


The Reformation Messenger



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International Missionary Society of S.D.A. Church Reform Movement



"Are not five sparrows
sold for two farthings,
and not one of them is
forgotten before God?"

Luke 12:6

We Believe

The all-wise, loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ; He is its Owner and Sustainer.

He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.

The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness.

The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine; the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform.

His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus.

Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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In This Issue

THE AVENUES OF THE SOUL	3
A NEW HOPE IS BORN	6
CONSCIENCE	9
WARNING AGAINST FALSE...	11
HEALTH MATTERS: MEMORY LOSS	14
DRESS REFORM	16
WATER INTAKE	19
JUDGE NOT	20
CC: THE POWER OF SONG	25

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THE AVENUES OF THE SOUL

“Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices, must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest. The heart must be faithfully sentinelled, or evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in darkness. ‘Gird up the loins of your mind,’ Peter wrote, ‘be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;... not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.’” AA, p. 518.

Avenues are wide streets found in big cities. The best shops, foreign embassies and beautiful mansions are usually to be found on these avenues, while the soul is the seat of our personality: our thoughts, our feelings, our mind.

What connection is there between these two things, one may wonder: an avenue and the soul? And which are the avenues of the soul? What is it that triggers our mind to think in a certain way, our heart to feel in a certain way? The things we see or hear. The avenues of the soul are

therefore our senses. In the same way that along an avenue there is much traffic, very attractive buildings housing embassies, shops and rich people, our senses receive an enormous variety of impressions that work a great influence upon our soul and build up our personality. We end up being the result of what we hear, see, smell, taste and touch.

As human beings we were wonderfully created. We are the crown of creation because we are the only tri-dimensional creatures composed of a body, a soul and a spirit. The spirit is to rule over our whole being, and our spirit responds to the influence of a supernatural power: God’s or the devil’s. If we allow the Lord to rule our thoughts, feelings and actions totally, then we are spiritual; if instead, we are ruled by the powers of darkness, we are under spiritualistic influence, two terms that are very similar, but very much apart in meaning.

When man in his innocent condition lived in Paradise, surrounded by nature and in contact with the angels and with God Himself, he had spiritual communion with his Creator. But after he gave in to temptation, which appealed to his senses, since Eve “*saw that the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes,*” he became carnal, ruled by his flesh.

The serpent, entwined on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, through which the devil spoke to Eve, appealed to her mind through her senses and made her see the tree as something “*to be desired to make one wise,*” although the tree was not called the tree of wisdom. There is no wisdom in the knowledge of evil. Wisdom can be obtained only from God if we come to Him like little children, humbly acknowledging that we know nothing and asking for it as King Solomon did.

Knowledge makes us proud, arrogant, lukewarm, while wisdom gives us insight, makes us sensitive and prudent. Much knowledge is a blessing only if combined with the knowledge of God, and a real knowledge of God makes us humble and dependent on Him for everything.

Much knowledge and little or no dependence on God is the situation of the church of Laodicea, whose members the Lord invites to a very special encounter with Him—an intimate dinner, not with candle lights, as sophisticated people like to do, but in the full light of the gospel of love, since “*the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts...*” Proverb 20:27. We are children of the light as long as we stand under the Sun of Righteousness.



In Matthew 6:22, we read, *“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness...”*

It is commonly said that the eyes are the windows of the soul and through them one can see man’s spiritual condition; they are also an avenue to the soul, a very broad avenue, since we are exposed to so many things through our eyes.

People who live in the countryside, surrounded by nature, get messages of peace and love from their surroundings since “God is love, is written upon every bud, upon every spire of springing grass.” CC, p. 10. But those who live in cities are in big danger: violence, pornography and vanity may enter through the eyes directly to the mind to be later manifested in aggressiveness, impure thoughts and covetousness.

God, in His love and wisdom, has protected this precious organ with eyelids, eyelashes and eyebrows so that no dirt may enter into it. In the same manner we should protect our sight from falling and dwelling upon anything that may corrupt the soul. King Solomon, who started his rulership as a humble, God-fearing young man, ended up falling into deep apostasy for the simple fact that he fell into temptation due to the covetousness that arose in his heart because

he did not keep his eyes fixed on the goal and allowed his sight to wander in all directions. He declares, *“And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them.”* Ecclesiastes 2: 10.

How careful should we all be with the direction in which we look! Even when Noah was building the ark that would lead him to

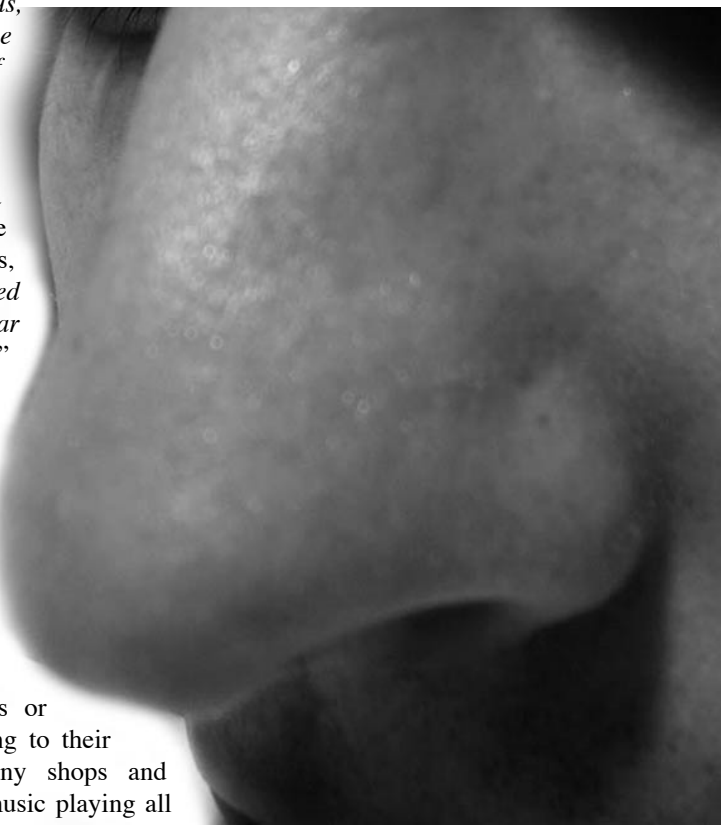
salvation, the Lord wisely commanded him to place a window on the roof and not on the sides, so that he would not see the terrible fate that the people who had rejected God’s grace had chosen for themselves. Noah had to have his eyes fixed on heaven and so should we, because it is from there that our redemption will come. In Hebrew 12:1, we read that we should *“run with patience the race that is before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”*

Not only the eyes, but also the ear is a wide avenue to the soul. Solomon says, *“the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.”* Ecclesiastes 1:8. This is a reality in which we live daily in differences circumstances. In big cities, it is common to see young people wearing earphones as they walk in the street, travel by bus or underground, listening to their favorite music. Many shops and supermarkets have music playing all

the time and even when one waits to get his telephone call answered, music is meant to shorten the waiting period.

Some people, as soon as they enter their home, turn on the TV or radio and have it playing, even if they do not listen to it. Not only music, the news or different programs do people listen to, but there is one thing most human beings pay an attentive ear to and sometimes seem to delight in hearing: gossip. The word of God says that among those who shall abide in His tabernacle are the ones who do not take reproach against their neighbor. There is a Chinese proverb that says that someone who listens to talebearers is as guilty as the one who does harm with his words and both deserve to be hung, one from the tongue and the other one from the ears. May the Lord forgive us for the times we have heard bad reports and may He protect us from sinning with our ears. It is always convenient to remember Paul’s advice to the Philippians, *“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”* Philippians 4:8.

There are still other avenues of the soul



that have to be guarded and which meet at a crossroad. These are the senses of smell and taste. When we have a certain weakness regarding our appetite, the sense of smell may play an alluring role. A perverted taste leads to overeating and indulging in things that are detrimental to the health. Appetite may be awakened by the sight, smell and taste of a certain dish and sometimes temperance is not practiced. The Word of God warns us against this danger in Proverbs 23:1-3, *“When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what [is] before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou [be] a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they [are] deceitful meat.”*

In the Holy Scriptures we find the exemplary life of Daniel who set guard upon this very wide avenue and became an instrument in God’s hands. Would Daniel have received a revelation and interpretation of the king’s dream and would he have been put in a high position in the Babylonian court if he had had no control upon his appetite? He was being trained to occupy a position of importance, since he was of royal lineage, and was given the privilege of eating from the “delicacies” on the king’s table, but this humble young man chose to serve the King of heaven instead, and to practice the principles of that kingdom: self-denial and temperance.

The people of Israel, on the other hand, succumbed to the lust of their palate and fell in the wilderness, thus never entering the Promised Land. Can we be running the same risk regarding our entrance into the heavenly Canaan if we follow their steps? Peter speaks of those who *“have tasted that the Lord is gracious”* (1 Peter 2:3) and *“desire the sincere milk of the word”*



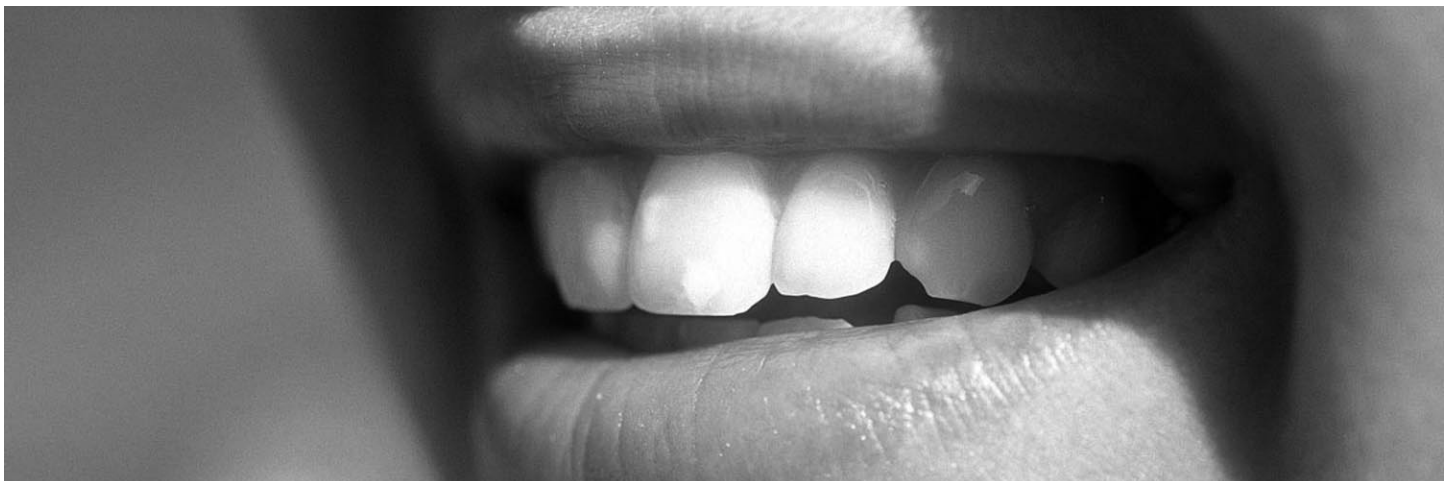
to grow thereby. The newly born men he refers to, who *“have purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit”* have a completely different kind of appetite, they do not crave for exotic or even national dishes, but *“do hunger and thirst after righteousness”* (Matthew 5:6), and their soul pants and *“thirsteth for God, for the living God.”* Psalm 42:2.

Still another avenue, if not wisely guarded, will be detrimental to our soul: the sense of touch. No wonder God’s command to our fore-parents regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was, *“Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it.”* Gen. 3:3 And Job declares in thorough despair, *“The things that my soul refused to touch are my sorrowful meat.”* (Job 6:7) The contact of our souls with evil, through any of our senses, will only grieve our spirit. The evil one is constantly pointing his poisonous darts at our soul through

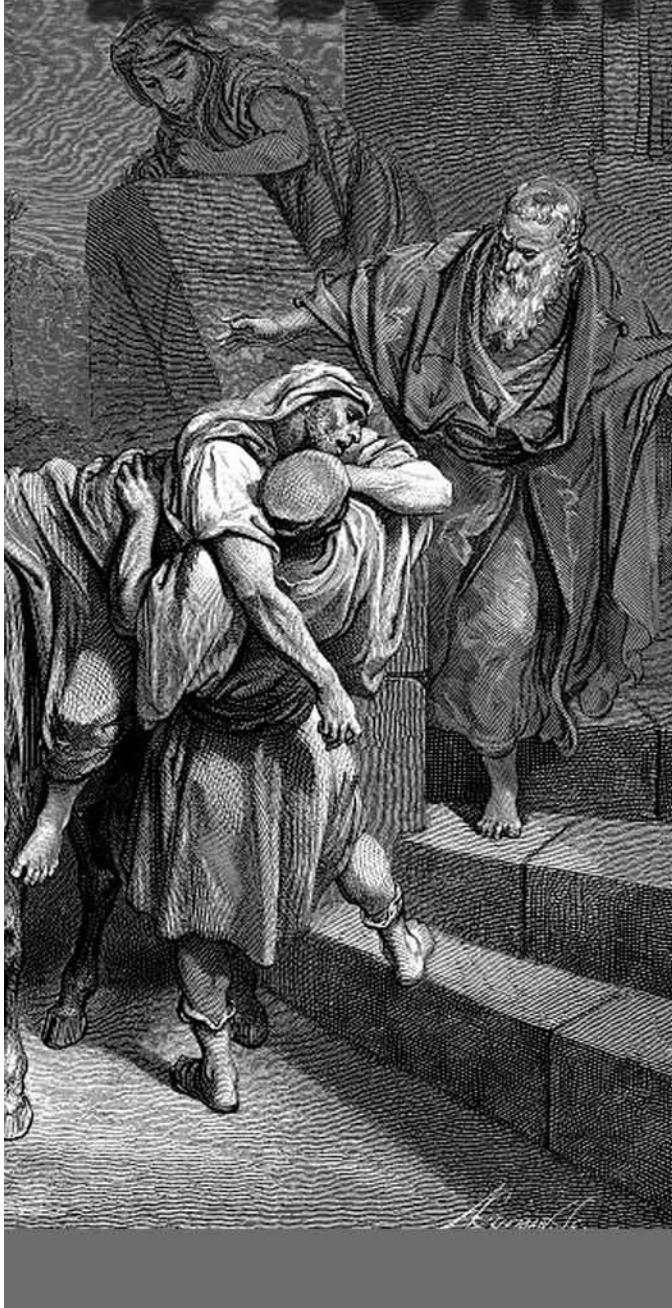
the above mentioned avenues, with the purpose of polluting it and making us eat of the forbidden fruit so that we may have no access to the tree of life in the middle of Paradise.

Our success in keeping God’s moral law--the Ten Commandments, is closely related to how much we have *“tasted”* God’s grace and guarded the avenues of our soul. Do we receive the blessing of the Lord every Sabbath because we have allowed Him to cause us *“ride upon the high places of the earth”* by not doing our own ways, finding our own pleasure and speaking our own words, or we do not cross the border of our flesh because covetousness has ruled our senses during the whole week?

May the Lord help us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service! (Romans 12:1) **AMEN.**



A NEW HOPE IS BORN



In regard to natural disasters, the year 2005 marked a historical record. Twenty-seven hurricanes have kept the inhabitants of the Caribbean, Central America and the United States in check, and caused great devastations worsening the living conditions of those people a great deal.

From 15 November to 13 December, sister Santina Mascera, responsible for the Work of the Good Samaritan, together with the representative of the German Union, Gustavo Castellanos, visited the southern part of Mexico and certain regions in some Central American countries that have been affected by the hurricane, Stan. The visiting program included the development of certain humanitarian projects in some countries in Central America.

The purpose of the trip, in the first place, was that of assisting the rescuing team to help the brothers and sisters in the faith who had been affected by the hurricane and giving them spiritual and moral support. In these countries, plans were made to sustain the Good Samaritan Work and offerings and basic commodities were given out.

The beneficiaries received donations amounting to 24,183,72 euros. This modest sum has given new hope and trust in the future. This was made possible thanks to the offerings coming from Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and Spain.

Honduras: A Stormy Welcome

On 17 November, hurricane Gama welcomed us in Honduras. At night, before the terrible flood made the main roads impassable, we managed to reach the city San Pedro Sula, on the Atlantic coast. Later on, for four days, innumerable storms lashed the western and southern part of the country causing much damage.

On Friday 18 November, the leader of the community in Honduras, Inocencio Guardado, told us by phone that it would not be possible for him to meet us, as it had been previously agreed, because the innumerable storms in the south of the country prevented him from coming. He added that many persons were trying to rescue the few things they had left by hanging them from the ceiling of their homes, and that the area was full of poisonous snakes that due to the flood had left their hiding place.

On that Friday we wanted to evacuate many people and our brethren from the area where bananas are grown, around the city of Lima, to a place near San Pedro Sula, in order to protect them from the alluvium.

Our attempt failed because the roads were impassable due to the heavy rain. Therefore, on Saturday, at four o'clock in the morning, we decided to try again, but the whole area was completely flooded.

In Honduras, hurricane Gama left 30,000 homeless people, 34 dead and many scattered. According to the report we received, there were no victims among the members of our community. 1000 dollars were immediately handed out to the social work of the Good Samaritan in Honduras, and thanks to the help of a regional private television channel an appeal was made asking for clothes.

We thank the Lord for stretching His protective and merciful hand upon the brethren and their co-workers.

The Work of the Good Samaritan sponsors a primary school in Honduras. From the 53 pupils who attend the different classes, 22 children have been sponsored by Italy in the year 2005 and this year they are being sponsored by Germany by means of school adoption at a distance. These children come from very poor families who live in indigent conditions. The increasing number of pupils calls for the school building to be enlarged.

The sponsoring of schoolchildren is based on a selection done by the head of the Good Samaritan department, Estela de Núñez, who follows a very precise criteria and interviews the poor families.

Guatemala And El Salvador- Assistance To The Poorest

On October 2005, when hurricane Stan lashed across Guatemala and El Salvador leaving thousands dead, especially in Guatemala, and causing innumerable material damages, the Work of the Good Samaritan donated 3,000 dollars to buy and distribute basic commodities among those affected. Enrique de León, honorary leader of the Work of the Good Samaritan, together with a team of volunteers, started a rescue campaign on the Pacific coast and the high plateau of Guatemala.

In the location Las Trochas, the Work of the Good Samaritan, together with the American foundation "Fraternidad Guatemalteca" – with its seat in Washington D.C., took care of 600 families affected by hurricane Stan, by providing them with food and potable water. Besides, a mill to grind maize, indispensable in making tortillas--the staple food of the population, was donated to the community. The Good Samaritan, for 150 dollars, had a room built to lodge the mill and for people to go to grind their grain.

In Las Trochas, the Good Samaritan of Guatemala is planning to buy a plot of land to build a settlement for some families who, because of the disasters or for social reasons are homeless and live in extreme poverty. The approximate cost of this project is of 5000 dollars.

The earth thundered and shook.

Hurricane Stan also left its imprint in Salinas, a village in the north of the high plateau of Guatemala where seven houses were buried by an earth alluvium. An inhabitant of this little village woke up at 5 a.m. and when he realized that the earth was making a noise like thunder, rushed out of his house. When he noticed that an enormous earth slide was about to raze the village to the ground, he did everything possible to alert the inhabitants to escape from the imminent disaster.

The Work of the Good Samaritan started a fund, with 2000 dollars, to buy a plot of land for the people who lost their home in Salinas. Those who live in dangerous areas must be evacuated before the rainy season starts (in May 2006) since the mountain may slide again. 3000 dollars are needed so that every brother or sister affected by the disaster in Salinas may receive a plot to build a home.

In spite of all their needs, these brothers in the faith are thankful to the Lord who kept them alive in a miraculous way. Another believer in the village told us that the night that the disaster took place, God assured him in a dream that nothing would happen to him.

In the location Tecún Umán, near the border with Mexico, the chapel was completely covered by the waters and cannot be used. The waters reached a height of a meter and a half and left a deposit of mud of 50 cm. The church members, who have also suffered great material loss, need contributions to restore their church. For this purpose, about 2000 dollars are needed.

In many places, the mass of water left behind a desert of stones and sand. The crop was lost and humidity destroyed the provisions of maize and beans. The Good Samaritan distributed food thus supplying the needs of the people until the coming harvest time.

On the road that goes from Guatemala City to Mexico, the Good Samaritan team met a large and very poor family that had lost everything due to the hurricane. This family is periodically being helped either with basic commodities or medicine.

Besides the places mentioned, many other

locations were visited and social assistance was provided.

The assistance was not only limited to the people affected by the catastrophes

In all the countries of Central America, the Good Samaritan helps not only those who were affected by the natural disasters, but also extremely poor people and particularly the sick, old, and handicapped. Request of help for such people are constantly received.

One of these cases is the one of Enrique, a child in Sonsonate, El Salvador, who is an orphan and paralytic since the age of seven due to a street accident. His grandmother, who also needs assistance, takes care of him. In view of his needs, the Good Samaritan has provided a wheel chair that enables him to attend school. What in Europe is taken for granted by a person with such problems, is not at all in countries like El Salvador.

In Sansonate, plans have been made to build a school for poor children. A brother donated the plot but there is need of funds to start the construction. The Good Samaritan left 1000 dollars to start with the project and another 2000 can be obtained locally, from donations, but there are still 15,000 needed to reach the total sum.

In the case of handicapped people, the Good Samaritan buys wheel chairs. Besides, in order to make it easier for the handicapped to move, the local team has helped pave the street. This has also contributed to the hygiene and the attention of the patients.

In Totonicapán, a Maya-Quiché town in Guatemala, which is 2500 meters high, we are sponsoring a primary school for poor children. During our visit we had a meeting with the teachers and some parents, and at that very moment three women came to ask for their children to be accepted in the school. One of them, a mother of three, who cannot read or write, told us that her oldest daughter, aged 11, had never attended school and was absolutely illiterate. Such cases can be solved with school adoption at a distance. Besides the already mentioned cases, humanitarian projects and plans to develop the area have been made in Las Minas and Tierra Caliente.

Nicaragua, 2nd Poorest In Latin America

The inhabitants of Laurel Galán, in the north of Managua--the capital of Nicaragua--have suffered because of the floods and consequent periods of drought. Now, in spite of the many difficulties that the country is facing, they are relieved thanks to the use of five wells that have been put to work with the help of the Good Samaritan. In such a way the whole village is being provided with water which before they had to fetch from a river six kilometers away.

In Posoltega, a city that seven years ago was destroyed by a huge alluvium of mud caused by the hurricane, Mitch, the Work of the Good Samaritan bought a plot of land for 1500 dollars, that was divided among 24 poor families. Before that, these poor souls did not have a fixed place to live. They would pitch a plastic tent in different places belonging to other people, and were soon sent away by the owners of the land. Three of these families belong to our denomination, three persons were recently baptized and seven are taking baptismal lessons. Some of the families are growing bananas and papayas which will

soon be harvested. The village was named after the Good Samaritan.

Similar projects have been made for homeless families in the villages of Piedra Luna and Bijao, in the province of Matagalpa, in the north of Nicaragua.

The co-workers of the Good Samaritan living in Bijao, have a little shop with natural products and give advice on natural medicine.

"In Nicaragua we want to help people to be financially independent," says Brother Víctor Talavera, honorary minister and José Abel, leader of the Work of the Good Samaritan in that country.

In order to promote the sale of the crops, they are planning to get a more appropriate market place than the one they have. In these rural areas it is also necessary to build mills for grinding maize. The accomplishment of these projects requires a total sum of 10,000 dollars.

A New Hope Is Born In Mexico

The river took away everything: houses, furniture, bridges and the precious life of many people. The survivors had not yet overcome the shock when they found out that they would get no help from the

state because they did not have a way to prove that they lived near the river, in the flooded areas; neither did they have any document to prove that they owned the property they had lost. These poor people depend totally on the help of benefactors.

The waters of the Coatán River, which runs in the southern part of the Chiapas region, overflowed the banks of the river and extended for hundreds of meters leaving a desert of pebbles and sand. The inhabitants of that area cannot do anything because it is forbidden to build.

The first means donated by our European brothers and sisters, which amounted to 2000 dollars and the offerings from the believers in Mexico were used to buy 14 tons of food.

In the city Tapachula, the Good Samaritan contributed with 5000 dollars to buy a plot where the friends and brethren in the faith may build their homes.

A pastor and his wife, who lost everything, are assisting the persons affected by the catastrophe and are now in charge of a soup kitchen where 500 persons eat daily. Hope is renewed when there is mutual help and the Lord is honored when we care for others.

It is hard to find the proper words to describe the suffering, poverty and even misery of the people in Mexico and Central America. It is difficult as well to find words to express the hope, gratitude and joy of those people, thanks to your support.

In behalf of those who were affected by the natural disasters in those countries, we thank you for your open and generous heart and for your hands ready to help. **Amen**

*Santina Mascera ,
Gustavo Castellano*



CONSCIENCE



God has given every person a conscience which sits in judgment on the moral rightness of thoughts, words and actions, independent of the individual's desires and inclinations.

“To man alone, the crowning work of His creation, God has given a conscience to realize the sacred claims of the divine law.” 1SM, p. 216

This conscience convicts man of sin. Sometimes so strongly that he cannot live with it. Pilate and Judas decided to take their own lives rather than suffer the pangs of their guilty conscience.

The purpose of the conscience is to bring the guilty sinner to repentance, to confess his sin and to bring his life to the obedience of God's law.

Paul writes to us to keep our consciences pure so that it will not condemn us. “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” 1 Tim. 1:5.

The end result or purpose of the commandment is love and good conscience and faith. If the commandment is broken then our love to others will die, our consciences will bother us and make us miserable and we will lose our faith.

“Holding faith, and a good conscience: which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.” 1 Tim. 1:19

Paul had many enemies who accused him of false teachings and of deceiving people. Therefore he appealed to their consciences in his defense.

“But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.” 2 Cor. 4:2

Even that people tried to find fault in Paul in order to condemn him, in their conscience they had conviction that Paul was right, except men whose consciences had been silenced by continuous violation of it.

Our conscience is like a compass, always pointing in the right direction. Soon as we are tempted to do sin, our conscience will tell us to stop. But then Satan comes along and tempts us to go against our conscience, and if we do, the next time the voice of our conscience is a little quieter than before. If we continue to violate our conscience, its voice becomes completely silent. Then we can do sin without feeling bad about it.

Paul explains this condition, “who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” Eph. 4:19.

A young teenager who had been brought up in a Christian home had never been inside a movie theatre. Once his school friends invited him to go in to see a movie, and he decided to go with them. When he came out he felt so bad that he said, “I will never again go to the movies.” But after a while they invited him again, and he went. Again he felt bad, but not so much as the first time. As the time went on, he

continued with his friends to go to theatres, and later he did not feel bad at all. But he lost his faith completely. He told me that religion does not mean anything to him. To pray, to read Bible, or to go to church, has no effect on him, and after this I never saw him anymore.

Our conscience has many enemies which are out to silence it, and sin is the main enemy that destroys our conscience. "A person may have property and intellect, and yet be valueless, because the glowing fire of goodness has never burned up on the altar of his heart, because his conscience has been seared, blackened, and crisped with selfishness and sin." Test. Vol. 2, p. 305.

"You have so long excused yourself in your disobedience on one plea or another that our conscience has been lulled to rest and ceases to remind you of your errors." Test. Vol. 4, p. 254.

"The mind is educated to familiarity with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is kept before the people in the periodicals of the day, and everything that can excite passion is brought before them in exciting stories. They hear and read so much of debasing crime that the once tender conscience, which would have recoiled with horror from such scenes, become hardened, and they dwell upon these things with greedy interest." PP, p. 459.

"They intended at some time to return to God; but the world with its follies and deceptions absorbed the attention. Frivolous amusements, pride of dress, indulged appetite, hardened the heart and benumbed the conscience, so that the voice of truth is not heard." PP, p. 558.

"The sinner of today is far more guilty than the heathen, because the light of the gospel shines clearly all around him. He violates conscience and is a deliberate enemy of God." Test. Vol. 4, p. 508.

One of the greatest enemies of our conscience is our will. So often our will wins and the voice of conscience is silenced.

The leaders of the Jewish people in the time of Christ had no conscience, therefore they could kill Jesus so easily. Yet they seemed

very religious, even fanatical.

Even our health depends on our conscience. A pure conscience promotes health while a guilty, violated conscience will destroy our physical health.

"Health is an inestimable blessing, and one which is more closely related to conscience and religion than many realize." CH, p. 566.

Peace, happiness and true joy also are possible only when we have a clean conscience. While a guilty conscience can inflict greater torture than any physical pain. This torture will come upon Christians who had violated their consciences and not repented, when they realize that salvation is too late for them.

A clear conscience has more value than all the riches in the world; it is better to die, therefore, than to violate our conscience.

It is possible to sensitize our conscience if it has been blunted by disobedience.

"No one can be truly united with Christ, practicing His lessons, submitting to His yoke of restraint, without realizing that which he can never express in words. New, rich thoughts come to him. Light is given to the intellect, determination to the will, sensitiveness to the conscience, purity to the imagination. The heart becomes more tender, the thoughts more spiritual, the service more Christlike." Test. Vol. 6, p. 476, 477.

"When in the strength and grace of God they place their minds against the temptations of Satan, their minds are made clear, their hearts and consciences by being influenced by the Spirit of God are made sensitive, and sin appears as it is—exceedingly sinful." BC 3, p. 1150.

"If we would live a true Christian life, the conscience must be quickened by constant contact with the word of God." Test. Vol. 7, p. 195.

"If they are watchful and

prayerful, God will keep their consciences sensitive and their perceptions clear, that they may discern the workings of the enemy and be fortified against his attacks." Test. Vol. 3, p. 373.

"The result of such Bible study will be well-balanced minds. The understanding will be quickened, the sensibilities aroused. The conscience will become sensitive; the sympathies and sentiments will be purified; a better moral atmosphere will be created; and new power to resist temptation will be imparted." CT, p. 357.

To make our consciences sensitive and clean, we need to have a closer walk with Christ and follow His instructions faithfully. Daily Bible study and constant prayer are also needed. Even if we have to suffer persecution we must not retaliate and complain because it would grieve the Holy Spirit and destroy our confidence in God; and also our consciences would be violated.

"Having a good conscience; that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ." 1 Pet. 3:16.

May the Lord help us to have a good conscience and to make it more sensitive as we progress in the work of sanctification. **AMEN.**

Timo Martin, Canada



WARNING AGAINST FALSE PROPHETS

2 Timothy 4:2-5



Sensationalism

Most people today are fascinated by sensationalism and every manifestation of excitement and world conflict, but particularly in the religious world. But, not only religion, but every newspaper in the world prominently displays headlines to draw attention to every field possible. Nothing is missing: politics, world peace, medicine, but again, particularly, church affairs, abuses, scandals and religious wars. To get attention, however, in any field, it must be out of the ordinary and shocking.

Stony Hearts

But, even terrible events, such as 9/11, tsunamis, earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, or floods, where thousands may die and many more suffer or are homeless, is soon forgotten after a few days. This attests to the heart of man, which is growing hard and dull... as stone. (Job 41:24; Ezek. 11:19; 1 Sam. 10:9; Zech. 7:12)

Masked Jesus

There is an enormous growth of indifference in religious life, fellowshipping, church attendance, and zeal for worship, and spiritual matters. Many dogmatic sects, eastern cults, new and diverse church movements are asserting their opinions and authority with arrogance. They, in fact, do not have any appearance or foundation of Christianity, but proclaim the love-theme, the beat of music, socials, and freedom of conscience. Jesus is "masked."

Repent

What, however, was the resounding message when Jesus Christ first began His ministry? It was, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Mk. 3:35) the faithful prophets for hundreds of years preached the same message! "Turn from evil and serve the Lord." There was no sensational, heavily burdened message, but a simple "positive truth" Jesus made very clear, saying, "For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister, and my mother." Now, that is quite a promise! For to do God's will, however, is to enter into an everlasting relationship with Christ. (1 John 2:17)

Success Formula

The Apostle Paul, however, was very successful. What did he preach? He preached, saying, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling bloc, and unto the Gentiles foolishness; But unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:23, 24) What did people at that time like to hear? No different than they want to hear today. All Athenians, then and now, either like to hear or tell some new thing. (Acts 17:21) Today it is called sensationalism. Few wanted to hear about truth and righteousness. Paul was disappointed but he kept working in faith, preaching the truth and the secret wisdom of God.

Secret of Faith

What is the secret of true faith? To faithfully serve the Lord without noisy propaganda, theatrics, loud music, revelry, and merriment, which describes today's Christianity. The pretended Christianity



Don't Believe

The Apostle John, too, said, "not to believe every spirit, but try every spirit, whether they are of God, as many false prophets will appear." (1 John 4:1) In our time, there is no shortage of those called by the Lord to do a great work. But the question arises... which lord or god called? In fact, "many are called but few are chosen." (Matt. 22:14)

of many modern preachers use ungodly things to pull away the people from the truth and its message of salvation. But, even many that are taught the truth and are very enthusiastic about it are to be warned. Here is the warning, "and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables." (2 Tim. 4:4)

True Gospel

So, where is the true gospel? It is with those who keep the firm foundations. (John 15:10, 14; 14:21) No matter how eloquent Jesus' words are repeated, if the Sabbath commandment is not included, every hour spent listening is wasted time. Jesus has warned us that false Christs will come and deceive those who have not fallen on the Rock with a full and contrite heart.

Satan's Ministers

Yes, Satan will clothe himself as an angel of light. It is much the same as if his ministers are transformed into ministers of righteousness and the apostles of Jesus Christ, but as false apostles and, thereby, deceiving the unwary. (2 Cor. 11:13-15) This is why the spirits need to be tested. The Church, furthermore, is to be the watchman, as the Church, given to man by Jesus Christ. He told the disciples, in fact, to be alert for false deceptions.

From the beginning, the Church was exposed to many spiritual movements. Apostle Paul exhorted the Ephesian elders thusly, in Acts 20:28-31. It was so profound, that Paul warned everyone "with tears, night and day." (Acts 20:19) Also, Paul warned further, "to avoid them." (Rom. 16:17)

For this reason, the gift of discerning spirits is needed. A believer heard a man on the street one day shouting, "glorious it was, glorious it was." He asked him, "what was so glorious?" He thought he was intoxicated for ecstatically shouting. Well, he was... spiritually! He went to some revival meetings and was still full of the spirit. But, he didn't want to know anything about the true fruit of faith, obedience to God, or keeping of the Ten Commandments.

Tongue-tied

A Bible Worker went to a family with our literature. They asked him if he had the gift of speaking tongues? The worker simply asked them, what is more important, the speaking of unintelligible mumblings and babblings of words, or learning and doing the will of God? When approached with keeping the Commandments of God, they didn't want to hear about them.

Speaking in tongues started at the end of the 19th century. Many well-known evangelists fell for it, but strong differences of opinion happened, resulting in divisions and branches of faith, fighting among themselves. Humanity today, because of terrible shakings and siftings of modern times, can easily fall into charismatic movements. Peoples' feelings are turned upside down, and in confusion are swayed to and fro. Furthermore,

those that are unstable or in poor health; having weak nervous systems and lowered immune systems, are easily attracted to sensationalism; things from the invisible world, things that grab their attention, instead of simple, humble things of the truth.

Seeing is Believing

The ability to discern spirits is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Ah! The gift to see and discern the spiritual position of a man! The Apostle Paul showed this gift. (Acts 13:8-10) Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit, the power of God. In fact, all the disciples were led in all truths with this power, and recognized the spirit guiding a man. We need this gift, this spirit, too. This power. Do you have it? are you developing it? are you using it or applying it daily? It is a divine security measure as well. By



merely a few words, a look, body language, observing one's conduct, we have a profile or screening measure by the shield of the Holy Spirit working in us and through us. What a precious gift!

Before the ascension of Jesus Christ, He promised the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, with its purpose and function. (John 14:26; 16:13) If man is willing to be molded, there will be a sanctification of the whole person. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power, the way of life will be made so plain that none need to err again. (AA, pp. 52, 53) Just think about this a moment. What is your way of life?

Chaff or Wheat?



Spiritualism is growing in society, but instead of talking about this, let's talk of present truth. (Rev. 1:3) Not only the book of Revelation, but all the books of the Bible! Sis. White said, "God will arouse His people. Heresies will come among them, which will sift them, as the chaff is separated from the wheat. The Lord says, 'Awake.' The light that came before, is now for our time, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Bible and our positions."

Sent From God

We must be familiar with the Scriptures or we will fall into false teachings. Some preachers call themselves, "Sent from God." They preach the Sabbath, yes, but mix truth with error, in a subtle, devious way; topics of sensationalism. Many topics cannot be supported by Bible scriptures. Moreover, the beat of many Christian songs are more like pagan jungle dances



than honouring God. In fact, many services today are predominantly filled with music, and specials, taking precedence over the main purpose of Sabbath worship; the hearing of God's word, the uniting of hearts and souls in prayer, and refreshing of our faith.

Hearing and Sight Failure

People always want something new and exciting, pleasure seeking, almost to the point of obsession, otherwise they are not interested. But, the Scriptures and our message is exciting, but our hearing and sight fail us! (2 Pet. 3:10-12) Attending a Sabbath service for some is a form of entertainment, a diversion, and social occasion. But, not as the apostles as they gathered at the Day of Pentecost; "all of one accord in one place." (Acts 2:1)

Thief!

God's word says, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." (2 Pet. 3:10-12) We know what wars have done and are doing; but what awaits us in a time not too far away? "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17)



The Lord calls everyone, but we cannot always have big successes. The parable of the Lord shows the results of invitations to the Great Supper. (Luke

14:15-24) But, everybody made excuses and so it is today, too. Those, however, under the Spirit of God will not be fanatical, but calm and steadfast, not extravagant in thought, word, or works.

Your Guide and Shield

"In all the confusion of false doctrines, the Spirit of God will be a guide and a shield for those who have not resisted the truth, and listening only to the voice of Him who is the truth." (GW, p. 289)

May the Lord help us plant our feet firmly on the Rock of eternal truth and that our hearts and consciences be on fire with the words of Jesus.

Character Rehabilitation

Finally, the building of character is the

work for today. Once this is done, we will be allowed to go home with the redeemed and dwell in the eternal haven of rest. May we all receive grace from the Lord for this.

May we, thusly, be prepared to face the adversary, and discern False Prophets In the Last Days. **AMEN.**

John Theodorou, USA

HEALTH MATTERS MEMORY LOSS

What is it?

Sometimes you simply can't remember things. Maybe it's trouble recalling a recent event, finding where you placed an object, or putting a name to a face or place.

Occasional memory loss is a normal part of brain aging. But when it becomes a frequent and noticeable problem, it could signal a much more serious condition, like Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia. Along with forgetfulness,

dementia causes confusion.

Helpful Hints to Mend your Memory

Once upon a time, you could rattle off birthdays, phone numbers, and addresses, keep track of appointments with using a date book, and remember every funny story from your childhood.

Now you are lucky if you remember what you ate for lunch. If your memory batteries seem to be running low, try these tips for recharging them.

Aim for more antioxidants. Many foods contain naturally occurring chemicals that fight damaging free radicals in your body. Beta carotene, which your body converts to vitamin A, is one of these antioxidants. By protecting your brain cells, beta carotene helps you think, reason, and remember. Unfortunately, millions of people throughout the world don't get enough vitamin A. Even just 1 milligram of beta carotene a day makes a big difference. Carrots, sweet potatoes, apricots, tomatoes, broccoli, cantaloupe, and collard greens are all good sources.

Vitamins C and E also fight free radical damage and poor memory. In fact, vitamin E might help ward off Alzheimer's. Look for vitamin C in oranges, grapefruit, broccoli, peppers, cantaloupe, and strawberries. You

can find vitamin E in wheat germ, nuts, seeds, and vegetable oils.

Gather memories with herbs. Ginkgo and ginseng both boost memory and concentration. They also fight stress and anxiety and give you energy.

In clinical studies, ginkgo increased blood flow to the brain by 70 percent in seniors. That means more brainpower and better short-term memory. This ancient herb also helps fight absentmindedness, confusion, tiredness, depression, dizziness, tinnitus, and headaches—all signs of dementia. Look for pure ginkgo biloba extract (GBE or GBX), and take 40 milligrams three times a day. Be patient; it might be a few weeks before you notice results.

To get the benefits of ginseng, chew on ginseng roots or make tea from a small chunk of root. You can also buy a variety of ginseng products, including teas, capsules, extracts, and tablets. Read their labels to make sure they contain between 4 and 7 percent ginsenosides, the compounds found in the bark or outer layer of the root.

Give your mind a workout. Read, solve a crossword puzzle, take night classes, or find new hobbies. Just keep your mind challenged. Your brain needs to stay in shape to perform at its best. Vary your activities to maximize your brain power.



Sip, slurp and swallow. Just because you are confused or show other signs of dementia doesn't mean you have Alzheimer's disease. It might mean you simply need to drink more water. Dehydration causes confusion, disorientation, and other problems. Drink water even if you are not thirsty.

Beef up your B's. Folate, thiamin, B6, and B12 are B vitamins that play key roles in brain function. No wonder people with chronic deficiencies score lower on memory and problem solving tests, while those receiving a boost of B vitamins perform better. A shortage of B vitamins may even lead to Alzheimer's. For folate, eat spinach, beets, avocados, asparagus, and other vegetables. Potatoes, beans, and watermelon provide B6 and thiamin. B12 is found in dairy products, also in kelp.



Vegans may have to supplement their diet with B12 tablets.

especially if you also look pale and feel sad and tired. Vegetarians need to make sure they get enough iron in their diet through legumes and green leafy vegetables.



Get your forty winks. Sleeping is a natural way to boost mind-improving hormones. Not getting enough sleep harms your ability to store information in your long-term memory. Aim for a regular sleep routine, where you go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.

Start the day off right. Breakfast gives your brain the fuel it needs for the day. When you wake up, help yourself to a bowl of cereal and fruit. Studies show that children who eat breakfast do better on tests than those who skip this important meal.

Check those medications. Your memory loss may not have anything to do with you. It could be a side effect of your prescription drugs. Ask your doctor about switching to a different medication.

Lubricate your brain. In an Italian study of nearly 300 seniors, those who ate at least 5 tablespoons of olive oil a day tested best on memory and problem solving skills. It is the monounsaturated fat that enhances your brain power, but olive oil also has vitamin E and other antioxidants. Next time you are in the kitchen, pour on the olive oil instead of corn or soybean oils.

Iron out your wrinkled memory. Poor memory could be a sign of iron deficiency,





DRESS REFORM

Dress reform is the system, instituted by the Spirit of God, whereby God's people could be dressed sensibly and modestly, avoiding the extremes of fashion. From the beginning, dress reform was a part of Health Reform. "To protect the people of God from the corrupting influence of the world, as well as to **promote physical and moral health**, the dress reform was introduced among us. It was not intended to be a yoke of bondage, but a blessing; not to increase labour, but to save labour; not to add to the expense of dress, but to save expense. It would distinguish God's people from the world, and thus serve as a barrier against its fashions and follies. He who know the end from the beginning, who understands our nature and our needs, --our compassionate Redeemer, --saw our dangers and difficulties, and condescended to give us timely warning and instruction concerning our habits of life, even in the proper selection of food and clothing." 4 T 634

"In humility and inexpressible sadness Adam and Eve left the lovely garden wherein they had been so happy until they disobeyed the command of God. The atmosphere was changed. It was no longer unvarying as before the transgression. God clothed them **with coats of skins to protect them from the sense of chilliness and then of heat to which they were exposed.**" SR 46.1

"True dress reform regulates every article of dress worn upon the person. In order to equalize the circulation of the blood, the clothing should be equally distributed upon the person, that equal warmth may be preserved in all parts of the body. The limbs, being remote from the vital organs, should have special attention..."

"Our Creator has formed the limbs with large veins and vessels to contain a large proportion of blood, that the limbs may be sufficiently nourished and proportionately warm with other portions of the body.

"But fashion robs the limbs of coverings, and the life current is chilled from its natural channel and thrown back upon its internal organs... The result is, the blood-vessels in the limbs contract because they are not filled and cannot contain the due proportion of blood which nature designed they should, and they are always chilly. Because this chilliness is habitual, it is not noticed by children who are thus unhealthfully dressed." *Health Reformer* 01-01-77

A Personal Testimony

Knowing that in Sr. White's day there was no such thing as synthetic fibers, and that natural fibers are much more healthy for us, I started wearing only cotton next to my skin over ten years ago and I noticed that I felt much cooler and healthier, especially in the hot summer's heat. And then about 4-5 years ago, as I started to study more deeply into the subject, I noticed that Sr. White talked about always covering the limbs in the heat and cold. So I started in the hot weather as well as the cold to keep my limbs covered, and again, I have felt a definite improvement in my health--increased comfort and immunity against disease.

In visiting the tropics in this region, I have noticed that most people cover up their skin against the intense sun, which only makes sense, especially as the sun has increasing danger associated with exposure to it.

What other benefits does Dress Reform provide?

One of the aspects of dress reform is moral health, manifested by showing modesty when in the presence of the opposite sex, especially. Today, true modesty is almost nonexistent for sensual malaria is the norm, rather than the exception in society. And this also affects our attitudes, deportment and behaviour toward the opposite sex in the church – have you noticed?

“It is a subject of interest to every soul of us, how we shall keep our vessels unto honor in the sight of a holy God... There is no safety for us when we lie down, when we rise up, when we go out, and when we come in. Satan and evil angels have conspired with evil men and evil women, and the whole energies of the powers of darkness will gather themselves together to lead astray and destroy every soul that is not garrisoned with firm principles of eternal truths...

“The principles of righteousness must be implanted in the soul. Faith must grasp the power of Jesus Christ, else there is no safety. Licentious practices are getting to be as common as the days before the Flood... The weak moral powers of men and women in this age who claim to be commandment keepers alarm me. Everyone needs to arouse and lift up the standard of purity.

“Sanctification – how many understand its full meaning? The mind is befogged by **sensual malaria**. The thoughts need purifying. What might not men and women have been had they realized that the treatment of the body has everything to do with the vigor and purity of mind and heart!... Men and women have been bought with a price, and what a price! Even the life of the Son of God. What a terrible thing it is for them to place themselves in a position where their physical, mental, and moral powers are corrupted, where they lose their vigor and purity. Such men and women cannot offer an acceptable sacrifice to God.” *In Heavenly Places*, pgs. 193-194.

“It is not a time when marriage should be regarded in the light of felicity. It is uncertain business. More misery than happiness is the result; and yet marrying and giving in marriage is as it was in the days of Noah. There seems to be no restraint; but passion and impulse have controlling power, and youth seem to be

bewitched with **love-sick sentimentalism**. For this reason rules and regulations are highly essential.... and anyone who regards these restrictions as unnecessary has not spiritual discernment, and will prove a hindrance rather than a help.

“Many seem to think these precautions are not essential, and their deportment pleads for greater liberty than the law of God allows them. It is an imperative duty to preserve the soul from impure thoughts and unholy actions...

Sensuality is the sin of the age. But the religion of Jesus Christ will hold the lines of control over every species of unlawful liberty; the moral powers will hold the lines of control over every thought, word and action. Guile will not be found in the lips of the true Christian. Not an impure thought will be indulged in, not a word spoken that is approaching to sensuality, not an action that has the least appearance of evil.” 18 MR 294

The Importance of Dress Reform

Aren't we reformers reformed enough? I mean, won't we lose our youth if we place too many restrictions upon them? Well, I don't know about you when you were a youth, but when I was a youth and coming to the truth from the world, I was very glad for Christian standards and the things that made us different from the world, because I was tired of the things and ways of the world. And the Christian young people I speak to today, that are sincerely seeking for the ways of the Lord, don't look for how little they can do in upholding Christian standards, but rather seek to come just as close as they can to “every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.”

“Many who call themselves Christians are mere human moralists. They have refused the gift which alone could enable them to honor Christ by representing Him to the world. The work of the Holy Spirit is to them a strange work. They are not doers of the word. The heavenly principles that distinguish those who are one with Christ from those who are one with the world have become almost indistinguishable. The professed followers of Christ are no longer a separate and peculiar people. **The line of demarcation is indistinct. The people are subordinating themselves to the world, to its practices, its customs,**

its selfishness. The church has gone over to the world in transgression of the law, when the world should have come over to the church in obedience to the law. Daily the church is being converted to the world.” COL 315.3

An older brother in the truth tells of being sent to pick up our people from train stations at conference time years ago, and how he never needed a description of the people, because our brothers and sisters in those days dressed so different from the world, that they could easily be spotted. Would that be true of our mode of dressing today?

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.” 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.

“The children of Israel . . . were commanded to have a simple ribbon of blue in the border of their garments, to distinguish them from the nations around them, and to signify that they were God's peculiar people. {See Num. 15:39, 40.} The people of God are not now required to have a special mark placed upon their garments. But in the New Testament we are often referred to ancient Israel for examples. If God gave such definite directions to His ancient people in regard to their dress, will not the dress of His people in this age come under His notice? Should there not be in their dress a distinction from that of the world? Should not the people of God, who are His peculiar treasure, seek even in their dress to glorify God? And should they not be examples in point of dress, and by their simple style rebuke the pride, vanity, and extravagance of worldly, pleasure-loving professors? God requires this of His people. Pride is rebuked in His Word.” OHC 271.2
Development of the Reform Dress

Controversy over dress is nothing new as it was going on even in the First Century, apparently, as the Apostles wrote in their epistles to the churches about proper clothing, especially for women. It is no different for God's people today. Could this be one of the simple means that God will use to cause a shaking amongst us?

In Sr. White's day, after she had first

introduced the Dress Reform in the 1860s and it was not well received, then the world did adopt a much more modest and healthful mode of dress than the hoop fashion, so she didn't push anything more about dress reform until later in the 1870s.

"We are nearing the close of this world's history. A plain, direct testimony is now needed, as given in the Word of God, in regard to the plainness of dress. This should be our burden. But it is too late now to become enthusiastic in making a test of this matter. The desire to follow Christ in all humility of mind, preparing the heart, purifying the character, is by no means an easy work. Our sisters may be assured that the Lord has not inspired them to make a test of that which was once given as a blessing, but which by many was hated and despised as a curse.

"The reform dress, which was once advocated, [THE "REFORM DRESS" ADVOCATED AND ADOPTED IN THE 1860'S WAS DESIGNED BY A GROUP OF SDA WOMEN IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE A HEALTHFUL, MODEST, COMFORTABLE, AND NEAT ATTIRE IN HARMONY WITH THE LIGHT GIVEN ELLEN WHITE, WHICH WAS MUCH NEEDED AT THE TIME. IT CALLED FOR LOOSE-FITTING GARMENTS HUNG FROM THE SHOULDERS WITH A HEMLINE ABOUT NINE INCHES FROM THE FLOOR. THE LOWER LIMBS WERE CLOTHED WITH A TROUSERLIKE GARMENT PROVIDING COMFORT AND WARMTH. SEE STORY OF OUR HEALTH MESSAGE, PP. 112-130.-- COMPILERS.] proved a battle at every step. Members of the church, refusing to adopt this healthful style of dress, caused dissension and discord... **But a more sensible style of dress has now been adopted which does not embrace these objectionable features.** The fashionable style of dress may be discarded and should be by all who will read the Word of God." 3 SM 253

Today, obviously the world is in much worse condition than it was then, and we much more need this standard to be uplifted as a people professing godliness.

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be

saved: For he will finish the work, and cut [it] short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:27,28

Because we know that God will cut His work short in righteousness and no, righteousness does not work from the outside in, but the inside out. When we accept the cross of Calvary in our hearts though, the changes will be seen in our attitude, behaviour and yes, the way we dress. The way we dress is an index to the heart.

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

"Lovers of fashion may claim to be followers of Christ, but their dress and conversation show what occupies the mind and engages the affections. **The outside appearance is an index to the heart. True refinement does not find satisfaction in the adorning of the body for display.** A modest, godly woman will dress modestly. Simplicity of apparel always makes a sensible woman appear to the best advantage. A refined, cultured mind will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. In the sanctified heart there is no place for thoughts of needless adornment." OHC 273.2

"Question.--Does not the practice of the sisters in wearing their dresses nine inches from the floor contradict Testimony No. 11, which says they should reach somewhat below the top of a lady's gaiter boot?

"Answer.--The proper distance from the bottom of the dress to the floor was not given to me in inches... But three companies of females passed before me, with their dresses as follows with respect to length: 'The first were of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering its filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.

"The dress of the second class which passed before me was in many respects

as it should be. **The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant, Fashion, had imposed upon the first class;** but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to disgust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a great measure their own influence. This is the style and influence of the 'American Costume,' taught and worn by many at 'Our Home,' Dansville, N.Y. It does not reach to the knee. I need not say that this style of dress was shown me to be too short.

"A third class passed before me with cheerful countenances, and free, elastic step. Their dress was the length I have described as proper, modest, and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and sidewalk a few inches under all circumstances, such as ascending and descending steps, et cetera.

"As I have before stated, the length was not given me in inches..." 3SM 278

Not Compulsion, But Individual Conviction

"It was not my duty to urge the subject upon my sisters. After presenting it before them as it had been shown me, I left them to their own conscience. Reformatory action is always attended with sacrifice. It demands that love of ease, selfish interest, and the lust of ambition be held in subjection to the principles of right. **Whoever has the courage to reform must encounter obstacles. He will be opposed by the conservatism of those whose business or pleasure brings them in contact with the votaries of fashion, and who will lose caste by the change...**

"Much unhappy feeling was created by those who were constantly urging the reform dress upon their sisters. With extremists, this reform seemed to constitute the sum and substance of their religion. It was the theme of conversation and the burden of their hearts; and their minds were thus diverted from God and the truth. They failed to cherish the spirit of Christ and manifested a great lack of true courtesy. Instead of prizing the dress for its real advantages, they seemed to be proud of its singularity. **Perhaps no question has ever come up among us which has caused such development of character as has the dress reform...**

"God has been testing His people. He

allowed the testimony concerning dress to become silent, that our sisters might follow their own inclination and thus develop the real pride existing in their hearts. It was to prevent the present state of worldliness that the reform dress was recommended. Many scorned the idea that this dress was necessary to preserve them from following the fashions; but the Lord has permitted them to prove that pride was cherished in their hearts, and that this was just what they would do. It is now shown that they needed the restriction which the reform dress imposed." 4T 636-639

"We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world. Unbelievers have a right to expect that those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will do more than any other class to promote and honor, by their consistent lives, by their godly example and their active influence, the cause which they represent. But how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement! The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan's devices." 1SM 122.3

God will have a people willing to live by every word that proceeds from His mouth even to the way we dress. Sensual malaria has taken over the world and we must make a decided stand against it. Reform is progressive and the time has come for a thorough reformation to take place.

God wants us to dress in accordance with His will, especially as this is meant for our health mentally, physically and morally. Not to make a test out of it, or urge it upon others, but to show from our attitudes, words and actions the blessing involved with true dress reform. *AMEN.*

Jerry Eaton, Australia

WATER INTAKE

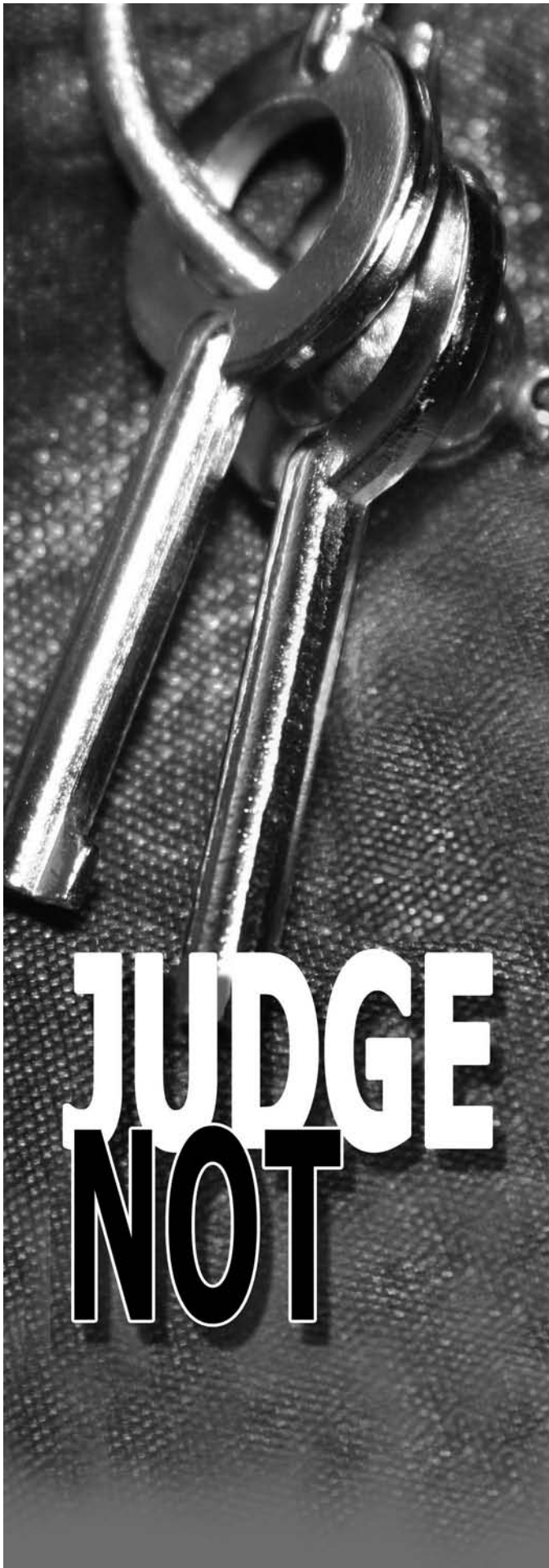
Do you need to drink six to eight glasses of water a day to stay properly hydrated?

In February, 2004, after reviewing more than 400 studies, the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine rejected this conventional wisdom. It concluded that most men need about 15 cups of fluid a day, and women about 11 cups. But that includes fluids from all beverages, and the water in food. The vast majority of North Americans already get that much liquid in their everyday diets.

Certain people are actually at increased risk of getting too much water, which can cause sodium concentration in the body's cells to drop dangerously low and trigger headaches, confusion, and in rare cases even seizures, coma, and death. High-risk groups include people with congestive heart failure or hypothyroidism; those who regularly take certain medications, notably non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen, ketoprofen, and naproxen; and amateur athletes who take too literally the common advice to "drink as much as possible" during exercise.

Water loss increases after exercise, when temperatures exceed 27C, or at elevations over 1,500 meters, but most people naturally feel thirsty after such stresses and drink more fluids without being prompted. However, people over the age of 65 or so may need to pay special attention to their fluid intake, since the sense of thirst tends to diminish with age. Scanty, strong-smelling, dark-yellow urine indicates that you need to drink more. Finally, while any beverage counts toward your daily intake, plain tap water does offer several advantages: It's cheap, thirst-quenching, and calorie-free.

People at increased risk of over-hydration should be especially careful to not exceed the recommended amounts for their gender. And exercisers should take care to consume at least one cup of fluid an hour but no more than three.



Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, He commissioned His followers (His church) to carry on the work that He had begun. His instructions were, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” And His promise was, “lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:19, 20. This was a very important duty – cooperating with heavenly agencies for the salvation of souls. Their words and actions would be a “savour of death unto death;” or, a “savour of life unto life” (2 Cor 2:16) for those to whom they ministered. To the church He also gave another important duty, “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 shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 16:19. From this statement, we understand that the church has a duty to discern between those who are living according to their commitment to the Lord, and those who are not. And those in violation of the commandments of God are to be separated from God’s people. Heaven would ratify the decision of the church, therefore the duty of separation is a very serious one. “‘The keys of the kingdom of heaven,’ are the words of Christ. All the words of Holy Scripture are His, and are here included. These words have power to open and to shut heaven. They declare the conditions upon which men are received or rejected. Thus the work of those who preach God’s word is a savour of life unto life or of death unto death. Theirs is a mission weighted with eternal results.” DA 413. This commission has always been a part of God’s church and still is today.

The separation can go one step further. We are bidden to have nothing to do with an infidel. “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” 2 John 10, 11

As human beings it is very difficult to keep quiet when we see something amiss in the life of another person, or things done in the church we don’t approve of. It is so tempting to share the “news” with someone else. However, this is contrary to Scripture. We are to tell the person in error alone – no one else. If we see things in the church we don’t approve of, speak to the leader alone – no one else. Otherwise this will undoubtedly lead to judgment, gossip and backbiting. The tribe of Dan was excluded from the 144,000 due to the problem of backbiting. Although the Danites were gifted with leadership qualities and were judges in Israel, they became proud and self-confident and began to abuse this talent and become judgmental of their brethren to the point of backbiting. “Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.” Genesis 49:17.

So what is our duty?

We are to discern, but not to judge. The difference is:

Discern – to see, or recognize using the senses or the intellect.

Judge – to form an opinion, estimate or conclusion

While God has entrusted the duty of discernment, and even separation to His church and people, He has not given the duty of judgment. When we perceive and recognize wrongs, we need to deal with them appropriately or turn away from them, not begin to form opinions and spread the gossip around. It has happened in the past, that discernment has led to becoming judgmental. When something is seen to be out of order, we form an opinion. God is judge and it is the sinner that causes

a separation from Christ, we do not need to drive him further away with our gossip. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Proverbs 5:22. We need to do the work of Jesus to try to woo them back to the fold of mercy.

JUDGMENT

The Bible is very clear about the sin of judging. Those that judge are equally guilty but are trying to avoid being noticed and judged themselves so they judge their brother to get the focus off themselves rather than giving them a word of encouragement and a helping hand. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Romans 2: 1-3. "Thus those who condemn or criticize others, proclaim themselves guilty, for they do the same things. In condemning others, they are passing sentence upon themselves, and God declares that this sentence is just. He accepts their own verdict against themselves." MB 124

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth 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 judgest another?" James 4:11, 12

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matthew 7: 1-5. When we judge someone else, it will always come back on us.

"He who opens his heart to the suggestions of the enemy, taking in evil surmisings, and cherishing jealousy, frequently misconstrues this evil-mindedness, calling it special foresight, discrimination, or discernment in detecting guilt and fathoming the evil motives of others. He considers that a precious gift has been vouchsafed to him; and he draws apart from the very brethren with whom he should be in harmony; he climbs upon the judgment seat, and shuts his heart against the one he supposes to be in error, as though he himself were above temptation. Jesus separates from him, and leaves him to walk in the sparks of his own kindling.

"Let no one among you glory any longer against the truth by declaring that this spirit is a necessary consequence of dealing faithfully with wrongdoers and of standing in defence of the truth. Such wisdom has many admirers, but it is very deceptive and harmful. It does not come from above, but is the fruit of an unregenerate heart. Its originator is Satan himself. Let no accuser of others credit himself with discernment; for in so doing he clothes the attributes of Satan with the garments of righteousness. I call upon you, my brethren, to purify the soul temple of all these things that defile; for they are roots of bitterness." 7BC 936

"Never speak a word of complaint or faultfinding. There are churches in which the spirituality has been almost killed, because the spirit of backbiting has been allowed to enter. Why do we speak words of blame and censure? To be silent is the strongest rebuke that you can give to one who is speaking harsh, discourteous words to you. Keep perfectly silent. Often silence is eloquence." CG 551

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:15, 16. Although this verse could be said to be in contradiction to the other verses since it is telling us that spiritual people are permitted to judge, however for those who have access to a Bible with a marginal reading or to the original Greek, this word "judge" is, in reality, synonymous with the word, "Discern." The spiritual and wise will have the ability to discern between right and wrong.

How does Gossip combined with judgment Work? "There will ever be some who take delight in dwelling upon the real or supposed faults and failures of others, and who employ their time in seeing, hearing, or reporting something that will destroy confidence in the person criticized. Few are without visible faults; in most persons careful scrutiny will reveal some defect of character; and upon these defects in others, some professed Christians delight to dwell. The habit strengthens with indulgence, and a love for gossip becomes their ruling passion. They gather together the tidbits of reports, -- all of them, it may be, utterly devoid of truth, -- and feast upon the scandal, and share it with others as a rare delicacy... The true followers of Christ will not be found biting and devouring one another... Envy and jealousy loose the bloodhounds of suspicion, and minds that love the sport join in hunting down the fair fame of Christ's ambassadors. An unjust insinuation is started, a conjecture is set afloat; and it gathers strength as it passes from one to another of those who desire it to be true. These evil reports are received with great satisfaction by some who have been reprovved for heinous sins or grave defects of character. They smarted under the reproof, and yet did not reform. Now their consciences are eased; they learn that the reprover cannot be trusted; somebody has circulated a damaging report; somebody has brought an accusation. They leave the distasteful work of caring for their own souls and repenting of their own sins, and climb upon the judgment seat to condemn another." RH 08-28-83

There is a curse pronounced against the one who judges or even slanders his fellow man. "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer." Psalm 101:5

UNFORGIVING SPIRIT

An unforgiving spirit is not from God, but from Satan. Have you ever heard someone say that they could not forgive someone for something they did against them? Or they may say they forgive but they do not forget. When future disagreements occur, the issue is brought up over and over again for many years. If God can forgive then why can't we?

“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” Micah 7:18,19

What a great and merciful God we serve. This is how He brings us peace and happiness. He lifts our burdens of sin and casts it away. When men place themselves in the judgement seat against their brethren, they are placing themselves above God. When we keep bringing the sins back to the surface that God has buried in the depths of the sea, we are doing something that even God will not dare to do. If God would treat us as an unforgiving person would treat a repentant person, what hope would we have?

PREJUDICE

The word “prejudice” comes from the same roots as the word judge. Pre-Judge. Judging ahead of time. It describes a preconceived opinion about something or someone either favourable or unfavourable. An opinion is formed about a person, a group or a situation without discovering the truth for one’s self. For example, in the early Christian church some of the believers were prejudiced against the Gentiles until they saw the Holy Spirit being poured out upon them also. “And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 10:45.

Prejudice has led many people to close their minds against the truth simply because they have heard negative reports from other people about the sect, “Seventh-day Adventist” and they believe these reports without studying for themselves to find the truth. The truth may require them to bear a cross that they do not want to carry. They simply look at the externals without delving into the real reasons behind the truths taught in the Adventist message.

In Jesus’ day there was much prejudice amongst the religious leaders. Their attitude towards the poor, the sick, the needy and Gentiles was that they were cursed by God and outcasts, therefore not worthy of their notice or sympathy. It was a well known

fact in Israel at that time that different towns were more corrupt than others and if Nathanael had believed all the gossip he heard about Nazareth, he may never have become one of Jesus’ disciples. His words to Philip show an element of prejudice.

“Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” John 1:45 - 49

What would have happened if Nathanael would have hardened his heart, not let go of his prejudice and refused to go? He would have lost a tremendous blessing. Something good *had* come out of Nazareth and something good was happening in Israel and Nathanael was about to find out. Unfortunately many refused to find out and accept Jesus, due to prejudice and gossip spread by the Jewish leaders. Today, when you do missionary work many will refuse to even listen. They have heard second-hand negative remarks about Seventh-day Adventism and before you get a chance to even share your faith – the ears are closed – they do not want to know. They have been told rumours, gossip and untruths and they are unwilling to study for themselves – what is truth.

Is it possible for prejudice to exist in God’s church towards believers in different countries and cultures? It is possible since we are all human and make mistakes, however, God is in control of His church and, even though Satan plants his tares in the church, God will purge and purify it, separating the tares from the wheat in His good time.

If we do hear rumours and gossip – find the truth first – check both sides of the issue – “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.” 2 Cor. 13:1. Don’t come to conclusions on the

word of one man or you are bound to make mistakes.

“He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.” Proverbs 18:13

It did happen in the days of Ancient Israel that there were rumours going around that there was a false system of worship being set up, shortly after their settlement in Canaan. You can read the story in Joshua Chapter 22:10-29. The tribes on the Western side of the Jordan River, suspected that the tribes on the Eastern side were setting up a false form of worship. They were ready to take up arms and go fight against their brethren. I’m sure rumours and gossip were travelling like wildfire about the rebellion in the east. However, before they took violent action they sent Phinehas, the son of the priest and ten princes to investigate. The truth was discovered – the rumours had been false and there was peace in the nation. What would have happened if they had not sent anyone to investigate, but rather acted on the rumours they had heard? It would have had terrible results. We may hear rumours or gossip from our brethren because we are all weak, sinful mortals, with human failings, but it is our duty to not pass on the rumours or gossip. Either let them die in our ears, or investigate the truth for ourselves if we are curious. Leave such matters to the Lord.

“Envy, jealousy, evil surmising, and evil speaking are of Satan, and they effectually bar the way against the Holy Spirit’s working. Nothing else in this world is so dear to God as His church. Nothing is guarded by Him with such jealous care. Nothing so offends God as an act that injures the influence of those who are doing His service. He will call to account all who aid Satan in his work of criticizing and discouraging.” 6T 42

TASTE AND SEE

“O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.” Psalm 34:8.

Sometimes people have false discernment. They think they are discerning correctly, however they are, in fact, judging through false reports from others because they did not make the effort to discover the truth for themselves – to taste and see. For example,

in social associations when false reports and gossip have been spread, a separation of friends has been caused because the false report was not investigated. There was no effort made to see and find out the truth.

It may also happen in religious matters when Christians do not study for themselves, but rather take the word of their church leader or a friend who is prejudiced against the truths of the Bible. Again, no effort is made to taste and see for themselves. Some of these Christians have spoken to me in the past telling me that keeping God's 10 Commandments is like wearing a yoke of bondage. The Sabbath is especially condemned. They asked me how I can wear this yoke of bondage. If only they knew. If they could experience the blessings that are connected with the Sabbath they would not have this preconceived idea. The peace, the rest, the fellowship... The fact that we can lay all worldly cares aside and rest in peace with the Lord. So much spiritual strength is gained, so much peace and happiness obtained. I can't understand how a Christian could maintain their faith without the blessing of the Sabbath. They have not tried it, so they

are judging and condemning something from the Lord through prejudice alone. Once they have tasted and seen for themselves what blessings come from true Sabbath observance, they will have a completely different attitude. They will have a clear discernment of the truth and not judge it falsely.

David had tasted and seen that serving the Lord brings more happiness than serving the world. "I have seen His greatness, I have tasted His goodness. 'Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.'" Psalm 66:16

Have You Tasted And Seen?

Even if we are a part of God's church, have we surrendered our all to Him? Is there some hidden small idol we are holding back? Is it some small indulgence of food, or fashion, or some form of entertainment? Are we

afraid to trust 100% in the leading of the Lord in our lives? Is there some element that we feel we must still control and are unwilling to yield? We have then not fully tasted and seen the goodness of the Lord. We have not fully entered into His peace and happiness. "God invites us to prove for ourselves the reality of His word, the truth of His promises. He bids us 'taste and see that the Lord is good.' Psalm 34:8. Instead of depending upon the word of another, we are to taste for ourselves." SC 111. We lose our clear discernment of the truth. The truth becomes cloudy and we begin to judge those as fanatics who adhere to the clear truth.



Some doubt that giving yourself 100% to God's control can lead to a life of perfect peace and happiness. Especially young people – they tend to dwell on the denials they must make, the things they must give up in order to serve the Lord. They have a preconceived opinion that the true followers of Christ cannot be happy because they do not partake in the pleasures of this world. They have no discernment, only judgment. Those in the world appear to be having so much happiness. Is this really true? Can the way of the cross bring happiness to the soul? When we hear of various “rules and restrictions” in God's church do we think that people are becoming fanatics and extreme? Taste and see for yourself. Do not judge, but investigate the cause, study God's requirements for your self rather than becoming prejudiced from the words of another and judge those who carry the messages of the Lord. It is important to discern truth from error and cling to the truth.

“Disguise it as they may, the real cause of doubt and skepticism, in most cases, is the love of sin. The teachings and restrictions of God's word are not welcome to the proud, sin-loving heart, and those who are unwilling to obey its requirements are ready to doubt its authority. In order to arrive at truth, we must have a sincere desire to know the truth and a willingness of heart to obey it. And all who come in this spirit to the study of the Bible will find abundant evidence that it is God's word, and they may gain an understanding of its truths that will make them wise unto salvation” SC 111. And then we will receive the blessing of the Lord. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27.

Even though Jesus is described as “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3), He was the happiest man that ever lived. “It is often said that Jesus wept, but that He was never known to smile. Our Saviour was indeed a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, for He opened His heart to all the woes of men. But though His life was self-denying and shadowed with pain and care, His spirit was not crushed. His countenance did not wear an expression of grief and repining, but ever one of peaceful serenity. His heart was a wellspring of life, and wherever He

went He carried rest and peace, joy and gladness.

“Our Saviour was deeply serious and intensely in earnest, but never gloomy or morose. The life of those who imitate Him will be full of earnest purpose; they will have a deep sense of personal responsibility. Levity will be repressed; there will be no boisterous merriment, no rude jesting; but the religion of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not quench the light of joy; it does not restrain cheerfulness nor cloud the sunny, smiling face.” SC 120

“Do not think that when you walk with Jesus you must walk in the shadow. The happiest people in the world are those who trust in Jesus and gladly do His bidding. From the lives of those who follow Him, unrest and discontent are banished... They may meet with trial and difficulty, but their lives are full of joy; for Christ walks beside them, and His presence makes the pathway bright...” HP 62 If we can meet Jesus in peace and be saved, forever saved, we shall be the happiest of beings.

“There is the evidence that you are connected with Jesus Christ, and that there is a power that sustains you in all your afflictions and disappointments and trials; and this power and this grace sweetens every affliction. When the cup of suffering may be placed to your lips, there is a Comforter and Helper. The cup of consolation is placed in the hand, and it may be the happiest period of your life.” RC 355

Suffering and happiness sound like they are mutually exclusive terms, how can you be happy in suffering? Only in Jesus. Taste and see. Try it for yourself. Then we can say like Paul did, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.... For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:8,9,17,18. If we could discern truth from error – light from darkness – then we will be able to taste and see that the Lord is good. All

judgment will be cast aside.

WISE AS SERPENTS

“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” Mat 10:16

Serpents are wise, but they are also deadly. We need their wisdom, but we must be harmless. This is especially true in our associations with our brothers and sisters in the faith. Those we see straying need our wisdom, but also our kindness and love, not judgment and condemnation. We must not backbite like an adder as did the tribe of Dan and find ourselves outside the kingdom of God. Judging must be left to God. Any prejudice we may have must be thrown out the window.

“This is the guile that Paul used; this is the wisdom of the serpent; the harmlessness of the dove. When we come to a community that is acquainted with our faith, this cautious course need not to be pursued, but in every case special efforts should be made to come close to hearts by personal efforts. Avoid running down the churches; do not let the people receive the idea that your work is to tear down, but to build up, and to present the truth as it is in Jesus. Dwell much upon the necessity of vital godliness.--Letter 2, 1885.” Ev 227

“If you see that by doing certain things which you have a perfect right to do, you hinder the advancement of God's work, refrain from doing those things. Do nothing that will close the minds of others against the truth. There is a world to save, and we shall gain nothing by cutting loose from those we are trying to help. All things may be lawful, but all things are not expedient.” 9T 215

Our duty before the Lord is to help one another on our spiritual journey on the strait and narrow way. This way may be full of dangers and sorrows, so we need to cheer each other along the way. May God help us to each do our own duty to the best of our ability and work in harmony with our brethren having clear discernment of truth from error, but being wise enough not to be judgmental. **AMEN**

Wendy Eaton, Australia

THE POWER OF SONG



CHILDRENS CORNER

Near the summit of a mountain in Pennsylvania is a small hamlet called Honeyville, consisting of two log houses, two shanties, a rickety old barn, and a small shed, surrounded by a few acres of cleared land. In one of these houses lived a family of seven,—father, mother, three boys and two girls. They had recently moved from Michigan. The mother's health was poor, and she longed to be out on the beautiful old mountain where she had spent most of her childhood. Their household goods had arrived in Pennsylvania just in time to be swept away by the great Johnstown flood of 1889.

The mother and her two little girls, Nina and Dot, were Christians, and their voices were often lifted in praise to God as they sang from an old hymn-book, one of their most cherished possessions.

One morning the mother sent Nina and Dot on an errand to their sister's home three and one-half miles distant. The first two miles took them through dense woods, while the rest of the way led past houses and through small clearings. She charged them to start on their return home in time to arrive before dark, as many wild beasts—bears, catamounts, and occasionally a panther—were prowling around. These animals were hungry at this time of the year; for they were getting ready to “hole up” or lie down in some cozy cave or hole for their winter's nap.

The girls started off, merrily chasing each other along the way, and arrived at their sister's in good time, and had a jolly romp with the baby. After dinner, the sister was so busy, and the children were so absorbed in their play, that the time passed unheeded until the clock struck four. Then the girls hurriedly started for home, in the hope that they might arrive there before it grew very dark. The older sister watched until they disappeared up the road, anxiously wishing some one was there to go with them.

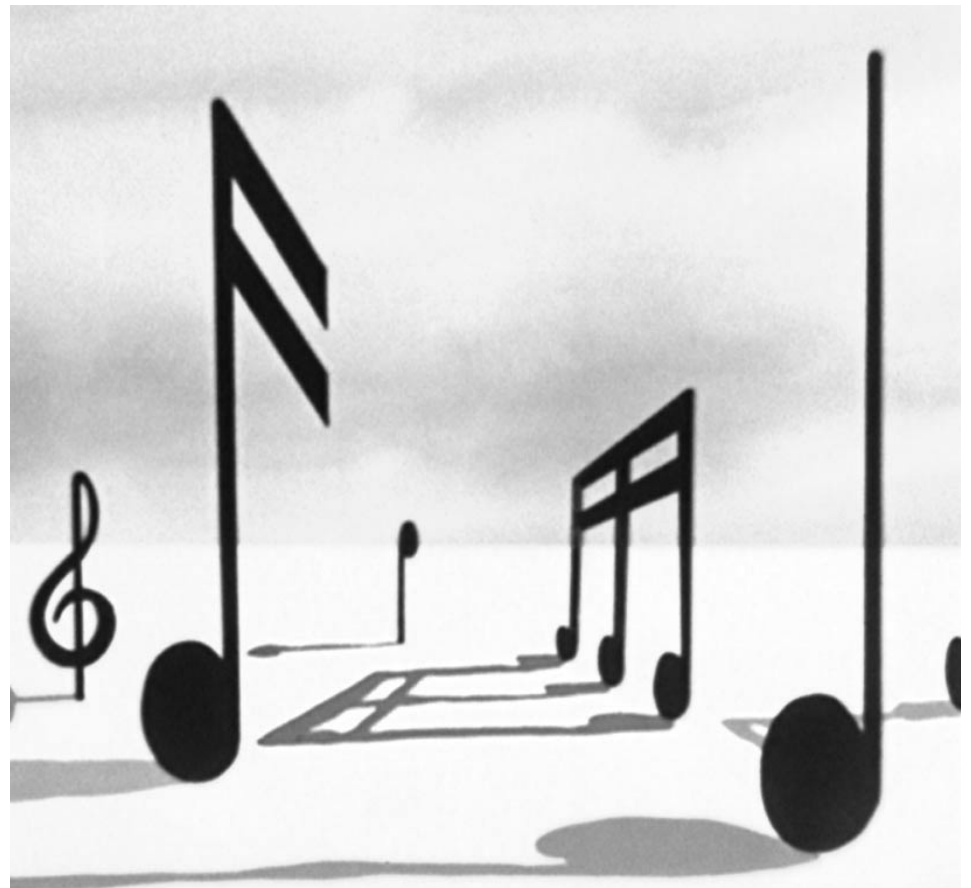
Nina and Dot made good time until they

entered the long stretch of woods, when Nina said:—“O, I know where there is such a large patch of wintergreen berries, right by the road! Let's pick some for mama.”

So they climbed over a few stones and logs, and, sure enough, the berries were plentiful. They picked and talked, sometimes playing hide-and-peek among the bushes. When they started on again, the sun was sinking low in the west, and the trees were casting heavy shadows over the road, which lengthened rapidly. When about half of the distance was covered, Dot began to feel tired and afraid. Nina tried to cheer her, saying, “Over one more long hill, and we shall be home.” But now they could only see the sun shining on the top of the trees on the hill.

They had often played trying to scare each other by one saying, “O, I see a bear or a wolf up the road!” and pretending to

be afraid. So Dot said: “Let's scare each other. You try to scare me.” Nina said, “All right.” Then, pointing up the road, she said, “O, look up the road by that black stump! I see a -----“ she did not finish; for suddenly, from almost the very spot where she had pointed, a large panther stepped out of the bushes, turning his head first one way and then another. Then, as if seeing the girls for the first time, he crouched down, and, crawling, sneaking along, like a cat after a mouse, he moved toward them. The girls stopped and looked at each other. Then Dot began to cry, and said, in a half-smothered whisper, “O Nina, let's run!” But Nina thought of the long, dark, lonely road behind, and knew that running was useless. Then, thinking of what she had heard her father say about showing fear, she seized her little sister's hand, and said: “No, let's pass it. God will help us.” And she started up the road toward the animal.



When the children moved, the panther stopped, and straightened himself up. Then he crouched again, moving slowly, uneasily, toward them. When they had nearly reached him, and Nina, who was nearest, saw his body almost rising for the spring, there flashed through her mind the memory of hearing it said that a wild beast would not attack any one who was singing. What should she sing? In vain she tried to recall some song, but her mind seemed a blank. In despair she looked up, and breathed a little prayer for help; then, catching a glimpse of the last rays of the setting sun touching the tops of the trees on the hill, she began the beautiful hymn,--

“There is sunlight on the hilltop,
There is sunlight on the sea.”

Her sister joined in, and although their voices were faint and trembling at first, by the time the children were opposite the panther, the words of the song rang out sweet and clear on the evening air.

The panther stopped, and straightened himself to his full height. His tail, which had been lashing and switching, became quiet as he seemed to listen. The girls passed on, hand in hand, never looking behind them. How sweet the words,--

“O the sunlight! Beautiful sunlight!
O the sunlight in the heart!”

sounded as they echoed and reechoed through the woods.

As the children neared the top of the hill, the rumbling of a wagon fell upon their ears, so they knew that help was near, but still they sang. When they gained the top, at the same time the wagon rattled up, for the first time they turned and looked back, just in time to catch a last glimpse of the panther as he disappeared into the woods.

The mother had looked often and anxiously down the road, and each time was disappointed in not seeing the children coming. Finally she could wait no longer,

and started to meet them. When about half-way there, she heard the words,--

“O the sunlight! Beautiful sunlight!
O the sunlight in the heart!
Jesus’ smile can banish sadness;
It is sunlight in the heart.”

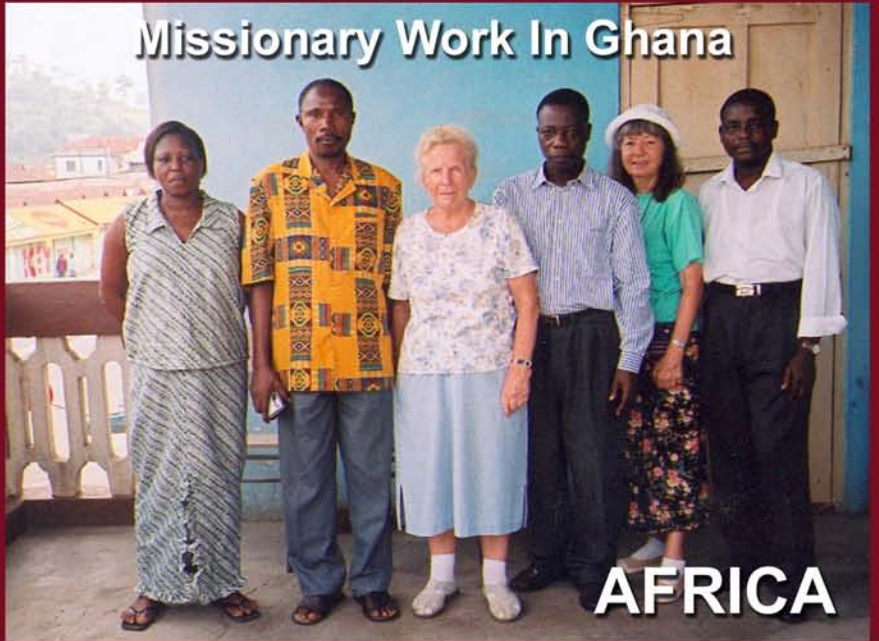
At first a happy smile of relief passed over her face; but it faded as she listened. There was such an unearthly sweetness in the song, so strong and clear, that it seemed like angels’ music instead of her own little girls’. The song ceased, and the children appeared over the hill. She saw their white faces, and hurried toward them. When they saw her, how their little feet flew! But it was some time before they could tell her what had happened.

What a joyful season of worship they had that night, and what a meaning that dear old hymn has had to them ever since! The memory of that thrilling experience will never fade from those children’s minds.





Interest in Benin



Missionary Work In Ghana

AFRICA



Ghana



Sis. Nada & Elvira



Baptism of Sis. Josephine in Adelaide



around the world

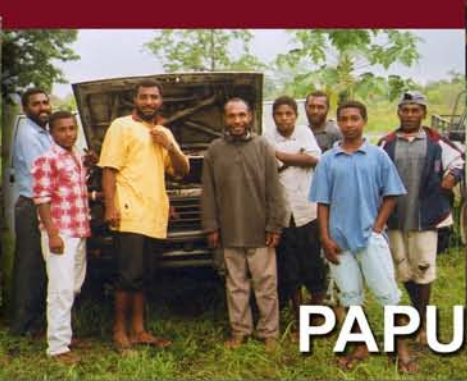


Believers @ Baptism



Believers in Sydney

AUSTRALIA



PAPUA NEW GUINEA



BAPTISM IN GHANA



BELIEVERS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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