young man particularly. He told me that he did not want to join the church until he was in his early 20's because he wanted to enjoy life a little first. What was his view of Christianity? It was not a happy view - rather it was a view that following Christ was a yoke of bondage, with which he did not want to chain himself with just yet. He was attracted by the glamour of the world that Satan presents to every young person. Where is this man today? He is very far from the Lord and has no desire for anything that has to do with religion. This young man did not understand the

freedom there is in Christ. Perhaps Christianity may look like a yoke from the outside, but until you try it, you will never know. Jesus said, "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." Psalm 34:8. Try taking Jesus into your heart and see if it is not true, that He can bring true peace and happiness. Try following His example in baptism and see if He is true to His word in giving you a greater abundance of peace and happiness. He will not disappoint you.

David knew the danger of delay. In Psalm 119:60 we read, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." It is very important that we also do not delay.

Another deadly delay is in the paying of your tithes and offerings. Jesus says, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. *Ye are cursed with a curse:* for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Malachi 3:8,9. The nation of Israel was cursed because they did not pay their tithes. How can we expect God to hear our prayers if we are stealing and breaking the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment? "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps 66:18.

There is no getting around it, if you do not pay your tithes you are stealing. I have heard all kinds of excuses but none are good enough for God. They won't hold any weight in the judgement. If you feel you do not have enough money to pay tithe, you are cursed by God, because you did not step out by faith and pay it in the first place. What about promising to pay in the future - delaying the payment until some future date? Why have God's curse on you today and continually until the day comes when you decide to return to God that which you stole from Him? Why not have His blessing upon you



today? The angels of God sometimes wonder at the mentality of human beings when God has so many blessings to offer us but we lack the faith to accept them. By our stubbornness we are separating from God because we don't want to use the tools He has given to us for success. It sounds ridiculous when you think about it. In the first place it was our own fault that the curse was brought and then we blame God and cry out to Him for help, when He told us how to avoid the curse in the first place. God has shown us the way; when you get your money, pay your tithes first - *then* He has promised to help us pay the rest of our bills. What could be easier? Sadly, some choose to delay the payment or they try to do things backwards by attempting to pay their bills first, hoping that there will be enough money in the end to pay tithes - there won't be unless you pay God first. Therefore they are under God's curse. I would shudder to be under God's curse. What would happen if a person fully intended to pay at some future date but they delayed the payment and let it sit in the bank for now - and then they met the same results that our dear young friend Lucy did? Where would the money go then? Would it go to tithe payment? Would it go to unconverted relatives who would not give it to the church? Would lawyers or banks take it? No, this is a very serious delay that some people make. Let us make sure we are right with God today and give to Him what belongs to Him so we can enjoy His blessings rather than suffer under His curses.

Some delay doing missionary work. They work so hard during the week that they need their leisure time for themselves today. They feel no urgency, there is still time in the future. I heard it said in one sermon that Satan has a sign that reads, "Still time". In the very near future he will

turn it around and on the back it reads, "Too late."

### THE LORD DELAYS HIS COMING

But wait, don't we see the Lord doing some delaying also? He is delaying His coming? Doesn't the Bible say that, "My lord delayeth his coming"? Here is what we can read from the pen of inspiration through Ellen G. White concerning this delay. She compared Ancient Israel and the delay they were faced with upon entering Canaan, with Spiritual Israel and the reason for the delay they are today facing regarding the entering of the heavenly Canaan.

"The lesson of this record is for us. The Lord has prepared the way before His people. They were very near the Promised Land. A little while and they would have entered Canaan. They themselves delayed the entering. In the first place, it was they who requested that spies should be sent up to search the land. .. The request that the spies be sent into Canaan showed a lack of faith; for God had told the people plainly that they were to take possession of the land. Why then did they need to send spies to search it? Had they put their trust in God, they could have gone straight in. God would have gone before them... Brethren and sisters, from the light given me, I know that if the people of God had preserved a living connection with Him, if they had obeyed His word, they could today be in the heavenly Canaan." *GC Bulletin*, March 30, 1903.

"For forty years did unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion shut out Ancient Israel from the land of Canaan. The same sins have delayed the entrance of modern Israel into the heavenly Canaan. In neither case were the promises of God at fault. It is the unbelief, the worldliness, unconsecration, and strife among the

Lord's professed people that have kept us in this world of sin and sorrow so many years." *Ev*, p. 696.

So this delay is not really God's fault at all. It is we, who are causing the delay although many will blame the delay on God as we read the remainder of the Bible verse: "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 24:48-51.

We see it is the wicked complaining that there is a delay, and they are not making good use of the extra time. The words of Jesus in this parable apply to those who ridicule the near coming of Christ. These wicked are not worldly people, rather they are "do nothings" in the church who have written beside their names, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

"They knew their master's will but did it not. They had the light of truth, they had every advantage, but chose their own selfish interests, and they will be left with those whom they did not try to save.

"Let there be an earnest consideration of these words. Let none say, "That does not mean me; I am a Christian." Who says this, yourself or He who reads the heart? The unfaithful steward had solemn responsibilities entrusted to him; before the world he appeared as a servant of Christ; but, oh, how deplorable for himself, and for all connected with him; he is an evil servant! He is imperiling his Lord's goods. He's teaching souls to trample upon the holy law of God. He calls



Christ, "My Lord." But he says, "My Lord delayeth His coming." He does not say that Christ will not come; he does not scoff at the idea of His Second Coming; but he tells the people that His coming is delayed. He is removing from the minds of others the conviction that the Lord is coming quickly. His influence leads men to presumptuous, careless delay. Thus they are off their watch and they echo the words of the unfaithful watcher; still others catch them up, and the evil spirit, and men are confirmed in their worldliness and stupor. Their course is downward, not upward; they are not looking for and hastening unto the day of God. Earthly passions, corrupt thoughts, take possession of the mind." TM, p. 237,238.

#### SATAN WON'T DELAY

Satan and his agents never sleep and unless we act without delay, he will come in and work his evil works of darkness. When Paul was a prisoner during the time when Festus was governor, Festus was relating to King Agrippa his difficulties in the case of Paul. To his mind, Paul was innocent, but he saw the Pharisees thirsting for his blood. Shortly after he had been made governor in place of Felix, the Pharisees wanted to quickly take care of the matter. Festus said, "Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth." Acts 25:17. When he agreed to judge the matter, the Jewish leaders were there the very next day to commence the judgment proceedings. They wanted no delay.

When Jesus was taken into Pilate's judgment hall, the Jewish leaders were again seen in a frenzy of activity and accusation. They did not want any delay. They wanted the whole mess to be over with before the Passover and before the common people knew what was happening,

for fear that someone would stand up to defend Jesus and thus stir up the crowd against them. No, when Satan is given permission to act, he acts quickly through his agents. He knows the loss that can be sustained through delay.

"It is important to believe God's word and act upon it promptly, while His angels are waiting to work for us. Evil angels are ready to contest every step of advance. And when God's providence bids His children go forward, when He is ready to do great things for them, Satan tempts them to displease the Lord by hesitation and delay; he seeks to kindle a spirit of strife or to arouse murmuring or unbelief, and thus deprive them of the blessings that God desired to bestow. God's servants should be minutemen, ever ready to move as fast as His providence opens the way. Any delay on their part gives time for Satan to work to defeat them." PP, p. 423.

This is especially true when there is a need in some of the smaller churches, or new interested areas in a country. There is a danger of overlooking these areas as not so important, due to some of the trials present in the larger churches. The difficulties and differences in the churches are made the focus of attention while the needy areas are left to languish due to delay and neglect. This is how Satan comes in to disturb the cause of God. Delay is very detrimental to these younger areas and as long as we faithfully perform the duties God places before us, Satan won't have time to get in and do his evil work.

#### THE TALENT OF TIME

"Our time belongs to God. Every moment is his, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will he require a more strict account than of our time.

"The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus that we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, not time to devote to selfish pleasure, not time for the indulgence of sin. . .

"Now is the time to labour for the salvation of our fellow men. . . .

"Every moment is freighted with eternal consequences. We are to stand as minutemen, ready for service at a moment's notice. The opportunity that is now ours to speak to some needy soul the word of life may never offer again. God may say to that one, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee," and through our neglect he may not be ready. In the great judgment day, how shall we render our account to God?" COL, p. 342,343.

"God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage. The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth. Victories are frequently lost and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect will result in great failures and positive dishonor to God. Rapid movements at the critical moment often disarm the enemy, and he is disappointed and vanquished, for he had expected time to lay plans and work by artifice." 3T, p. 498.

May God help us to use our time wisely and not delay in our individual preparation for the Lord's coming, or to delay as a church in promptly taking care of the needs of the church. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit by delay." 8T, p. 56. "Delays are virtually defeats." 3T, p. 500. Amen.

Wendy Eaton



# He Comes Soon, Are You Ready?

In Matthew 24, Jesus said that there would be wars and rumours of wars, false prophets, false christs, famines, and pestilences in many places. In this prophecy, there are three phases. Jesus says that there will be wars, but that the end is not yet. He then introduces us to another phase—nation rising against nation. In this phase, we see famine, and because of famine, pestilence (disease) on a large scale, and great earthquakes which bring devastation to the inhabited areas of the world. All this He says is the beginning of sorrow.

We see today the reality of this phase. Next, He introduces the third phase—persecution. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted (persecuted), and shall kill you. Matt. 24:9.

And just who are these who are to be persecuted and killed? Those who are the faithful and true, who have not bowed the knee to Baal, will be hated of all nations.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. 3:12. They have bought from Jesus the gold tried in the fire—faith and love. They are those who have perfected their characters to the point that, in the closing moments, they are able to respond as Jesus would to every situation. They are those who have steadfastly refused the mark of the beast. They are the ones who may go to a martyr's grave. Rev. 20:4.

## Martyrs

John 16:2. "Every individual in our world will be arrayed under one of two banners. The two armies will stand distinct and separate, and this distinction will be so marked that many who shall be convinced of truth will come on the side of God's commandment-keeping people. When this grand work is to take place in the battle, prior to the last closing conflict, many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ's sake in standing in defense of truth. By the decree enforcing the institution of the Papacy

in violation of the law of God, our nation (United States) will disconnect herself fully from righteousness...

"When the fifth seal was opened, John the Revelator in vision saw beneath the altar the company that were slain for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. After these come the scenes described in the eighteenth of Revelation, when those who are faithful and true are called out from Babylon. Christ will restore the life taken; for He is the life-giver. He will beautify the righteous with immortal life." Maranatha 199.

Blessed with the security of good homes and professions and the freedom to go to church on Sabbath, Laodiceans are slow to comprehend Daniel's prediction: "There shall be a time of trouble such as never was." Dan. 12:1.

## Signs of the End Fast Fullfilments, Sunday Laws Are Just Around the Corner

Wonderful events are soon to open before the world. The end of all things is at hand. The time of trouble is about to come upon the people of God. Then it is that the decree will go forth forbidding those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord to buy or sell, and threatening them with punishment, and even death if they do not observe the first day of the week as the Sabbath. The decree which is to go forth against the people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther... Satan instigated the scheme in order to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God. But his plots were defeated by a counter-power that reigns among the children of men...

The protestant world today see in the company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath, the unwelcome



intruder must by some means be put out of the way.

The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful images past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God...

Not having a "thus saith the Scriptures" to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack... On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people. Maranatha 198.

#### Climactic Events Are Before Us

God cannot forbear much longer. Already His judgments are beginning to fall on some places, and soon his signal displeasure will be felt in other places. There will be a series of events revealing that God is master of the situation. The truth will be proclaimed in clear, unmistakable language. As a people we must prepare the way of the Lord and the overruling guidance of the Holy Spirit. Test. Vol. 9, p. 96.

More and more, as the days go by, it is becoming apparent that God's judgments are in the world. In fire and flood and earthquake He is warning the inhabitants of the earth of His near approach. The time is nearing when the great crises in the history of the world will have come, when every movement in the government of God will be watched with intense interest and inexpressible apprehension. In quick succession, the judgments of God will follow one another--fire and flood, and earthquake, with war and bloodshed.

Oh, that the people might know the time of their visitation. There are many who have not yet heard the testing time for this time. There are many with whom the Spirit of God is striving. The time of God's destructive judgments is the

time of mercy for those who had not the opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched; His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter.

The mercy of God is shown in His long forbearance. He is holding back His judgments, waiting for the message of warning to be sounded. Oh, if our people would feel as they should, the responsibility resting upon them to give the last message of mercy to the world, what a wonderful work would be done!

Behold the cities, and their need of the Gospel! The need of earnest labourers among the multitudes of the cities has been kept before me for more than 20 years. Who are carrying a burden for the large cities? Test. Vol. 9, p. 97.

We believe this series of events has already begun, and soon will come a sudden change in the way God deals with man.

Do you believe that the Lord is coming and that the last great crisis is about to break upon the world?

There will soon be a sudden change in God's dealings. The world in its perversity is being visited by casualties—by floods, storms, fires, earthquakes, famines, wars, and bloodsheds. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power; yet He will not at all acquit the wicked.

"The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm and clouds are the dust of His feet. O that men might understand the patience and longsuffering of God! He is putting under restraint His own attributes. Fundamentals of Christian Education 356.

Now is the time to prepare. Tomorrow is too late. Jer. 8:20.

Are you a real child of God? If not, why not?

Sirbu Alin Emanuel  
Finland

# SINLESSNESS

Sin is our enemy. Sin has caused untold amount of suffering and still continues to destroy the joy and happiness from the human life and causes death in the end.

[f we would only understand the evil nature of sin, we would put out a superhuman effort to put it out of our lives. We would hate it and would seek God's help to overcome it.

We would rather die than commit the smallest sin. We would pluck out our eyes rather than see evil and vanity. We would cut off our right hand rather than fall into temptation.

But Satan has blinded the eyes of many not to see the nature of sin. The pleasing fables that people love to hear is that the sinless life is not possible or at least not for many years; that the Roman's Chapter 7 still applies after conversion.

The majority of Seventh-Day Adventists rejected the message of 1888 and the result was apostasy and fall in the time of war in 1914. Today their trumpet has no clear sound about sin and victory over it. Because they rejected this message they sinned against the Holy Spirit and yet remained leaders in the Church of God. (Test. Mm. pg. 80)

Both brothers, Jones and Waggoner preached that a sinless life is possible, and that it can start today. If anyone rejects this message as the Adventist leaders did at the 1888 conference, may the Lord be merciful to us.

Often excuses have been presented that Moses sinned and is in heaven. Sister White committed sins and God still used her as a prophet. Other men of God did sin and God forgave them.

This is not our message. Our message is "Go, and sin no more." John 8:11.

We are saved by faith from sin. By faith we receive the power of God that enables us to live a life free from sin.

But faith is not enough. We, ourselves, must work this out in our own lives with God's help. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Phil. 2:12.

We must resist sin. "Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Heb. 12:4.

"The strongest evidence of man's fall from a higher state is the fact that it cost so much to return. The way of return can be gained only by hard fighting, inch by inch, every hour." T. Vol. 8 pg. 313.

We do not have a holy flesh, therefore to continue in a sinless life we must put our persevering effort daily to resist the temptations of Satan and the tendencies of our own flesh. Sister White calls us to tax every fibre to the utmost in our being to resist sin and temptations. Not until Jesus comes can we rest from this struggle, but the result is a perfect character of Christ.

## HOW TO REACH SINLESSNESS?

"Those only who through faith in Christ obey all of God's commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness in which Adam lived before his transgression. They testify to their love of Christ by obeying all His precepts." Bible Comm. 6 p. 1118.

Apostle Paul writes to us, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13.



By faith we can move mountains and nothing is impossible to us. If any professed Christian still continues in sin, he is casting shame upon Christ, claiming that His power is not strong enough to overcome sin.

#### IS SINLESSNESS REQUIRED?

"Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation.... He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble." G.C. p. 623.

"Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.... I saw that none could share the "refreshing" unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action." E.W. p. 71.

"Christ came to make us partakers of the divine nature, and His life declares that humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin." M.H. p. 180.

"Sin, however small it may be esteemed, can be indulged in only at the peril of infinite loss. What we do not overcome, will overcome us and work out our destruction." S.C. p. 33.

"He has made abundant provision for every soul to have such grace and strength that he will be more than a conqueror in the warfare against sin. The Saviour is wounded afresh and put to open shame when His people pay no heed to His word. He came to this world and lived a sinless life, that in His power His people might also lead lives of sinlessness." Atlantic Union Gleaner Jan. 17, 1906.

"God says to His people today, 'It is my desire that you shall exemplify before a world sunken in sin and selfishness the sinlessness of the Redeemer's character'". R.H. Dec. 3, 1901.

Our message is clear. Present to the people the sinless character of Christ and invite them to copy it in their own lives. Yet a provision has been made that "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John 2:1.

The Lord is a sin-pardoning God, yet His message to us is clear, "Go, and sin no more." AMEN

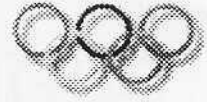
Timo Martin



Baptism of nine souls in Manado, Indonesia by Brother H.Y. Karinda



# THE OLYMPIC GAMES



"In the hope of impressing vividly upon the minds of the Corinthian believers the importance of firm self-control, strict temperance, and unflagging zeal in the service of Christ, Paul in his letter to them made a striking comparison between the Christian warfare and the celebrated foot races held at stated intervals near Corinth. Of all the games instituted among the Greeks and the Romans, the foot races were the most ancient and the most highly esteemed. They were witnessed by kings, nobles, and statesmen. Young men of rank and wealth took part in them and shrank from no effort or discipline necessary to obtain the prize." AA, p. 309.

## **Go for gold on this earth.**

**I.O.C.** International Olympic Committee make all the decisions and rules.

**Where:** The decision is made by the IOC as to which country the games will be held.

**When - Time:** The games will run for two weeks every four years.

**Rules:** Rules are established for the games as well as for the behaviour of the contestants.

**Uniform:** Every country has to wear a uniform when participating in the games.

**Send a message:** A message is sent to the whole world and every participating country is informed about the decisions of the IOC.

**Number.** A certain number can participate in the games

## **The Christian race on this earth is for eternal life.**

**International Race Committee:** In heaven there is the International Race Committee: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They make all the decisions and rules of the race.

**Where:** "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Rev. 12:12. The race will take place on this earth.

**Time:** "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Dan. 8:14. From here we see that the final leg of the race began in 1844.

**Rules for games:** "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. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." [Isa. 8:20. To win this race you have to keep the rules which are the ten commandments.

**Rules for behaviour:** "Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Cor. 14:40.

**Uniform:** "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest now that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Rev. 3:17,18. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" Eph. 6:13-18.

**Message sent to whole world:** "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:6-12.

**Number:** "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." Rev. 7:4.



**Judges:** Judges to be set for making sure the games are they conducted according to the rules set up by the IOC.

**Judges:** "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:14. "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgement was set, and the books were opened." Dan. 7:10. "For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us." Isa. 33:22.

## CONTESTANTS

## CONTESTANTS

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so ran, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

**Decision:** Each contestant makes their own decision.

**Made decision individually:** "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Josh. 1:7,8.

**Chosen:** Each one is chosen according to their ability of performance.

**Made choice:** "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Josh 24:15.

**Commitment:** They make a commitment that they will stick to the rules and do their best.

**Made commitment:** "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12. They make a commitment in baptism.

**Agreement:** They make an agreement with their coach that they will perform the best they can.

**They set their goal and want to achieve:** "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13,14. The goal is eternal life.

**Set their goal:** To get a gold medal.

"The competitors in the ancient games, after they had submitted to self-denial and rigid discipline, were not even then sure of the victory. "Know ye not," Paul asked, "that they which run in a race ran all, but one receiveth the prize?" However eagerly and earnestly the runners might strive, the prize could be awarded to but one. One hand only could grasp the coveted garland. Some might put forth the hand to secure it, another, an instant before them, might grasp the coveted treasure." AA, p. 313.

**To Achieve:** They put their mind, body, and spirit to achieve and get a gold medal.

## PREPARATION

**PREPARATION** needed to achieve eternal life.

**Training:** They have a coach who trains them.

**Training or teaching:** In order to receive the best training, you need a coach. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Mat. 28:19,20. God's church is the coach for the Christian race.

**Practice:** What they learn they practice daily.

**Practicing:** "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23. "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb. 3:13. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal. 5:25. "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice," Heb. 4:7.

**Healthy food:** They are temperate in everything they eat and eat special foods for endurance and strength.

**Healthy living, Temperance:** "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12:1. "(Touch not; taste not; handle not;" Col. 2:21. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Gal. 5:22,23.

**Positive Thinking:** Thinking they can get that gold medal.

**Positive thinking:** "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you... I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:8,9,13.

"In referring to these races as a figure of the Christian warfare, Paul emphasized the preparation necessary to the success of the contestants in the race - the preliminary discipline, the abstemious diet, the necessity for temperance. "Every man that **striveth** for the mastery," he declared, "is temperate in all things." The runners put aside every indulgence that would tend to weaken the physical powers, and by severe and continuous discipline trained their muscles to strength and endurance, that **when** the day of the contest should arrive, they might put the heaviest tax upon their powers. How much more important that the **Christian**, whose eternal interests are at stake, bring appetite and passion under subjection to reason and the will of God! Never must he allow his attention to be diverted by amusements, luxuries, or ease. All his habits and passions must be brought under the strictest discipline. **Reason**, enlightened by the teachings of God's word and guided by His Spirit, must hold the reins of control." AA, p. 311.

## SUPPORT

**Mother and father:** Mother and father are supporting them all the time.

**Relatives:** Relatives also offer their support.

**Friends:** Friends help with encouragement to go on.

**Country:** The country gives their support to cheer their spirit and help them finish the race.

## PERFORMANCE

**Stick to the rules:** They obey all the rules.

**Good behaviour:** They behave with good manners.

**Happiness:** They are happy they can perform at the games.

## SUPPORT

**Jesus said:** "lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Mat. 28:20.

**Mother and father:** "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Pro. 22:6.

**Friends:** "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Pro. 18:24.

**Country:** "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten **Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not **perish**, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

## ACTUAL PERFORMANCE - obedience.

**Stick to the rules:** "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James 1:22.

**Good Behaviour:** "But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." Jer. 7:23. "But thou, O man of **God**, flee these things: and follow after righteousness, godliness, **faith**, love patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." 2 Tim. 6:11,12.

**Always thinking to win the gold:** "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the **Lord**, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." Col. 3:23, 24.

"Paul knew that his warfare against evil would not end so long as life should last. Ever he realized the need of putting a strict guard upon himself, that earthly desires might not overcome spiritual zeal. With all his power he continued to strive against natural inclinations. Ever he kept before him the ideal to be attained, and this ideal he strove to reach by willing obedience to the law of God. His words, his practices, his passions - **all** were brought under the control of the Spirit of God." AA, p. 314/315.

**Endurance:** "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Mat. 24:13.

"And after this has been done, the Christian must put forth the utmost exertion in order to gain the victory. In the Corinthian games the last few strides of the contestants in the race were made with agonizing effort to keep up **undiminished** speed. So the **Christian**, as he nears the



goal, will press onward with even more zeal and determination than at the first of his course." AA, p. 311.

## VICTORY

After each game, when the race is finished, they receive the prize: gold, silver or bronze.

## VICTORY

**Receive the seal:** "Saying Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Rev. 7:3.

**Receive His name:** "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14.

**Receive a crown:** "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10.

**Receive eternal life:** "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28. Only when they have finished the race will they receive the prize.

"Paul presents the contrast between the chaplet of fading laurel received by the victor in the foot races, and the crown of immortal glory that will be given to him who runs with triumph the Christian race. "They do it," he declares, "To obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." To win a perishable prize, the Grecian runners spared themselves no toil or discipline. We are striving for a prize infinitely more valuable, even the crown of everlasting life. How much more careful should be our striving, how much more willing our sacrifice and self-denial." AA, p. 311/312.

## CELEBRATION

They are congratulated and then they sing the national anthem. Later, they walk through the city where crowds of people welcome them. A feast is prepared for them and everybody is happy. They remember this, for all of their earthly lives.

## CELEBRATION

**Well done:** "His lord said unto him, Well done thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of the lord." Mat. 25:21. "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" Gal. 5:7.

"They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honored of the earth have ever worn. They are crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed upon the brow of earthly monarchs. The days of pain and weeping are forever ended. The KING of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed. Amid the waving of palm branches they pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious; every voice takes up the strain, until the anthem swells through the vaults of heaven: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." And all the inhabitants of heaven respond in the ascription: "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever." Revelation 7:10,12." GC, p. 650/651.

"Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire, - so resplendent is it with the glory of God, - are gathered the company that have "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, "having the harps of God," they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men; and there I heard, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, "the voice of harpers harping with their harps." And they sing "a new son" before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb - a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song; for it is the song of their experience - an experience such as no other company have ever had." GC, p. 648/649.

"Such is not the case in the Christian warfare. Not one who complies with the conditions will be disappointed at the end of the race. Not one who is earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The weakest saint, as well as the strongest, may wear the crown of immortal glory. All may win who, through the power of divine grace, bring their lives into conformity to the will of Christ. The practice, in the details of life, of the principles laid down in God's word, is too often looked upon as unimportant - a matter too trivial to demand attention. But in view of the issue at stake, nothing is small that will help or hinder. Every act casts its weight into the scale that determines life's victory or defeat. And the reward to those who win will be in proportion to the energy and earnestness with which they have striven." AA, p. 313/314.

Nada Stefanović, Australia



## PETER'S LADDER

Men and women that are called of God as the co-operating agents with the divine agencies have always had nothing extraordinary to human eyes. However, they spoke something foreign and startling that always left their hearers amazed, utterances that even the learned cannot and will never refute. For this reason Him that had declared "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes" (Mat. 11:23). Considered it not a reproach to turn to these babes "In the untutored fishermen, in the publicans at the market place, in the woman of Samaria, in the common people who heard Him gladly, He found His new bottles for new wine." DA p.279.

It has always been that out of nothing, God brings something, for it was inquired; "Can there be any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). Contrary to people's popular expectations, God disapproved such words for in Nazareth, we read that the Redeemer, the Saviour of the lost world was brought up.

Peter's ordinary business of life.

Something impressive and inspiring has been bookmarked to be an example unto all that will be called as a family of hope. From Peter, we learn that he was not a man of high caliber or rank, but just a fisherman. Seeing that he had a responsibility of taking care of the family given to him, he spent most of his night times at the sea fishing to ensure that the need of bread was met in his household. Of many engaged in this tedious and unattractive business of life, Jesus saw some potential which if cultivated, the returns would be worthy the investment thus made. However, "The heavenly teacher passed by the great men of the earth, the titled and wealthy, who were accustomed to receive praise and homage as leaders of the people. They were so proud and self-confident in their boasted superiority that they could not be moulded to sympathize with their fellow men and become co-labourers with the humble man of Nazareth. To the unconcerned, toiling fishermen of Galilee was the call addressed; "follow me and I will make you fishers of men." (Mt.4:19). GC p171.

It is at this point while in the active daily toils we find Peter, a fisherman by profession given the call "follow me, and they straight-away left their nets and followed him." Mt. 4:19,20. What a prompt and positive response. Is it that Peter had prior to this meeting met this man that now without word or question he heeds the call? What really actuated this fast reaction? This remains a mystery to the human mind; which we will lightly understand that, "It is God's plan to employ humble instruments to accomplish great results, men who were most free of any of their time from pride of rank and from the influence of bigotry and priestcraft." GC 171.

In his unconverted state "Simon waited for no second bidding. He hastened to the Saviour. The eyes of Christ rested upon him reading his character and his life history. His impulsive nature, his loving sympathetic heart, his ambition and self confidence, the history of his fall, his repentance, his labours and his martyr death, the Saviour read it all." DA p. 139. While Jesus thus surveyed the life of the ardent soul, to find that it ends on the hands of Emperor Nero, some process of self-scrutiny seems to have been propelling him to heed the high calling. With no oral communication exchanging between the two, it became evident than men sometimes become ashamed of their sinful ways and give up some of their evil habits, before they are conscious that they are being drawn to Christ. But whenever they make an effort to reform from a sincere desire to do right, it is the power of Christ that is drawing them. An influence of which they are unconscious works upon the soul, and the conscience is quickened and the outward life is amended. SC p14. These momentous scenes as seen here binds the two in the give and take relationship without the exchange of a single word. Though a few words were spoken, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men", (Mt. 4:17) they left a lasting impression in Peter's mind that years later as the priests listened to the apostles fearless words, they took knowledge of him, that he had been with Jesus.

Follower, a student of Christ.

As one who was eyed to lead the flock hereafter to be left by Jesus, every opportunity was given that he may develop the character in the similitude of his divine teacher. "God takes men as they are, with the human elements



in their character, and trains them for his service, if they will be disciplined and learn of him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their impressions, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed in His image." DA P 298.

The lessons designed to fit this great student were mainly tests of faith and affirmative thrust of God's providence amid the darkest hours of trials. The classroom chosen was the open fields, mountains and the sea. The textbook recommended to complete the required syllabus was the adaptations of nature.

With the swelling darkness, the disciples decided to cross the Sea of Galilee for a night's retreat, after a day's mission of feeding the 5000 was done. Thinking that the day's lessons at the mountain side was enough for the day, the Saviour saw an occasion to yet present another vital lesson to this weary and exhausted disciple. The classroom chosen for this lesson was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And on the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, it is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightaway Jesus spoke unto them saying, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid. And Peter answered Him and said, Lord if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And Jesus said, come. And when Peter was come down of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. Matthew 14:24-29 and looking unto Jesus, Peter walks securely." DA 381.

Like Peter, we can walk by faith successfully in railing and tempest situations by fixing our hopes in God through Jesus. A pledge of surety has been freely given with this requisite in mind: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up." John 3:14. "These are they which follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth." Rev. 14:4. The other page of failure remains to be if we fail in lifting our eyes to the cross and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes - sinking to the bottomless part of the sea as was with Peter.

In another awesome lesson, Jesus saw it necessary to unfold yet another vital mystery that would enable his students to bank their faith and believe in Him as one who was sent of heaven. The class for this lesson was held at the mountain. It is written, "and after six days, Jesus taketh with him Peter and James and John, and leadeth them up onto a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee; and one for Moses and one for Elias. For he wist not what to say; for they were so afraid. And there was a cloud, which overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud saying, This is my beloved Son, listen to Him.' And suddenly, when they had looked around about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves." Mk.9:2-8.

No means, and no way was spared that the heavenly truths may be brought home to the disciples understanding that they were with One that was and will be living forever. In this lesson, "they received great light." They were given a clearer insight into the work of the Redeemer. They saw with their eyes and heard with their ears things that were beyond comprehension of man. They were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (2Pet 1:14), and they realized that Jesus was indeed the Messiah to whom patriarchs and prophets had witnessed and that He was recognized as such by the heavenly universe". DA 425. In unfolding these mysteries, Jesus had always given Peter the highest privilege that not all the disciples were led to learn. Slowly but surely was Peter's faith and belief thus grounded and built.

After a number of artistic lessons, concerning all that they had seen and heard, their Teacher set a time in which to assess and evaluate His students with the inquiry, "but whom say ye that I am?" (Matt. 16:14). With the test at hand, the student who had received the highest privilege took no time before any of the eleven would say anything, "Peter declared, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." (Matt. 16:14).

He waited not for kingly honours to crown his Lord but accepted Him in his humiliation. Peter had expressed the faith of the twelve. DA 412. In response, Jesus took no time to commend Peter's discernment saying: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 16:17). When Peter first heard the words of Jesus, he sought, he found, he followed Him. He was with Him in the

temple, the table, on the mountainside, in the field. He was as a pupil with a teacher, daily receiving from him lessons of eternal truth, till he could not mistake Him for anybody than the 'Son of the living God.'

### The Commission

By acknowledging the Supremacy of Jesus as the son of the living God, Jesus' mission was partially completed. In Peter, the testimony is given, "And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16: 18-19). Later before his ascension Jesus asked him, "Simon, son of Jona, lovest thou me more than these? He said unto him, yeah Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He said unto Him, feed my lambs." (Jn. 12:15).

Jesus had singled out Peter out of the twelve to bestow unto him a divine responsibility, "Feed my lambs." This message sounds in our generation not only to our leaders today but also to all that have knowledge of Him that was incarnated through heavenly origin. He (Peter) had seen and heard Him and so was to declare the same, that many may have fellowship with them (disciples). After a number of encounters with Jesus' experiences, Peter had knowledge of the commission entrusted him- taking full charge of a crucified and risen Saviour. Would you give an account of that which was accomplished by Peter as one who had first hand knowledge from the risen Jesus? Is the commission given to our leaders today less than that given to Peter? Never will it be for the one that has given the instruction, changes not. If anything, with the increase of licentiousness, it demands more earnest effort than Peter would fathom.

### Vulnerable Peter

The life of Peter's ministry has been bookmarked with untold success. His tender care of the lambs he was bidden to "feed", is the result that we today proclaim the majesty of the risen Lord. Though he is not here to testify the gospel being preached to the ends of the earth before His Master could appear, of him the account read: he preached at Pentecost, he addressed the disciples, witnessed in Solomon's porch, he denounced Simon Magus, reported to the Jerusalem church, among other duties he executed. Would one ever imagine that one having a command to rebuke even demons would /can err? Not at all, if the insight from on high has not shed its rays in the abode of reason and judgment for with all that are called mortal men, born of flesh it has been written: "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

As any other follower of Christ, Peter, though born to the faith of Christ and with Christ Himself ministering to his spiritual growth was never completely perfected never to error any more. He that was from the foundation of the world had reason and purpose to intercede for His young children in the faith with the words, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil." (John. 17:15). He well knew all sorts of snares and subtleties that awaited them.

"There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine; no new interpretation of the scriptures without first submitting it to the brethren for experience". 5T 293

This virtue was no exception to Peter. Being human, he was susceptible to erring. With his good human intentions were found the words of Satan in disguise, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee" (Matt. 16:22). From Peter's point of view, nothing like the looming death of the one loved should befall Him. As a young child with father, Peter had just grasped a partial knowledge of his Master's mission. The words, "what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter", John 13:7. Even though it may not have seemed appropriate to Peter's ignorance, Jesus chose deliberately decided to use sharp and rebuking words, "get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that are of men." Matt. 16:23



Peter loved his Lord but did not commend Him for manifesting the desire to shield Him from suffering. Peter's words were not seen as would be a help and solace to Jesus in the great trial before Him. They were not in harmony with God's purpose of grace towards a lost world, nor with the lesson of self-sacrifice that Jesus had come to teach by his own example. Peter did not desire to see the cross in the work of Christ. The impression, which his words make, was directly opposed to that which Christ desired to make on the minds of His followers, and the Saviour was moved to utter one of the sternest rebukes that ever fell from His lips. DA p. 415. The words of Christ were spoken not to Peter but to the one whom was trying to separate him from his Redeemer. "Get thee behind me, Satan. No longer interpose between my erring servant and me. Let me come face to face with Peter, that I may reveal to him the mystery of my love." DA P 416.

Satan was not ashamed to personate himself in the person of Peter that he may thwart the purposes of the majesty of heaven. Neither is he ashamed now to desire even the very elect that he may bring to nothing the pearl that has been given to all freely. As in Peter has he got a stronghold in you to tease and challenge those that the Lord has commanded, "feed my sheep." Without patience and forbearance, Peter could have not been honoured with a divine responsibility by one who he had denied three times saying, "I don't know the man." Matt 26:72, However he in a short while had declared Jesus to be the Christ, the son of the living God, who heard heaven declare, "This is my beloved son, listen to Him." "Peter's fall was not instantaneous, but gradual. Self-confidence led him in the belief that he was saved, and step after step was taken in the downward path until he could deny his Master. Never can we safely put confidence in self or feel this side of heaven that we are secure against temptation. Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are saved, this is misleading. Everyone should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts, we are not beyond the reach of temptation." Maranatha P 236.

On calling Peter to follow Him, Jesus was not blind to his impulsiveness and as an uncomprising hater of the authority of Rome. Jesus never rushed to undress Peter of his old self, but waited for suitable occasions when these defects would be ripe to get rid off. As with the scene in the garden of Gethsemane when the chief priests and Pharisees sought to kill Jesus, "Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear." Jn18:10. Jesus was well conversant of Peter's weapon but never said a word till he could see him use it, that he may have an opportunity to unfold unto him the armour and sword that never rusts. And so, are we not to be slow or refrain altogether to censure those that God has assigned the duty of taking care of His organized church?

"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 life by the Holy Spirit, are 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 their natural defects of character and disposition, in what does their position differ from that of the worldling? They have not been born again." Maranatha p. 237

Satan is working to crowd himself in everywhere. He would put asunder very friends. There are men who are ever talking and gossiping and bearing false witness, who sow the seeds of discord and endanger strife. Heaven looks upon this class as Satan's most efficient servants. But the man who is injured is in a far less dangerous position than when fawned upon and extolled for a few of his efforts which appear successful. The commendation of apparent friends is more dangerous than reproach.

Every man who praises himself brushes the luster from his best efforts, A truly noble character will not stoop to resent the false accusations of enemies; every word spoken falls harmless for it strengthens that which it cannot overthrow. The Lord would have his people closely united with Himself, the God of patience and love. All should manifest in their lives the love of Christ. Let none venture to belittle the reputation or the position of another. This is egotism.

Never speak despairingly of any man, for he may be great in the sight of the Lord, while those who feel great may be highly esteemed of God because of the perversity of their hearts. Our only safety is to lie low at the foot of the cross, be little in our own eyes, and trust in God; for he alone has power to make us great. 4T 607

Even at their advanced growth in faith, servants of God holding key positions in God's work are vulnerable to err just as Peter was. Although Peter had received a vision to visit Cornelius (Acts 10), to this Gentile the spirit had made it clear that "what God had cleansed, that call ye not common". "Which in times past were not a people; but are now people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (Acts 10:15; Pet 2:10). However with this acknowledgment, we may fail to explain what prompted Peter to act as he did as here written "for before that certain Jews came from Jerusalem, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they (fellow Jews) came, he withdrew and separated himself fearing them who were of the circumcision. And other Jews dessembled likewise with him; in so much that Barnabas also was carried away with their discrimination." (Galatians 2:11, 12). This revelation of weakness on the part of those who had been respected and loved as leaders, left a most painful impression on the minds of the Gentile believers. Nonetheless, in God's providence, Paul had taken the part of Jesus, at this time to rebuke Peter saying, "If thou being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou Gentiles to live as do the Jews." (Galatians 2: 13, 14) AA 198.

Of such situations, the apostolic church suffered untold setbacks than we can understand today. However, the apostles and the disciples alike would not be swayed from the solemn commission of "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you". Matt. 28: 19-20. It came to pass that "Peter saw the error into which he had fallen, and immediately set about repairing the evils that had been wrought, so far as was in his power. God, who knows the end from the beginning, permitted Peter to reveal this weakness of character in order that the tried apostle might see that there was nothing in himself whereof he might boast. Even the best of men, if left to themselves will err in judgment." AA p198

As one that has been called into this union with Christ, it is worthwhile looking back at the reactions of the early church when error was spotted in Peter, their appointed leader. Both the clergy and the church members acknowledged that Peter had made a mistake but chose not to dwell on those mistakes so that dissension from within the church may be quenched to give way for the message of the crucified Saviour. Such, as a people waiting for the soon coming Saviour should be our doing. Censuring and belittling those that have been placed in leading positions, has been and will always be the design of the evil one (Satan) that more and more souls may be confused of the will of God that has been made or to be made known by his weak sentinels. Censure not, implicate not, lest the same leader that you are strongly opposed to has taken pleasure in infirmities, for in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake. For when such appears to be weak, then he is strong. The end result of it all is that you would have fought a losing battle, for being strong, you are weak.

God has placed in the church, as His appointed helper men of varied talents that through the combined wisdom of many the mind of the spirit may be met. Men who move in accordance with their own strong traits of character, refusing to take up with others who have had a long experience in the work of God, will become blinded by self confidence, unable to discern between the false and the true. AA 279

The fear of the Lord made David spare the life of Saul twice at the cave of Engedi (1Sam 24), and in the trench at Jeshimon (1 Sam 26). Even when agitated by Abishai, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee; with the spear even to the earth at once and I will not smite him the second time. David said to Abishai, destroy him not: for who can stretch his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed, but I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster and the cruise of water and let us go. The Lord handed to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the Lord delivered thee into my hand today, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed" (1Sam 26:8,9,11,23). Should these not be our stand to those that have been elected to office in whatever capacity in the church's hierarchy (GC-Sabbath Schools)? It may be that your leader has not worked to your satisfaction but it would be vital to remember that there are different administrations but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations but it is the same God who worketh in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit with all". (1 Corinthians 12:5-7)



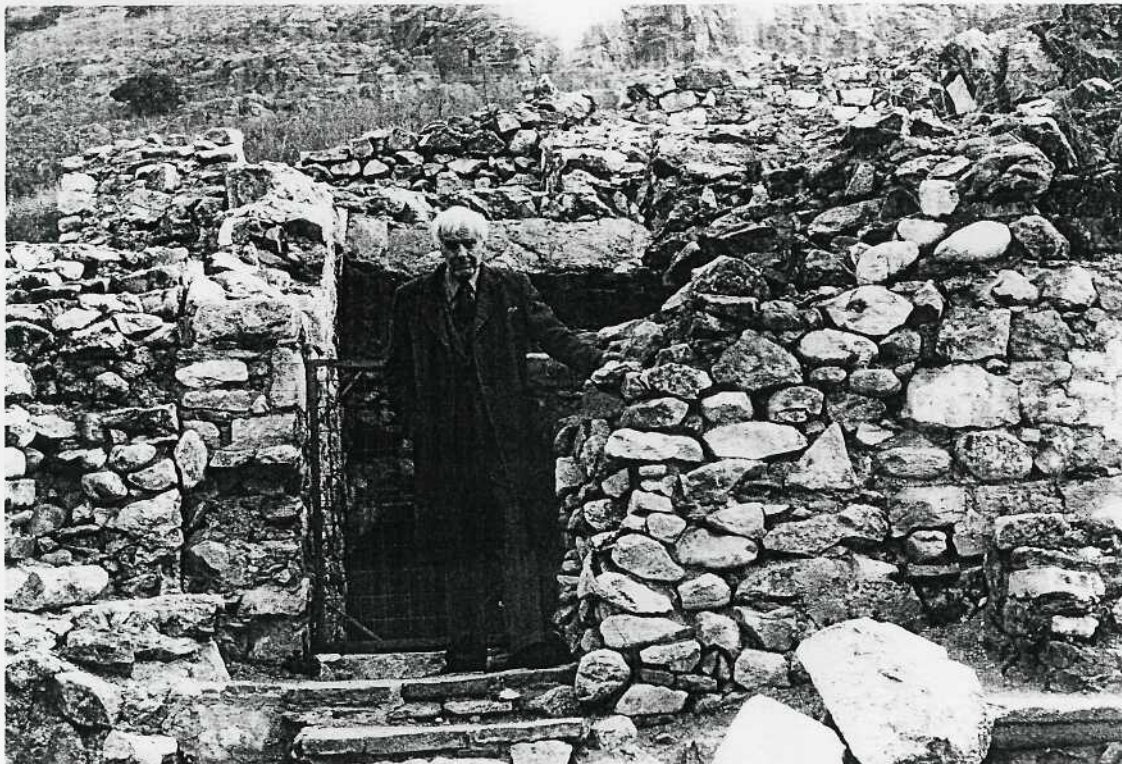
Christ who connects earth with heaven *is* the ladder, the base is planted firmly on the earth in his humanity; the topmost round reaches to the throne of God, in His divinity. The humanity of Christ embraces fallen humanity, while his divinity lays upon the throne of God. We are saved by climbing round, after round of the ladder, looking to Christ, clinging to Christ, mounting step by step to the height of Christ, so that He is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity are the rounds of this ladder. All these graces are to be manifested in the Christian character; "if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" 2Pet. 1: 10,11 (6T 147)

Fellow Christians, the records of sacred history are written not merely that we may read and wonder, but that the same faith which wrought in God's servants of old may work in us. In no less marked manner will the Lord work now, wherever there are hearts of faith to be channels of His power. To us as to Peter, the word is spoken, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke 22: 31, 32 (PK 175,76).

As witnessed from David, loving our leaders with all the infirmities known of them will arouse the long lost respect for them, in whatever capacity they may be serving. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth and one converts him, let him know that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." James 5: 19, 20. AMEN.

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**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, 4T 224**



Brother John Theodorou at the entrance of the prison  
Of the apostle Paul at Phillippi, Greece

# THE PROBLEM OF THE TONGUE

"I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue." Psalm 39:1-3.

What do you suppose David said? What do you say when you feel you must say something?

The ideas that other people sometimes express are bad enough to have to listen to; but the words that we say ourselves react the most painfully upon our own mind and character. I have much to repent of along these lines.

When I was a child, I usually had little to say, even in my teen and young adulthood, I was habitually silent; but since becoming a Christian my tongue has been loosed, often to my great dismay. What a difficult instrument to learn how to play properly!!

"if any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is vain." "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body." James 1:26; 3:1-3.

I've bridled several horses, and ridden them, or led them about. Now I must learn to bridle my tongue. Some dear

person I know, one in particular, has learned the lesson of bridling her tongue. Even the lines around her mouth show the repeated wars fought and won over the tongue.

"Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet they are turned about with a very small helm, wherever the governor lists. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasts great things. Look, how great a matter a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." James 3:4-6.

Have you ever noticed how what we swallow affects how fast our tongues run? Alcohol is often noticeable in this respect, as is rich food. Take notice the next time you are at a gathering where food is served.

Can we actually tame our own tongues?

"For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." James 3:7,8.

I guess not!

"Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we man, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

"Does a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries?



Either a vine, figs? So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh?" James 3:9-12.

What is the solution then?

"Do ye think that the scripture says in vain, the spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy? But HE GIVES MORE GRACE. Wherefore He says, God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the LORD, and He shall lift you up." James 4:5-10.

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one of another. This I say then, WALK IN THE SPIRIT, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." Galatians 5:14-16.

"Marvel not that I say unto thee, YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN." John 3:7.

Do you think we would actually say bad things about our own brethren?

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaks evil of his brother, and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law, and judges the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, Who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judges another?" James 4:11, 12.

In view of these things, it seems best for us to pray continually: "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Psalm 141:3.

"Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy word thou shalt be condemned." Matthew 12:31-37. AMEN

Sister Kathleen Ross  
Alberta, Canada



Ordination of brother Oscar Archila  
October 28, 2000



# FAST FORWARD

We all live in the last days of a well-advanced electronic world. Our daily life leads us into the modern global control of the electronic field. In the beginning, this electronic life gives us some kind of happiness, but we are going to go on an incredible journey of risk.

The modern world of high technology could not have come about except for the development of the computer. Different types and sizes of computers find uses throughout society in the storage and handling of data, from secret governmental files to banking transactions to private household accounts.

Data bank services and computer networks make available a great variety of information sources. The same advanced techniques also make possible invasions of privacy and of restricted information sources, but computer crime has become one of the many risks that society must face if it would enjoy the benefits of modern technology.

Twenty years ago, people had to remember only their social security number and maybe a phone number or two. But now using passwords to gain access to computer files and e-mail services at work has become a way of life for many. In fact, it is not uncommon for people to accumulate dozens of passwords, access codes, and personal identification numbers.

One network administrator reportedly maintains 129 active passwords. Some companies are therefore replacing password-based systems with fingerprint scanners and other hi-tech security devices. Satan is now pregnant on his presumption of misguiding

us into this fast world of modern technology. In this fast world, the computer lovers are very excited about Bill Gates' new discoveries of modern weapons of electronic software.

In the past, we used words like potato chips, and fish and chips but the present generation are daily using words like microchips and biochips. So we go a little deeper into this chip world. We now that we all are working for money. Without money we cannot live in this world. Sometimes, people are very crazy and very thirsty for cash. So, this cash will soon disappear and be replaced by electronic money. This money could be first used through smart cards.

These smart cards contain microchips, but soon they can be replaced by microchips implanted under our skin, most likely in our right hand. Isn't it wonderful? The technology has even been already tested for decades on animals, and is now ready to be applied on human beings.

Why would the international multi-millionaires want to do this? Simply to get total control over us. Everyone can see now all the high-tech updates meant to facilitate electronic commerce, with the smart cards, computers and cellular phones. The same multi-millionaires know very well that we would not give up the daily use of cash and accept these biochips to be planted under our skin unless there is a wide financial crisis that will convince the population that the only way not to lose everything is to accept the biochip.

Starting this year, you will see the huge campaign to convince people in America and Canada to accept these smart cards.



Unlike today's financial cards, the smart card does not need a magnetic strip on the back. Instead, it is equipped with a wiry silicon chip, often displayed at left of centre, but sometimes hidden in the plastic. Traditional magnetic strip cards can only hold one line of type, compared to 500 times more data for the smart cards. And unlike debit cards, smart cards allow retailers to accept payment without requiring authorization from a bank.

In Europe, although the Euro, the new European currency was launched on Jan 1, 1999, Euro coins and bank notes are not scheduled to go into circulation until 2002—three years later. This is done on purpose to give enough time for the Europeans to get hooked on electronic money through smart cards.

In their publicity campaign, smart card companies will explain that their cards are more convenient than cash, that you no longer need to bother with change, etc. Beware, this is a trap! Once smart cards become widespread, cash will be eliminated and smart cards will become the only means of exchange... for a short period of time until they are replaced with the ultimate solution—the microchip implanted in the right hand or forehead (right hand means labour and forehead means belief system).

As "smart" as they may look, smart cards can always be stolen, lost or be damaged. So there is no way they can lose it when the microchip will no longer be embedded in a plastic card, but directly placed inside the human body, as it is done now with microchip pet identification systems.

Infopet is one of several companies that provides a syringe-gun implantable biochip that is injected under the skin of an animal. The chip can only be read by a scanner, and

the code identifying the owner and pet will bring up a file on a computer. The system boasts that it can track over one billion pets by satellites and cellular towers. The biochip for humans will also be implanted through a syringe and be read by a scanner.

Motorola, who produces the microchips for the Mondex smart card, has developed several human implantable biochips. The biochip measures between 5-7 mm in length and .75 mm in width, about the size of a grain of rice. It can contain 34 billion unique sets of individual identification codes, which is more than enough to provide the capability to assign a unique code to every human on the planet today. It was determined that in using three entries of six digits, each inhabitant of the world could be given a distinct international social security number.

This microchip would be utilized in every way in which we are now using plastic credit cards today, and in fact, it would replace them all—health cards, passports, driver's licenses, national identity cards, etc. nobody could withdraw money from the bank without it, receive benefits from the government without it, buy or sell anything without it. This chip would also include full data on our family history, address, telephone number, occupation, criminal record, income tax information, health condition and religion.

Over 1.5 million dollars was spent studying where to place the chip in the human body, to recharge its battery. Only two suitable and efficient places were found—the forehead, just under the hairline and the back of the right hand (Researchers discovered that heat fluctuations are greater in the right hand than in the left hand for reasons they do not fully understand). When one learns this fact, one cannot help making

the connection with this passage of the book of Revelation which is really striking. "And he causes all the small and the great, and the rich and the poor and the free man and the slaves, to be given a mark in their right hand or in their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy or sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Rev. 13:16.

By accepting this microchip, we will lose every freedom and privacy, and be controlled by a heartless central computer at the service of a totalitarian world government. At the same time, this kind of biochip implantation will be a sign of the times of the national Sunday law. Some people are thinking this can be the final test.

Sunday worship is the mark of the beast, Papacy's authority. We will pass "sealings" and the seven plagues in our risky journey. This is the right time to believe in the living God. We should not put our precious trust in international bankers. It is true that we all are facing very heavy financial problems in every country in the last days.

Very soon, all will have made their choice for the "seal of God" or the "mark of the beast". It is not just a matter of choosing between two days, it is a matter of worship, of loyalty—either to God or to the beast's power. Now Jesus is pleading His blood for us in the Most Holy place in heaven. Now "the hour of His judgment is come." Rev. 14:7. Before our probation is closed forever, before every case is decided for life or death, even now He is inviting us to surrender all to Him and have life and peace. Soon it will be too late. I sincerely believe that you are an honest seeker for truth, otherwise you would never have read this far in seeking to know God's will.

Many people nowadays are getting a hunger and thirst for the truth. They want the pure truth. Errors from the pulpit do not just fly over their heads any more.

May God richly bless you and your family as you continue to study his marvelous words. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. AMEN.

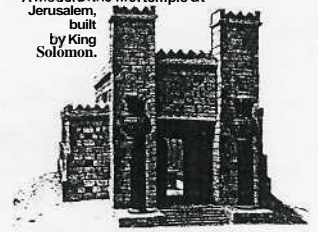
Xavior Chelliah  
Canada



Some of the believers of Perth, Australia



A model of the first temple at Jerusalem, built by King Solomon.



# HAGGAI

For over a year the temple of God had been neglected and forgotten. The people built houses and planted vineyards, but nothing seemed to be working. Nature itself seemed against them. God was disappointed that they had forgotten His temple.

This was the condition of Israel awhile after they had returned from captivity in Babylon. It was a horrible spiritual condition – mostly because they had lost sight of God. But even in this dark hour there was still hope. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah gave the people stirring testimonies telling them why they weren't being blessed. If they would put God's interests first they would be blessed.

To those who were discouraged Haggai encouraged them to consider their ways. Why have they done so little? Why are you concerned about your own house, but not the Lord's? It is because of your fear of being poor, but that fear has become a reality because you did not put God first. Then the Lord revealed to the people the reason for their want. You looked for much, but little came. And when you brought it home I blew on it and caused a drought throughout the land. All because you let my temple lay in waste.

"Consider your ways," urged the Lord. Go get supplies, build my house, and I will certainly be glorified.

The leaders and people of Israel took the message of counsel and reproof given through Haggai to heart. They felt God was serious and they dared not disobey lest they be cursed. So Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people started work on the house of the Lord.

As soon as Israel decided to obey the words of reproof, those words were followed by a message of encouragement. Then Haggai spoke and assured the people that the Lord was with them, and they were doing the right thing.

In less than a month, after work resumed on the temple, the builders received another comforting message. "Be strong, Zerubbabel, be strong Joshua, and be strong all ye people of the land for I am with you, said the Lord."

When Israel was camped around Mount Sinai the Lord declared that they were His. Now again, even after they had rejected Him many times, the Lord was again bringing them to Himself.

To His children today the Lord says, "Be strong, and work for I am with you." The Christian always has a strong helper in the Lord. We might not understand how God works, but this we do know, He will never fail those who put their trust in Him. If Christians understood how many

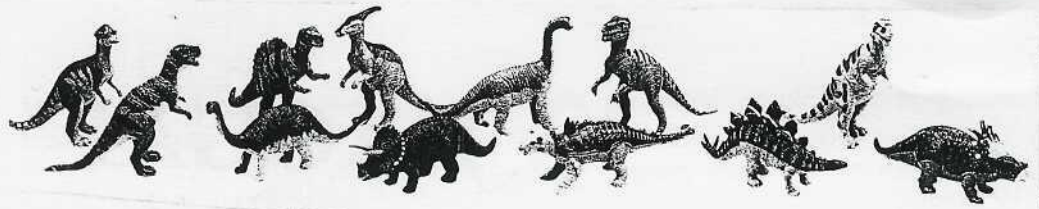
times God had protected them from Satan and not given up on them, they would never want to sin.

Zechariah who God raised up to help him emphasized Haggai's messages of encouragement. With fields lying waste, their few provisions and unfriendly people around the Israelites had to have faith and rely totally on God. Message after message was given by Haggai and Zechariah, encouraging the people to keep going because their efforts would be rewarded. Thus the builders were not left alone because the prophets of God helped them every step of the way. The Lord Himself declared, "Be strong for I am with you." The Lord also declared that from this day on they would be blessed.

To Zerubbabel their leader, who had been sorely tried when they came back from Babylon, was given a most precious message. "All the enemies of Israel will be cast down and in that day I will  
Make thee a signet, And bless you and all of Israel forever."

In conclusion to this inspiring story we must always put God's needs before anything else in the world. After all the Lord always put our needs first and on top of this He is our loving father so let's not become selfish but always remember to put the Lord's work first. Amen

Richard Eaton



## FINDING FORGIVENESS

One warm summer's day Kevin had promised to take his brother Mark to the zoo. They had been to the zoo before, but six-year old Mark never got tired of seeing all the animals at play, especially the monkeys. Kevin felt good when he saw how excited Mark was. Today was going to be even more special because Kevin's friend, Matthew was coming along with his younger brother, Philip. Together Mark and Kevin sat on the front steps patiently waiting for their friends to come by so they could go. Occasionally Mark would get a little impatient and run around the yard, up and down the stairs, and in and out of the house.

"Calm down," Kevin would tell him, "You will need all your energy for the zoo. We will do a lot of walking when we get there." Mark would settle down for a few minutes, but then he was up again.

It was not too long before another friend of Kevin's rode up on his bicycle. Carson seemed to be in such a rush as he rode quickly up the front pathway towards them. He held up a large sheet of paper in one hand and seemed in a desperate hurry.

"Look at this!" Kevin unfolded the paper and saw a series of short scrawls. They seemed to be signatures of people though he could not make out the names of the first two. Then he saw a clearly written name of a television star and then the autographs of several baseball players.

"Look on the back," puffed Carson. "I got the governor too!"

Kevin looked at his friend suspiciously. "Where did you get these?"

"Let me see!" begged Mark.

Carson ignored Mark as he took back his paper. "Down at the golf course. There are so many big name people there I don't even have half of them yet.

"Grab your bike and a pen and paper and let's go down there before they all leave."

Kevin got up to open the door and then stopped. "I'm supposed to wait here for Matthew. He's bringing his little brother and we're taking Mark to the zoo in less than half an hour." Mark grinned at his brother.

"Come on, we'll be back in time," said Carson impatiently. "Even if we don't, Mark can go with Matthew since he's got to take his little brother anyway. And if worse comes to worse you can go another day. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance!"

Kevin stood holding the door open while he debated what to do. Finally he bent down and put his arm around Mark's shoulder. "Mark, if we don't happen to get back before Matthew shows up, you can go with him. You won't care if I am not there as long as you get to go with Philip. Just remember to tell your sister when you leave. I'll try to get back though."

Carson laughed as they rode down the hill in front of the house. "You know with the lines you'll have to wait in at the golf course, we'll never get back in half

an hour."

"Maybe not," said Keith. "But I brought along an extra sheet to get autographs for Matthew. When I give him that, he won't be so upset that I didn't come."

Not knowing how long he had been gone, Kevin returned home when he had been satisfied with the autographs he obtained. He knew he had gone past his half an hour, but he did not know how long. He figured by now Mark would be happily enjoying the animals at the zoo with Matthew and Philip. However upon entering the garage with his bicycle, he could hear Mark crying inside the house. "What is Mark doing back so soon?" he wondered. "I wasn't gone that long, and he should still be at the zoo. Matthew couldn't have been this late picking him up."

But he could tell by the sobs that something had gone wrong. He felt a little guilty about running out on Mark, and he had a suspicion that he was in some trouble.

"Where have you been?" asked both parents at once as Kevin stepped in the door. Kevin was about to answer when he saw the clock. He had been gone for over two hours!

"You were supposed to take Mark to the zoo and you just left him here! What were you thinking of?" asked Mom. She was holding Mark's head against her shoulder as he sniffled quietly.

"Something came up. I thought Matthew would..." mumbled Kevin. "I'm really sorry



Mark."

"Something came up?" said his dad. "He's not Matthew's brother. When Matthew got here and found out you had gone off somewhere; he was angry and left without Mark. I don't blame him! But the thing I can't understand is how you could leave a six-year old boy at home all alone? Kevin, he's too little to take care of himself!"

"Where is Judy?"

"Your sister is baby-sitting down the block. We just got home 10 minutes ago. You've got a lot of explaining to do," said Dad, his voice rising.

Kevin lost his temper, and angry words were exchanged before he ended up slamming a door and running upstairs to his room. It didn't take long for his anger to melt away. He knew he was wrong. He was upset that things had turned out this way, but mostly he was upset with himself.

"How in the world could I have done such a mean thing to Mark?" he thought. "He'd been looking forward to it all week. Matthew deserved better treatment too. Then I start talking back to my parents and saying things I don't mean. All for a lousy pageful of autographs. He flicked the paper off his desk and watched it flutter to the floor.

Then he sat on the edge of his bed with his knees up to his chin. He began to think of all the things he had done wrong lately. The longer he sat there, the more he remembered. His list seemed to pile until it was way in the hundreds of unkind acts.

"For every sin I remember there are probably 10 more that I managed to forget," he thought. "Why do my parents put up with all this?" Then a worse thought came to him. "Why does God put up with me? I've done too many things for even God to forgive. What if he punishes me?"

He was very near to tears, and suddenly he knew what he must do. "I don't deserve another chance," he said out loud. "I don't see how I can talk to my parents or God again. I shouldn't even talk to Mark. He deserves something more than a rotten brother!"

Just then Mark peeked around the doorway into Kevin's room. He was wearing his pajamas and he had just taken a bath.

"You're not always a rotten brother," said Mark.

"I am too," Kevin said irritably. He listed a couple of week's worth of bad behaviour. "And then I left you alone, and something could have happened to you with no one else around. Besides you didn't get to the zoo like I promised you."

"That's OK," said Mark, walking into the room. "You said you were sorry. You didn't do it to be mean, did you? Can we go to the zoo tomorrow?"

"Sure," said Kevin. "I don't know why you want me around."

But Mark wasn't paying attention. He looked over Kevin's desk and the shelves in the room.

"Where are the autographs?"

"Right here, take a look if you want." He picked up the sheet off the floor and handed it to Mark. "Come on, Mark, you're supposed to be in bed."

As he led Mark into the hall he asked, "You mean all I have to do is say I'm sorry and you forget the whole thing? Wow! I wish it was that easy with..." he paused.

"You wish it were that easy with whom?" asked Dad who was waiting for them by Mark's bed.

Kevin stood silently for a few seconds while Mark climbed into bed.

"With you and Mom. And God. It can't be that easy when you've got a list this long to ask forgiveness for." He held his arms out as wide as he could.

Dad gave Mark a hug. "I know you have a wonderful little brother, Kevin. But if you think he knows more about forgiveness than God does, you're giving him too much credit. Or you're not giving God enough. Maybe you're not giving Mom and I enough credit either."

"There must come a time when people get tired of forgiving," said Kevin. "I think I've used up my chances."

"I wouldn't worry about that," Dad said. "Mark was saying something that God has always said. All you have to do is be sorry for your sins and confess them. God knows you're not perfect. He loves us all so much that He's willing to forgive us no matter how many wrong things we have done in the past. Even better yet, if we ask for His help, He will help us in the future so we won't repeat the same sins again. He can help us to be better Christians. He really does want to help you reach the goal of perfection that the Bible talks about and with His help you can do it one day."

"I'm really sorry about today, Dad. And Mark."

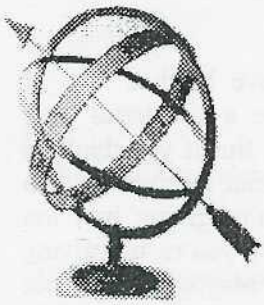
"You already said that," sighed Mark. "Good night."

"Good night," answered Dad and Kevin. As they walked together down the stairs, Dad turned to Kevin. "The rest of us have already forgiven you for today. How about forgiving yourself?"

**"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."**

**1 John 1:9.**

*Lord, it's a terrible feeling knowing that I've done something wrong. I've known that feeling more than I care to. But you are able to remove that feeling.  
Thank you.*



# KING HEZEKIAH

One day the King Hezekiah got sick. The sickness he had was deadly and there was no cure for it. Isaiah, the prophet, came and told him that he was going to die. The king started praying fervently that he would get better. Hezekiah was a good king and he served God faithfully, so God had mercy on him and told the prophet Isaiah to go back and tell him that he would live. Now just imagine if somebody told you that you were going to die and then a while later they told you that you would live, wouldn't you get a little confused? Well Hezekiah was, so he asked God for a sign. He asked that the sun move backwards 10 degrees. So it happened. Today that would be the equivalent of 40 minutes. So wouldn't you wonder what happened if the sun went backwards across the sky instead of forwards? Well, some Babylonian wise men did. They told their king, whose name was Merodach-baladan, and he sent ambassadors to Hezekiah to learn more about the God that performed that miracle. But King Hezekiah did not tell them about God. He showed them his treasures. Since he did that, the ambassadors went back and told their greedy king about the riches they had seen. Later they decided to make war on Israel to get them. Then Isaiah told Hezekiah he had sinned a great sin. He didn't tell of God's mercy and truth.

Sometimes we make the same mistake and only talk about ourselves to others. We should be living examples of Jesus. "The story of Hezekiah's failure to prove true to his trust at the time of the visit of the ambassadors is fraught with an important lesson for all. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience, of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, of the matchless depths of the Saviour's love. When mind and heart are filled with the love of God, it will not be difficult to impart that which enters into the spiritual life. Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perception of truth, unselfish purposes, yearning for piety and holiness, will find expression in words that reveal the character of the heart treasure.

"Those with whom we associate day by day need our help, our guidance. They may be in such a condition of mind that a word spoken in season will be as a nail in a sure place. Tomorrow some of these souls may be where we can never reach them again. What is our influence over these fellow travelers?

"Every day of life is freighted with responsibilities which we must bear. Every day, our words and acts are making impressions upon those with whom we associate. How great the need that we set a watch upon our lips and

guard carefully our steps' One reckless movement, one imprudent step, and the surging waves of some strong temptation may seep a soul into the downward path. We cannot gather up the thoughts we have planted in human minds. If they have been evil, we may have set in motion a train of circumstances, a tide of evil, which we are powerless to stay. On the other hand, if by our example we aid others in the development of good principles, we give them power to do good. In their turn they exert the same beneficial influence over others. Thus hundreds and thousands are helped by our unconscious influence. The true follower of Christ strengthens the good purposes of all with whom he comes in contact. Before an unbelieving, sin-loving world he reveals the power of God's grace and the perfection of His character." *Prophets and Kings*, p. 348.

Sharon Eaton



Oscarito, Marillita and Sarita  
Having refreshments after  
The baptism in El Salvador



# FOOD COMBINATION



There is a saying, "Americans entertain themselves via the mouth." And I am sure that most of you will agree. We eat for taste sensations rather than for the purpose of nourishment. Not that proper eating is not, or should be an enjoyable affair, for God made the fruits of the trees to be succulent and sweet. But ever since the entrance of sin, man's eating habits have become more perverted with the passing of each century. Today Americans are guilty of committing every sin in the book regarding their taste buds.

The average American can share their experiences regarding acid indigestion—for most have had heartburn and other stomach symptoms. It has been fairly well established that over 50% of American meals end up in digestive problems of some kind, most of which are acid indigestion related.

There are other forms of indigestion that arise from eating the wrong combinations: that is, foods that incompatible with each other in digestive chemistry. Of course, we must not forget that emotional conditions at the time of eating can turn off the digestive system, or when we have fevers. Also eating beyond digestive capacity, known as overeating, can lead to indigestion as well. (I certainly know all this by painful experience!!)

Food combining is as important as the selection of food itself. "We need to study the art of preparing in a simple manner the fruits, grains, and vegetables. We do not need these complex combinations that are provided. As the matter now stands we are in danger of making dyspeptics." Manus. 150 (1905).

The basic benefit of food combining is that digestion is improved, there is less disease and more energy. Keep in mind, (once you improve your eating habits), your body may have to conduct eliminative crises, which are usually mistaken for illnesses, before it will be free from disease (toxins within the body). And, too, keep in mind that the poisons you have consumed and generated in the past (from improper eating and possibly drug taking), have done a certain amount of damage to your organism, and it will take time for the body to fully repair itself.

Digestion is governed by physiological chemistry. The physiological limitations of the digestive glands, enzymes and juices should be considered in planning meals to which the glands and their secretions can adjust.

It is not only what we eat, but also what we digest and assimilate that produces health and strength. Incorrect food combinations are primary culprits in the interference with normal digestive processes.

"Disturbance is created by improper combinations of food; fermentation sets in; the blood is contaminated and the brain confused. The habit of overeating, or of eating too many kinds of food at one meal, frequently causes dyspepsia. Serious injury is thus done to the delicate digestive organs. In vain the stomach protests, and appeals to the brain to reason from cause to effect. The excessive amount of food eaten, or the improper combination, does its injurious work. In vain do disagreeable premonitions give warning. Suffering is the consequence. Disease takes the place of health." Counsels on Diet and Foods, 110, 111.

In all probability, Adam and Eve were instructed on how to properly combine the foods that grew in the Garden. But eventually, as part of Satan's scheme to destroy man, this most important function was lost. The art of food combining is a real science and can be appreciated by all who want and have excellent health. But it must be realized that we must eat from principle rather than from inclination of habit.

Many foods, which are good in themselves, can be a poison to the system when incorrectly combined. In most food preparations, SIMPLICITY is the key word. Of course it is not quite that simple with all the food combining rules, but the first and most important rule to observe is simplicity.

This article is taken from a book entitled "Something Better—God's Original Design, Live Foods", written & compiled by Katy Chamberlin, Anchor of Faith Ministries.

Submitted by Kathleen Ross  
Alberta, Canada



MODERATION



HEALTHFUL  
FOOD



PURE  
WATER

# GOD'S EIGHT NATURAL DOCTORS

## --A NEW START

Most diseases and health problems can be totally cured, or at least greatly helped by cooperating with God's eight natural doctors. These are:

**NUTRITION:** God originally gave mankind fruits, grains and nuts to eat. In the Garden of Eden they didn't cook anything, but ate everything in peak condition. We should try to achieve and follow this plan of diet as much as possible, using lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and nuts with whole grains and legumes. (I dry my grain sprouts, put them through the flour mill and use the flour as cereal, raw). The animals love it!

Young corn is delicious eaten raw, and some grains and legumes can be sprouted and eaten raw, or lightly cooked. Many vegetables that we usually automatically cook can be eaten raw, especially if they are fresh from the garden, young and tender.

We should totally avoid flesh meats, coffee and tea, alcohol, refined sugar, white flour products, refined foods, junk foods. Dairy products are not the best; avocados, nuts and seeds are better.

**EXERCISE:** We need plenty of activity, especially out-of-doors. Useful work is the best as it is purposeful, meaningful and helpful; with a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction afterwards. We should not overdo it, but should work according to our capacity, and stop before we are exhausted.

**WATER:** Our bodies lose about two quarts of water a day passed in urine, stools, sweating and breathing, and this must be replaced. Drink at least 8-10 cups of pure water every day. More wouldn't hurt you, and is especially necessary when the weather is hot and/or you are working hard.

A great way to start your day is by drinking a quart, more or less, of pure hot water.

**SUNSHINE:** Let the sunshine into your home and heart, and be out in it as much as possible and practicable. Gear yourself to an outdoor life.

**TEMPERANCE:** Temperance means total avoidance of what is harmful, and judicious use of what is good.

**AIR:** Breathe deeply of pure, fresh air, especially around pine, cedar, and other evergreen trees. Practice deep breathing at all times.

**REST:** "Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

**TRUST:** Trust awakens trust. We should try to trust our fellow man as much as we can, in spite of the crime and corruption that is in this world. Distrust, fear and worry break down the vital forces of our being whereas, faith, hope and trust build us up.

### BIBLE TEXTS FOR A NEW START

**NUTRITION:** Genesis 1:29. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so."

**EXERCISE:** Genesis 2:15. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." 2Thess. 3:10. "For even when we were with



you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither would he eat."

WATER: Rev. 22:17. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

SUNSHINE: Malachi 4:2. "But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."

TEMPERANCE: Galatians 5:22, 23. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." 2Peter 1:5-7. "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

AIR: Genesis 2:7. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

REST: Genesis 2:2,3. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which he had made, and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

TRUST: Psalm 37:5-11. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; fret not thyself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not yourself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, you shall consider diligently his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

AMEN

Kathleen Ross  
Alberta, Canada



Nine new souls were baptized into the church in Indonesia.

## GREETINGS FROM EL SALVADOR

Dear Brethren, editors of the Reformation Messenger.

Peace and blessings to you all.

Again it gives me great joy to greet all the dear brethren and sister in different parts of the world. Wishing that the grace of Jesus Christ be with you in these last days.

"Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" Rev. 22:7

Attention, Prophecies fulfilling!

By the mercy of God and the grace of Jesus we have passed another year and the coming of Jesus is getting closer. Soon the prophecies of Rev. 13:11-17 will be fulfilled. "That no man might buy or sell, save he that he had the mark, or name of the beast."

In our country, El Salvador, the existing monetary currency, colon, has been replaced with American dollars. What does this mean?

This common money is part of the well-known globalization plan. Today, El Salvador, tomorrow Guatemala, and then other countries. This plan to have common money in the countries makes us to think that secretly, slowly, it brings about the globalization which next will bring the Sunday law.

This way what is happening in El Salvador will continue in the rest of the Central America.

Today more than ever we must keep open the eyes of faith and look beyond the blue sky and fasten our eyes to prophesies which are fulfilling around us.

Dear brothers and sisters around the world we plead with you to decide for the eternal life, because the time of probation will end the moment when we least expect it to happen.

May the Lord bless you richly,  
Your brother and co-laborer

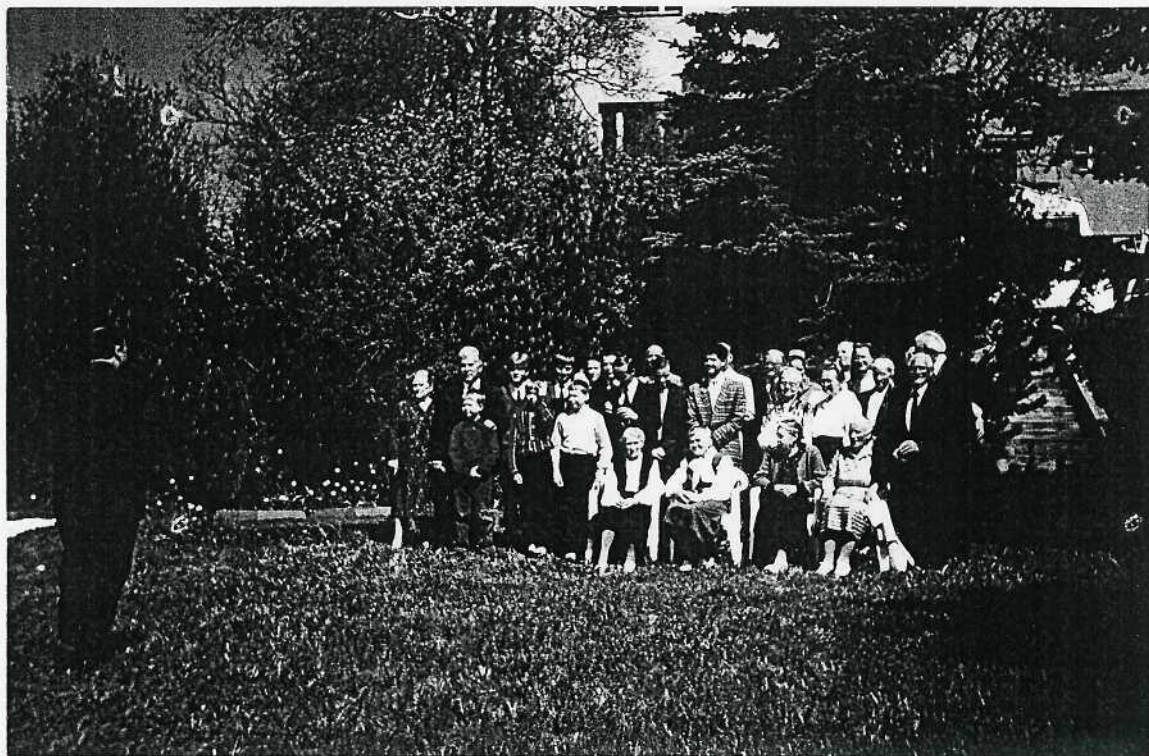
Oscar Archila

Acceptance into ministry our newly ordained  
Minister Oscar Archila by Pastor Ruiz.





## Conference In Finland



*God Bless You*

*It's a little prayer—  
"God bless you."*

*But it means so much today  
It means may angels guard you  
And His shining light show your way.*

*God's love surrounds you  
Peace enfolds you, never to depart.*

*It's a little prayer—  
"God bless you."*

*But it comes right from the heart.*

**But do not become discouraged;  
cast your care upon God and remain  
calm and cheerful.  
Begin every day with earnest prayer,  
not omitting to offer praise and  
thanksgiving.  
TMK 232**

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Conference in Australia