

# *The Reformation* **Messenger**

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

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life,  
clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne  
of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either  
side of the river, was there the tree of life..."

Revelation 22:1,2

**We Believe**

The all-wise, loving God created 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 His life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh.

The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides in 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.

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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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# "THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD"



"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." Psalm 23.

This is a very common and well-known chapter in the book of Psalms. But, have you ever contemplated the spiritual meaning which David wanted to convey to you? Let us take a closer look at the chapter. To start with, we need to understand that David was a shepherd by profession. He understood the work of a shepherd by experience. He knew the behaviour, character and lifestyle of the sheep.

## Shepherd's Work

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." John 10:11. The shepherd's work is to lead the flocks to the greener pastures, protect the flocks from the beasts, take care of the lame and the sick. This is the good shepherd's work. Jesus also mentions the works of a bad shepherd. "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep." John 10:12.

## Beast of Prey

Let us also look closely at the lifestyle of the wild beast. They don't have a shepherd, neither a shelter. They don't graze in the greener pastures, for fear of man and other beasts. They don't even know where they will be in the next hour or after some time. Their lifestyle is very difficult and unpredictable. Hence they are not as fat as the domestic animals under the guidance of a shepherd.

## "The Lord is My Shepherd"

When David was comparing the lifestyle of a sheep and the wild beasts, he saw the tender love and care of God towards him and he expressed it through his words. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Although David had many enemies and experienced some difficulties and hardships, he was happy knowing that the Lord was his Shepherd and he would not want. Though there may be hunger, floods, earthquakes, disasters by land or sea, he had no fear, for the Lord was his Shepherd. Though his soul was broken because of his sins, weakness and trials, he was happy to know that the Good Shepherd restores his soul. As long as the Lord was his Shepherd, he knew that he would be led in the path of righteousness for His name's sake. Though he walked in the valley of the shadow of death, he feared not evil, he knew that the Lord's rod and staff was his comfort. Though he had many enemies, he feared not for the Lord was able to prepare him a table before his enemies. As long as the Lord was his Shepherd, surely goodness and mercy was to follow him all the days of his life. He was to dwell in the house of

God forever and ever. The house of God which David was talking about was God's temple which represents His church today.

### **Paul's Experience with the Good Shepherd**

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:35. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38, 39. The apostle Paul found nothing worthy to separate him from the Good Shepherd. Like David he could say "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Though he experienced hardships, hunger, discouragement, persecution, he could surely say, I will dwell in the house of God for ever and ever.


### **Personal Experience with the Good Shepherd**

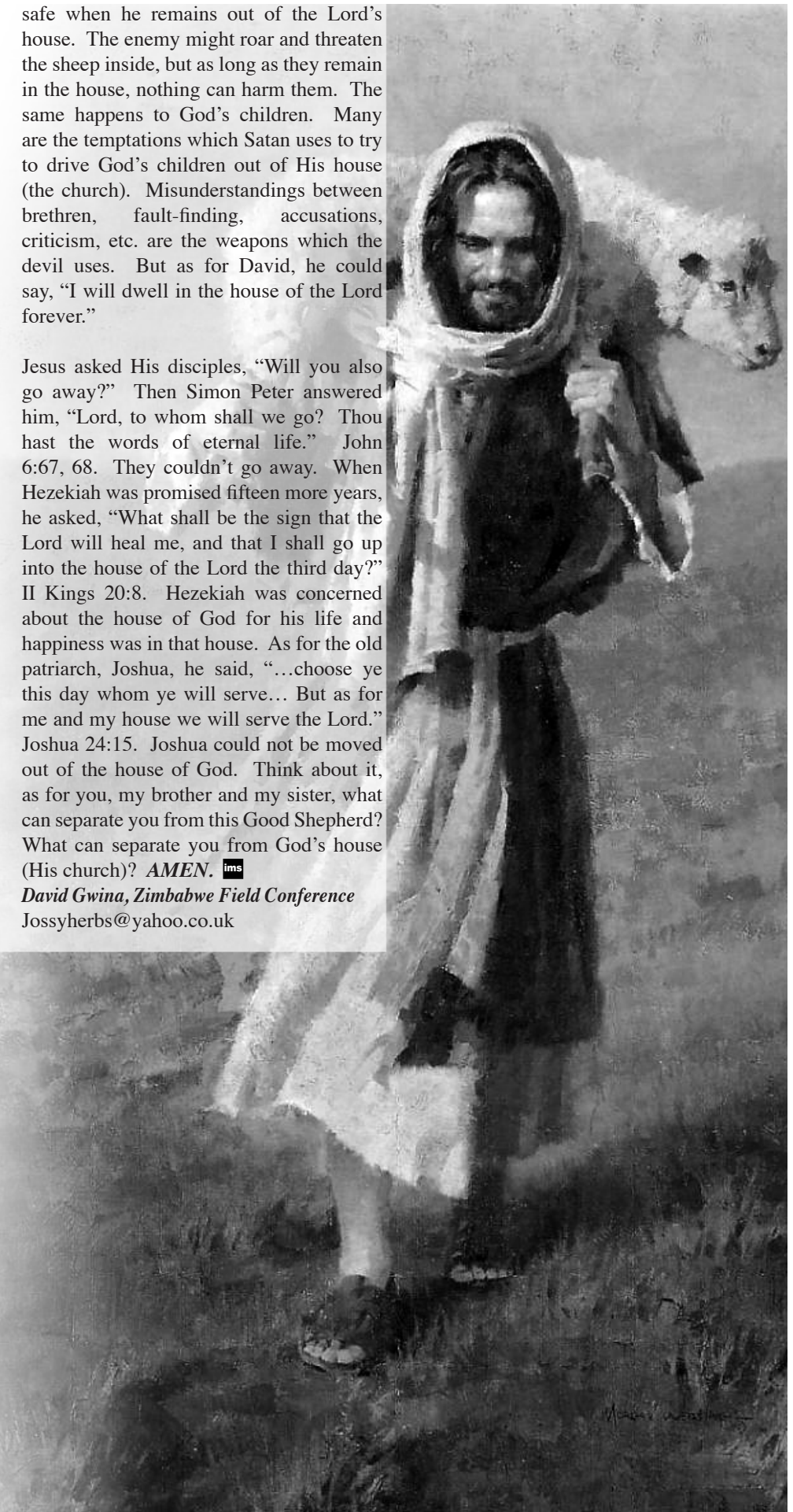
We can name a lot of people who experienced a good relationship with this Good Shepherd. What is your personal experience with this Good Shepherd? Do you feel comfort and safety in His hands? Do you have fears about tomorrow and the future? Fear not, the Lord is your Shepherd. Are you downhearted in your soul, because of trials, temptations, bereavement and sickness? Worry not, for the Good Shepherd will restore your soul, both physically and spiritually, and lead you in paths of righteousness. Is your life threatened by death, both physically and spiritually? Fear not, for He will be with you, His staff and rod will comfort you. Do you have many enemies, including the devil and his angels? Fear not for the Good Shepherd is able to prepare you a table in the presence of your enemies.

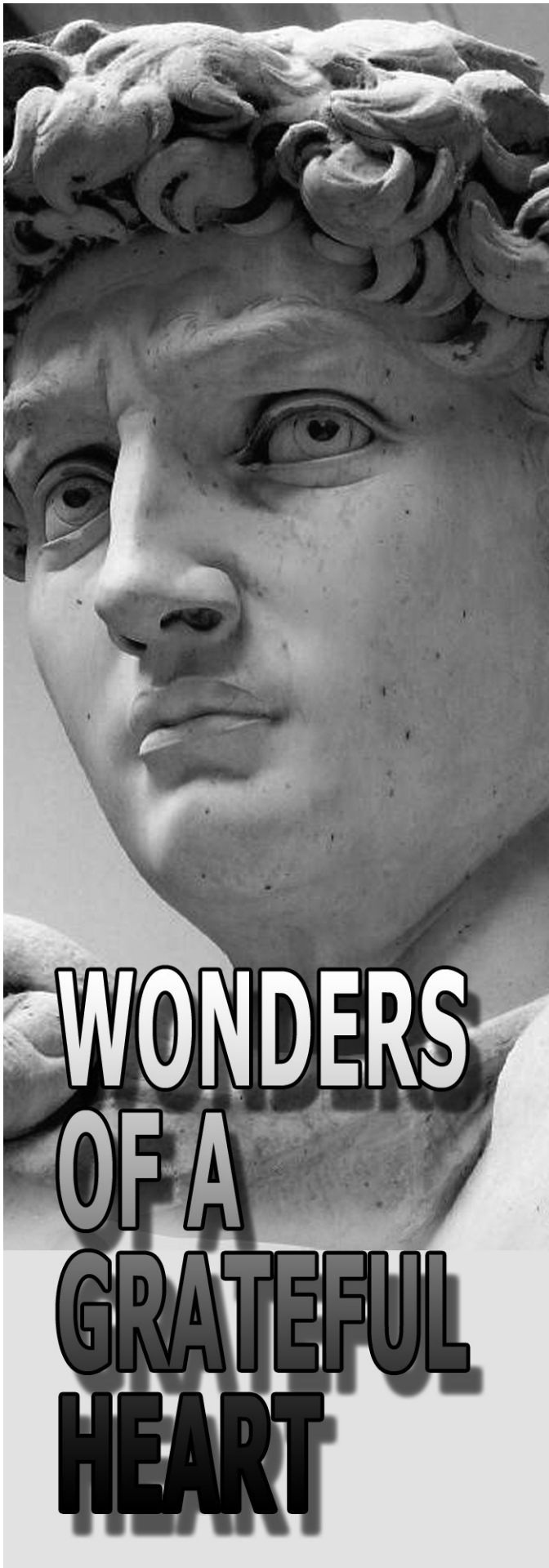
### **Living in the House of God**

As long as Christ Jesus is our Shepherd and we are His sheep who know His voice, we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. As it is in nature, so it is in the spiritual life. The beasts roar and threaten the sheep inside the corral. The one that jumps out of the corral will be in hot pursuit by, and will finally be eaten by, the beasts. One is never

safe when he remains out of the Lord's house. The enemy might roar and threaten the sheep inside, but as long as they remain in the house, nothing can harm them. The same happens to God's children. Many are the temptations which Satan uses to try to drive God's children out of His house (the church). Misunderstandings between brethren, fault-finding, accusations, criticism, etc. are the weapons which the devil uses. But as for David, he could say, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Jesus asked His disciples, "Will you also go away?" Then Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6:67, 68. They couldn't go away. When Hezekiah was promised fifteen more years, he asked, "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?" II Kings 20:8. Hezekiah was concerned about the house of God for his life and happiness was in that house. As for the old patriarch, Joshua, he said, "...choose ye this day whom ye will serve... But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15. Joshua could not be moved out of the house of God. Think about it, as for you, my brother and my sister, what can separate you from this Good Shepherd? What can separate you from God's house (His church)? **AMEN.**   
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Gratitude is a virtue highly appreciated both in heaven and on earth. The expressed will of God for us is that we may be grateful, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Only grateful people will go to heaven: those who are deeply moved by the sacrifice done for them on the cross of Calvary and willingly surrender their heart to their Master. If our faith and our hope do not come out of a thankful heart, we are in danger of losing both. Only those who are grateful can sing praises to the Lord at all times, and that kind of place is heaven.

Grateful people forgive and forget, are happy and generous, do not complain, they are able to see the bright side of things and can walk by faith. They do not fail to see a manifestation of God's love in EVERYTHING, even in misfortune, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose." Romans 8:28.

That kind of a person was David; no wonder he composed so many psalms! There is one practically for every occasion! Who has not at least once found his thoughts and feelings literally expressed in a psalm? All of them distil deep gratitude.

It is not only on paper that David expressed his gratefulness to his God, or when he played wonderful melodies on a string instrument in the stillness of the night, but many acts of his life are a testimony of the gratitude that dwelt in his heart.

In the Old Testament, in the 19th chapter of 1 Chronicles, we find a story from where we can learn quite a few things and see this wonderful trait of David's character. "Now it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead. And David said, 'I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me.' And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him." (1 Chronicles 19:1, 2)

"I will show kindness"- in the Spanish translation it says "mercy" and in the German one "friendship" which amounts to the same thing since a real friend practices kindness and mercy with his fellowmen. Every real friend is a gift from heaven and the Bible tells us that he who wants to have friends has to show friendliness. Jesus calls Himself our friend and if we count on Jesus' friendship we have the best Friend we can have.

In the Scriptures we find a wonderful example of real friendship in the relationship between David and Jonathan. It is written that David loved Jonathan as he loved his own soul. (1 Samuel 20:17). David was such a faithful friend that when Jonathan died, he asked, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (2 Samuel 9:1). King Saul was envious of David and persecuted him, but his son Jonathan was a faithful friend. David treasured this friendship so much that when Jonathan died he looked for someone of his family to whom he could show mercy and kindness and he found a son of Jonathan's who was lame. Are we doing the same? Are we looking for those who are left from our late friends' or relatives' family to show kindness to them? This is the best way to preach the gospel!

In today's story David wants to show kindness to Hanun, the son of the

king of the Ammonites, because his father had been kind to him. David's acts of mercy and kindness are triggered by gratitude. Unfortunately, usually the opposite happens among people. Many times, just for minor things, enmity is cultivated, and this can pass from one generation to the other.

David sent messengers to the king's son to console him, "But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, 'Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? Are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?' (1 Chr. 19:3)

Every king and president has his counsellors who give him advise on how to handle things. How important it is to have good advisors, people who are guided by God's Spirit! Mistrust and suspicion can be very bad counsellors. The Bible tells us that we should not judge because we do not know the heart of man and cannot see his motivation. The Spirit of God gives us discernment between good and evil, but it is not God's will that we suspect always what is evil. It is a very bad habit to make manifest to others our negative thoughts or our suspicion over someone's motivation because they may have such a bad influence upon others that can lead them to handle things in an unrighteous way.

Hanun, the son of the king of the Ammonites, believed what his advisors told him. So what did he do? Let us continue reading the story, "Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent them away." This act had the purpose of humiliating them. Hanun acted according to the suspicion that was sown into his heart by his counsellors. "Then there went [certain], and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, 'Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and [then] return.'" David manifested once more the nobility of his character by allowing the men to remain far from home until their beards grew and they had once again a dignified appearance.

How does the story develop further on? "And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the children of

Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syriamaachah, and out of Zobah. So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle." The Ammonites got together and prepared themselves for war. They looked for allies and invested money in military equipment! One evil decision led to another. They could not believe that David would not retaliate and their fear led them to even a more aggressive action which this time involved other nations. Something that was meant for good led to a war only because a couple of people expressed their negative thoughts and influenced the king. This happens not only in the administration of a nation, but also within the family circle, among friends, in our work place and even in the church. How sad it is when parties are formed taking sides for one or the other person, when a cold war goes on

sometimes for years in a place where warm fellowship and love should be cultivated and treasured! That is why God's word is clear and sharp and tells us that we shall be judged for every word we say.

"But the tongue can no man tame; [it is] an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." James 3:8, 9. The tongues of Hanun's counsellors were deleterious darts that poisoned the young king's heart to the point that he was blind to the expression of David's gratitude.

May the Lord help us to cultivate what is good and to avoid evil, mostly in our thoughts since they influence our feelings and lead us either to evil or to good acts. May He help us to keep our mind busy with all the good done to us in heaven and on earth so that we may grow in gratitude. *Amen.*

*Teresa Corti* 



# CRY ALOUD AND SPARE NOT... BUT HOW?



In Isaiah 58:1 The LORD says “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”

Why are we given this mandate? Like the great commission in Matt 28: 19, 20, His desire is to use us to draw all men to Him in repentance and salvation.

So then how do we “Cry aloud and spare not?” Does God have a certain method for us to follow? Prov. 14:12 “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

God does not think like us nor is He altogether like us. Ps. 50:21 “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.”

Isa. 55: 8, 9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

How did God cry aloud and spare not? Did He literally cry aloud and tell people their sins?

Isaiah 42:1-3 “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.”

Isaiah 11:3 “And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:”

John 12:47, 48 “And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

God’s delight is in His servant and the Spirit of God is upon Him, yet without a cry heard, or His voice lifted up in the street, nor after the sight and hearing of men and without a reed broken or flax quenched He brings forth judgment to the Gentiles.

“For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?” 1 Corinthians 4:20, 21

Jesus woke early morning by morning to learn how to speak a word in season. Isa. 50:4 “The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.”

Jesus submits to the instruction of His Father. He humbles Himself to learn God’s ways and He is not rebellious. Jesus is our example. We

need to learn how to speak words in season to qualify for the attendance of the Holy Spirit.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to lead us to repentance. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Romans 2:4 (Gal 5:22)

Every truth spoken must be centered in the atonement of Christ. "The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation (including Isaiah 58:1), must be studied in the light, which streams from the cross of Calvary ..."

Lifting up the cross of Christ both cuts and heals through the former and latter rain. "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:1-13

"Jesus is inviting and drawing by His Holy Spirit the hearts of young and old to Himself. . . . When Christ crucified is preached, the power of the gospel is demonstrated by the influence it exerts over the believer. In place of remaining dead in trespasses and sins, he is awakened. Lift up the Man of Calvary higher and still higher; there is power in the exaltation of the cross of Christ." SD 221

The preaching of Christ crucified is "crying aloud and sparing not."

What happens in the heart when the Lamb of God is lifted up? Jesus has said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." John 12:32. Christ must be revealed to the sinner as the Saviour dying for the sins of the world; and as we behold the Lamb of God upon the cross of Calvary, the mystery of redemption begins to unfold to our minds and the goodness of God leads us to repentance. In dying for sinners, Christ manifested a love that is incomprehensible; and as the sinner beholds this love, it softens the heart, impresses the mind, and inspires

contrition in the soul. SC 26.4

"One ray of the glory of God [Galatians 5:22, Ex 20, John 17:22, 26], one gleam of the purity of Christ, penetrating the soul, makes every spot of defilement painfully distinct, and lays bare the deformity and defects of the human character. It makes apparent the unhallowed desires, the infidelity of the heart, the impurity of the lips. The sinner's acts of disloyalty in making void the law of God, are exposed to his sight, and his spirit is stricken and afflicted under the searching influence of the Spirit of God. He loathes himself as he views the pure, spotless character of Christ." SC 29.1

Without the knowledge of sin we feel no need of repentance, so it is obvious that while the Lamb of God is being lifted up the Holy Spirit is doing the work of showing us our sins. God's love softens the heart impresses the mind and inspires contrition. This is not something man's thrusts upon one another can do. It is clearly the silent working of the Holy Spirit.

True shepherds lead the sheep by example through the Door. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." John 10:1-4

Showing people their sins (Isa. 58:1) in any other way than through the Atonement of Jesus is not bringing the lost sheep into the fold through the Door and makes us thieves and robbers or false shepherds.

The Holy Spirit shows us how He reproves of sin. John 16:8-14 "And when he is come, HE will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged... Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall

glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

What (who) does the Holy Spirit show us that will reprove us of sin? It is none other than Jesus. The Holy Spirit cries loud and shows people their sins through Jesus Christ. Like Jesus, "He [the Holy Spirit, the Godhead work as one] shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."

The voice of the Holy Spirit is still and small. "And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."

How can we speak loudly with a small voice? Isaiah 58:1 reads "and show [not tell] my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."

Actions speak louder than words. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may SEE your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16 ('glorify' by copying the example)

Our light shines through good actions accompanied by good words. Goodness is a fruit of the Spirit.

Why and how are we asked to lift up our voice like a trumpet? What two messages were associated with the sounding of the trumpet in the sanctuary services?

1. Judgment hour. Lev 25:9
2. Time to worship. Lev 27:13

The first angel's message calls our attention to both judgment and worship. "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

The loud cry begins during the 3rd angel's message. Giving the loud cry, "Come out of her my people..." is indeed crying aloud. The three angel's messages must be



proclaimed throughout the earth. As it is given it swells to a loud cry, thus we “cry aloud” telling the people the judgment is come and encouraging them to come and worship. The three angels’ messages are to go to every kindred, nation, tongue and people, it is thus we “spare not”. Not a soul on earth is to be spared from hearing this message.

### Man’s Ways Verses God’s Ways

“Respect and Love One Another. --If we keep uppermost in our minds the unkind and unjust acts of others we shall find it impossible to love them as Christ has loved us; but if our thoughts dwell upon the wondrous love and pity of Christ for us, the same spirit will flow out to others. We should love and respect one another, notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing. Humility and self-distrust should be cultivated, and a patient tenderness with the faults of others. This will kill out all narrowing selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.” SC 121, 1892

“It depends very much on the way we take hold to labour whether we shall have souls as the result of our efforts.” Manuscript 14, 1887

The robber often cries out, “Stop thief!” after some other man, in order to direct pursuit away from himself. So people condemn sin in others, in order that it may not be suspected that they are guilty of the same thing. Often, too, people:

“Compound for sins they are inclined to by damning those they have no mind to,” but of which they are actually guilty by reason of their human nature.

Since all flesh of man is the same, we ought to be filled with humiliation, instead of contempt, when we hear of a gross sin that is committed; for it is really a picture of what is in our own hearts. Instead of saying, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men,” we should bear the burden of the erring, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted. Very often the man whose weakness we feel inclined to condemn, has not failed so badly as we should have done if we had been tempted in the same way, and to the same degree.

Outcry against Sin, - In “Pilgrim’s Progress” when Talkative left Faithful to decide upon the subject of their conversation, Faithful

proposed this question; “How doth the saving grace of God discover itself when it is in the heart of man?” And then Bunyan proceeds thus:

“Talk. – I perceive then that our talk must be about the power of things. Well, it is a very good question, and I shall be willing to answer you; and take my answer in brief thus: First, where the grace of God is in the heart, it causeth there a great outcry against sin. Secondly –

“Talk. -- Why, what difference is there between crying out against and abhorring sin?”

“Faith. – O, a great deal! A man may cry out against a sin, of policy; but he can not abhor it but by virtue of a godly antipathy against it. I have heard many cry out against sin in the pulpit, who can yet abide it well enough in the heart, house, and conversation. Joseph’s mistress cried out with a loud voice, as if she had been very chaste; but she would willingly, notwithstanding that, have committed uncleanness with him.”

“A keen perception of right and wrong, and a vigorous denunciation of sin, will never justify any man. On the contrary, they only deepen his condemnation. It is a sad fact that too many of the so-called reformers of the present day seem to think that gospel work consists largely in the denunciation of evil practices. A detective is not a minister of the gospel.” Waggoner on Romans, page 2.40, 2.50

### Arise, Shine

“Let those who have a knowledge of the truth arise and shine. ‘Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet.’ No longer mutilate the truth. Let the soul cry out for the living God. Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. The Comforter will come to you, if you will open the door to Him. ‘Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.’” MS 51, 1901.

*Chris Godfrey, Australia* 



# WE MUST CONSULT THE WILL OF GOD



“I have written for him the great things of my law, but they were considered a strange thing.” Hosea. 8:12

My dear parent, can you see, anywhere, those who hate their children? As we know, all kinds of animals even from small insects to big animals, all the livestock love their children. Nowadays we are also hearing of different types of love, such as dogs feeding milk to cubs.

When children made mistakes, many times the parents simply ignored them, and didn’t take any action because they loved their children so much. But this will bring many problems, troubles and sorrows in their life. Here we see what kinds of problems entered into the family of Isaac, son of Abraham the prophet.

The matter was the blessing of the birthright and to whom it belonged. What did the parents, Isaac and Rebekah do for their children? What happened in their lives? Come; let us enter the story of the four members of this family.

Nowadays, most parents and children are living with many struggles. Why? Because they are traveling on the self-inflicted way, and they are trying to do everything themselves. Sister E.G. White explained about such people: “But like many who now profess to be children of God, they were unwilling to leave the matter in His hand.” PP, p. 180. If we read over and over the story of our fore parents, Isaac and Rebekah, we can learn many things, and our life will change to do the will of God.

The scholars of science talk about twins having the same habits, character and doing everything the same. But here Esau and Jacob both are very different in everything. “Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac, present a striking contrast, both in character and in life.” PP, p. 177.

## CHARACTER OF JACOB AND ESAU

“**Esau** grew up loving self–gratification and centering all his interest in the present. Impatient of restraint, he delighted in the wild freedom of the chase, and early chose the life of a hunter. **Yet he was the father’s favorite.** The quiet, peace loving shepherd was attracted by the daring and vigor of this elder son, who fearlessly ranged over mountain and desert, returning home with game for his father and exciting accounts of his adventurous life.”

“**Jacob**, thoughtful, diligent, and care – taking ever thinking more of the future than the present, was content to dwell at home occupied in the care of the flocks and the tillage of the soil. His patient perseverance, thrift, and foresight were valued by the mother. His affections were deep and strong, and his gentle, unremitting attentions added far more to her happiness than did the boisterous and occasional kindnesses of Esau. **To Rebekah, Jacob was the dearer son.**” PP, p. 177.

According to the above thought, we can understand that the twin brothers of Jacob and Esau were different in every thought and activity. They did not do even one single thing with the same mind. The older son, Esau was the father’s favorite. The father’s affections were centered upon the elder son. The younger son, Jacob, was the dearer son to Rebekah; he was mother’s favorite. She was convinced that the heritage of divine promise was intended for Jacob. So, the parents were responsible for the battle among Jacob and Esau. Lifelong they

lived with struggles, even before their birth, “the children struggled together within her.” Genesis 25:22.

Who are ready to love only one eye, and hate another eye? Most people like both their eyes. “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.” Matthew 6:22 Like two eyes, parents should love both their two children. But there was no unity among this family of four members; they acted as two groups. The older son, Esau was the father’s favorite. The younger son, Jacob was the mother’s favorite. “And Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.” Genesis 25:28. Do you understand my dear brethren and sisters? Both father and older son were slaves to the taste and to their stomachs. They both, Isaac and Esau made mistakes, even in matters of food.

### ESAU’S BIRTHRIGHT FOR FOOD

“And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.” Genesis 25:29-33. Sister E.G. White says; “...he carelessly bartered the glorious heritage that God Himself had promised to his fathers. His whole interest was in the present. He was ready to sacrifice the heavenly to the earthly, to exchange a future good for a momentary indulgence.” PP, p. 179 So now the birthright belonged to Jacob. “Knowing the opposition of Rebekah and Jacob, he [Isaac] decided to perform the solemn ceremony in secret. In accordance with the custom of making a feast upon such occasions, the patriarch bade Esau, ‘Go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savory meat, ...that my soul may bless thee before I die.’” PP, p. 179.

Apostle Paul wrote about Esau and his character as follows: “lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright for you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing,

he was rejected for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.” Hebrews. 12:16,17. So, again apostle Paul advises parents, “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4.

### THE WILL OF PARENTS

“Isaac made known to his sons these privileges and conditions, and plainly stated that Esau, as the eldest, was the one entitled to the birthright... Years passed on, until Isaac, old and blind, and expecting soon to die, determined no longer to delay the bestowal of the blessing upon his elder son. But knowing the opposition of Rebekah and Jacob, he decided to perform the solemn ceremony in secret. In accordance with the custom of making a feast upon such occasions, the patriarch bade Esau, ‘Go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savory meat... that my soul ay bless thee before I die.’” PP, pp 178, 179.

“Rebekah remembered the words of the angel, and she read with clearer insight than did her husband the character of their sons. She was convinced that the heritage of divine promise was intended for Jacob. She repeated to Isaac the angel’s words; but the father’s affections were centered upon the elder son, and he was unshaken in his purpose.”

“Rebekah divined his purpose. She was confident that it was contrary to what God had revealed as his will. Isaac was in danger of incurring the divine displeasure and of debarring his younger son from the position to which God had called him. She had in vain tried the effect of reasoning with Isaac, and she determined to resort to stratagem.” PP, pp. 178, 180

### THE WILL OF CHILDREN

“Jacob had learned from his mother of the divine intimation that the birthright should fall to him, and he was filled with an unspeakable desire for the privileges which it would confer. It was not the possession of his father’s wealth that he craved; the spiritual birthright was the object of his longing...”

“With secret longing he listened to all that his father told concerning the spiritual birthright; he carefully treasured what he

had learned from his mother. Day and night the subject occupied his thoughts, until it became the absorbing interest of his life. But while he thus esteemed eternal above temporal blessings, Jacob had not an experimental knowledge of the God whom he revered. His heart had not been renewed by divine grace. He believed that the promise concerning himself could not be fulfilled so long as Esau retained the rights of the first-born, and he constantly studied to devise some way whereby he might secure the blessing which his brother held so lightly, but which was so precious to himself.”

“**When Esau...** for a dish of red pottage he parted with his birthright, and confirmed the transaction by a oath. A short time at most would have secured him food in his father’s tents, but to satisfy the desire of the moment he carelessly bartered the glorious heritage that God himself had promised to his fathers. His whole interest was in the present. He was ready to sacrifice the heavenly to the earthly, to exchange a future good for a momentary indulgence.”

“‘Thus Esau despised his birthright.’ In disposing of it he felt a sense of relief. Now his way was unobstructed; he could do as he liked. **For this wild pleasure, miscalled freedom, how many are still selling their birthright to an inheritance pure and undefiled, eternal in the heavens.** – PP, pp.178, 179

### THE PROMISE OF GOD

Who are you? Are you a parent or child? What are you doing? Whatever you do, you must do the will of God. If you are doing anything wrong against the plan and promise of God, what will happen? What kind of trouble and sorrow entered into the life of Esau and Jacob, the children of Isaac and Rebekah? When the parents did not obey the promise of God, they brought many problems to their children’s lives. My dear parents, kindly think about this. A small mistake leads to a great sin. Here God gave us a wonderful lesson through the family of Isaac, who is our forefather.

“And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and



## Jacob Deceives His Father

the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and **the elder shall serve the younger.**" Genesis 25:22,23; Romans 9:10-12. So, the promise of God was that the older, Esau shall serve the younger, Jacob. But the parents and children went against the promise of God. Because of this, they struggled their life long.

### *Jacob And Rebekah Succeeded, But What Did They Gain?*

"Jacob and Rebekah succeeded in their purpose, but they gained only trouble and sorrow by their deception. God had declared that Jacob should receive the birthright, and His word would have been fulfilled in His own time had they waited in faith for Him to work for them. **But like many who now profess to be children of God, they were unwilling to leave the matter in His hands. Rebekah bitterly repented the wrong counsel she had given her son; it was the means of separating him from her, and she never saw his face again.** From the hour when he received the birthright, Jacob was weighed down with self-condemnation. He had sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. In one short hour he had made work for a lifelong repentance. This scene was vivid before him in afteryears, when the wicked course of his own sons

oppressed his soul." PP, p. 180

My dear parents, here we have a warning lesson. Fathers and mothers, if you give wrong counsel to your children, you are showing a way of sin to them. So, sin will separate them from your guidance and from the shelter of the Lord.

My dear parents and lovely children, through this lesson, we must know only one thing, but a great thing. We must submit ourselves to the Lord. As children of God, we have to leave all matters in His hands. If we do this, we will be happy always and we can enjoy eternity with the children of God and the heavenly angels; we can escape from all sin, trouble and sorrows.

"How many, even of professed Christians, cling to indulgences that are injurious to health and that benumb the sensibilities of the soul. When the duty is presented of cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, they are offended. They see that they cannot retain these hurtful gratifications and yet secure heaven, and they conclude that since the way to eternal life is so strait, they will no longer walk therein.

Multitudes are selling their birthright for

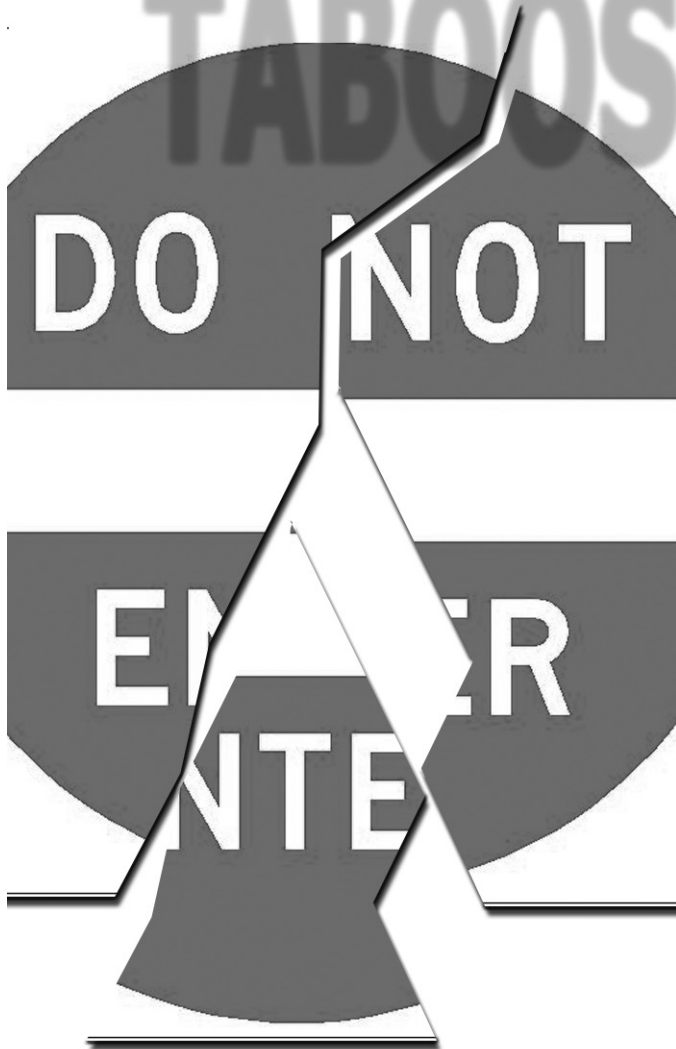
sensual indulgence. Health is sacrificed, the mental faculties are enfeebled, and heaven is forfeited; and all for a mere temporary pleasure—an indulgence at once both weakening and debasing in its character." PP, p.182

If we want a life of happiness in this world, we have to do "Like Abraham, we must be obedient to the divine requirements. In marriage, in our family relations, in public life, **we must consult the will of God.**" PP, p. 178. If we do this, we will receive everlasting life. Our loving Saviour Jesus Christ says, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me to give to everyone according to his work." Revelation 22:12 "Surely I am coming quickly: Amen. even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Revelation 22:21,22. So, my dear brethren, let us sing and praise the Lord as follows:

*"All to Jesus we surrender,  
All to him we freely give,  
We will ever love and trust Him,  
In his presence daily live."*

S.raj Israel, India 

# WHERE ARE THE TABOOS?



*“And whatever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.” (Col 3:23,24)*

## KEEN CHRISTIANS

There was a time when it was taken for granted that keen Christians didn't do certain things; they didn't smoke, they didn't drink, they didn't play cards, they didn't wear make-up, they didn't go to the theatre, they didn't dance, they didn't swear, they didn't blaspheme, they dressed properly, and so on. They were just different, separate from others! (Rev.14:12). By a keen Christian, we mean one that is sharp, eager, and strong.

That time would seem to have gone, and today we hear little of the old taboos. We mean by taboos those things which were forbidden or disapproved of; prohibition resulted from social conventions, women's suffrage, etc.

They had their dangers, no doubt. Well, in the first place they were negative in their emphasis. An era of “don'ts, nays, and naughts.”

You see, a keen or sharp Christian was by them defined in terms of what he or she **did not** do rather in terms of what he or she **did** do.

## THE TABOOS HAVE GONE

In the second place, they tended to lead to an unthinking attitude by the Christians who adopted them. Few stopped to think out why a Christian did not do these certain things; perhaps habit, tradition, parental example, religious training, custom, fear of God, etc.

The danger we face today, therefore, is that of an equal lack of thought on the part of the Christians who, with a sense of relief, have decided to be done with the taboos! They have, for many, become hampering and inconvenient things, and with an appeal to the new “Christian liberty” and “freedom of conscience”, they have been discarded. For many it's the “New Age.” In essence, “**the taboos have gone!**”

## FREEDOM!

“Free from the law,” is the cry carrying with it the failure to realize that freedom from the law in the New Testament sense is freedom from the law as the grounds of our acceptance before God, and a freedom from the ceremonial or ritual aspects of the law, which many refer to as the Jewish context; but not freedom from the moral law, or Ten Commandments, as a way of life and as a requirement of God in obedience. (Ex 20:1-17). “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.” (Math 5:20). So spoke the Master, and we clearly find inherent in these words a tremendous, exacting standard of holiness and righteousness which we neglect at our peril.

## LIVING OR DRIFTING?

The inadequacy of the old taboos does not necessarily imply their invalidity. But, we would do well as Christians to re-examine them in the light of some basic moral principles that are laid down in the New Testament which would include the old taboos in their scope while widening it!

Some of the basic principles which the thinking Christian will want to apply will be outlined below; their application to life will depend upon whether we as Christians are prepared to think them through within the context of a vital life, or whether we are prepared lazily to drift within the dreamy current of our present times.

## PROBLEMS OF CONDUCT

There are three questions which the Christian would do well to ask himself as he or she faces the problems of conduct in this generation; an “evil generation, perverse and crooked, a generation that curses, a generation of vipers.” (Deut 1:23; 32:5, 20; Prov. 30:11; Lk 3:7).

### *I. What Purpose Does This Effect?*

Under this question are two limiting considerations:

**1. Is the purpose convenient at such a time or place?** The first consideration is: (1Cor 6:12). “All things are not expedient.” Ah! Lawful they may be, but not expedient, not suitable, not convenient at this time or this place. This principle is not just Christian but has its Christian colour in the various circumstances in our lives.

There is no harm in reading a good Christian book, but it is not “convenient” if I do that when I should be doing my home-work. There is no harm in riding a bicycle, but it could be not “convenient” if I was riding when I should be in church. There’s something refreshing about sitting at home listening to one of my favourite Christian choirs on a CD or tape, but it may not be “convenient” if that same night is prayer meeting at the church. And so, the illustrations go on and on.

**2. Is the purpose constructive?** The other limiting consideration is: (1Cor 10:23). “All things edify not.” Ah! They may be lawful, but they are a waste of time, of money, of strength, of effort. They have no real constructive worth. Sound familiar? How often people approach life with the attitude, “I don’t see the harm in it!” The Christian is more positive in his attitude; he asks, “What is the good in it?”

Life is really so short, and in this world there are so many ways of wasting time, wasting money, wasting our strength, wasting our efforts, that the Christian cannot afford to

be “unthinking.” We can say, “spinning your wheels.” Time to reflect, meditate, reason, deliberate? No time for that! But, the will of God is concerned with the whole man, his mind, his body and his spirit, and that which will lead to the development of the soul, the health of the body, or the instruction of the mind, which will be cherished, and room will be made for it. The rest will be regarded with a steady eye and clear mind by His leading and protection.

### *II. What Power Does This Exercise?*

Is the second basic question the Christian asks: “Lawful,” says Paul, “but I will not be brought under the power of any.” It is simply a fact of experience that things can become dominating in any person’s life (take priority); and so in applying this question to life, the thinking Christian will examine the questioned thing by asking:

**1. “Is there domination in my own experience?”** Or, “what is dominating me?” The moment any thing or any person has reached a place of mastery in my life, (“brought under the power of any”), the one mastery that I most cherish, and treasure, then it has taken the place, wrongfully, from the mastery of the Supreme Master. You see, it could be a habit or a hobby, a sin or a sport, the love of making money or the love of pleasing men, a spouse, our children, or it could be a friend-ship or a job.

Wherever there is this kind of mastery there is always bondage, and where there is bondage there is wastage, and where there is wastage there is sin. Wastage of time, of money, of thought, of strength, of effort, and of life itself! I think if we were honest, we would have to admit that this concept of bondage is what led our early fathers, pioneers, EG White, and others to question the disastrous tobacco habit, which can achieve such a mastery over the human will; “the brain is weakened and destroyed.”(MH 328; 9T12) And which today carries the added menace of the threat of lung cancer, which is the number one killer of all cancer deaths in the world, and which kills even many nonsmokers by second-hand smoke; “the body temple is defiled.”(TE 64, 65).

But, under this aspect of moral principles the Christian is not just concerned with himself, but with others, and so he asks a further question; not only, “Is there

domination in my experience?” but:

### **2. “Is there danger through my example?”**

(1Cor 8:9) “Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours becomes a stumbling block to them that are weak.” There are some things which carry with them the very seed of danger, which some might overcome, but which others might not. One of the strongest arguments for total abstinence lies just here. “In America, alone, there are over 15,000,000 alcoholics; confirmed and helpless drunkards; the highest in the West. It’s a major public health problem in North America, costing US \$170 billion annually.”(Wikipedia). What a tragedy that must represent! What misery, to at least another 30,000,000 affected by this fearful wreckage of homes. “The human body is terribly harmed and breaks down.” (Ed 202; EV 534). Were the early fathers and pioneers in the faith so wide of the mark when they advocated total abstinence as the path for the keen Christian? I wonder if the taboos after all were not the better and wiser way. (1Cor 6:19)

### *III. What Praise Does This Evoke?*

This is the third question which the Christian will want to ask as he thinks out the basic principles of Christian conduct. In (1 Tim 4:4), Paul writes, “Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” This verse can often be misinterpreted. Let’s explain further:

**1. Are you thinking or thanking?** But, let’s put it this way: the questions of right and wrong for the Christian are not just matters of thinking, but of thanking. Note the condition to fulfill --“if it be received with thanksgiving.” In effect Paul says, if you are not quite sure about something, bring it before the Lord, and see if you can thank Him for it. If you cannot, then be careful. Let your thanking be intelligent and inclusive. Can you thank Him for the thing itself, for what it has involved for others, for what it does to your own life?

For example, many, even professed Christians, say there’s many “good films” around; “The Ten Commandments,” “The Passion,” and now “The Da Vinci Code.” The question the Christian believer must ask is this, “Can I thank God for the moral cost at which these things are produced in Hollywood? What if your “converted” daughter is enamoured with Hollywood

icons, and told you that her ambition was to be a film star?

As the film industry stands, with its tragic stories of divorce, unfaithfulness, drug and substance abuse, addictions, alcoholism, anorexia craze, scandals, suicides, and promiscuity, is it right for the Christian to get his or her entertainment at that price? In a glitzy, ritzy world of immorality? In an age that is subdued and habitually intoxicated with celebrities, rock stars, cult heroes, devil worshippers, and Satanism? In Best Picture fights between gay (homosexual) movies and racial movies? "It's a hotbed of immorality." (4T653). T.V., DVD, is theatre, too! "Pleasure lovers crowd to the theatre as probation nearly closes." (ChS31). Amazing truth! Furthermore, "sensibilities are benumbed." (T253).

The fact still remains that the writings of The Gnostic Bible and other kinds of esoteric literature lie at the heart of the film, "The Da Vinci Code." The Gnostic Bible, is a collection of documents which some believe give an alternate interpretation of the early days of Christianity; that Christianity was diverse, with no strict doctrines such as we find in the New Testament. We, the traditionalists are the heretics!!

The Gnostics, (GR gnosis means knowledge), were teachers who combined Christianity with Greek philosophy. The Gnostic writings have fraudulent authorship. Paul warns of such deceivers (2Thess 2:1-3). Finally, the Gnostics have no historical ties to the Old Testament, but rather a historical link to Plato. The Gnostics also believed in two different gods, and many more notions that are contradicted in the Old Testament. Finally, the Gnostics were not eyewitnesses, and the early church was aware of these teachings and refuted them!

This explains why many who read "The Da Vinci Code" or see the film, (or other such films) are prone to believe it; forget historical investigations, forget the need for continuity with the Old Testament. It really comes down to the desire to have a tolerant faith that lets us pick and choose our beliefs, cafeteria style; freedom of choice, but without changing one's conduct. Now, we can't always compete with people's desires, but we can show that all the hard evidence and truth is on our side! We have nothing to fear. Finally, "a Christian would not wish to meet death at the theatre or be at the theatre

when Jesus returns." (MYP398). Moreover, "The youth habitually attending the theatre are corrupted in principle." (MYP 380).

But, not only here must the question be asked, (What Praise Does This Evoke?), but in other departments of life, such as the **effect of labour or working conditions**, which can be damaging to personality, or health, one's family, one's spiritual life and salvation.

What conclusion can we then reach? "If" I can thank God for it, it will most likely be good, but "if" I cannot, then it is almost certain to be wrong. So, **thanking** in addition to **thinking** will help to clear the way.

### TABOO REPLACEMENTS

We began by asking, "**Where Are The Taboos?**" The question that consequently follows is, "**What has taken their place?**" Well, many things, prominently, and distressful at that:

#### *Perilous Times And Perilous Men*

The American pop culture, firstly, rather than becoming more patriotic, nostalgic, more introspective, considerate, and reverent, have become unchanged in many ways; violent, irreverent, licentious, and so on. In the Apostle Paul's letter to young Timothy, he says, "This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it; from such turn away." (2Tim 3:1-5) This apostasy is not limited to America, but is universal.

#### *Cool*

Take, for one, the savage craze of primitive African tribal paintings (tattoos), and piercing of facial and intra-oral parts; tongue, lips, cheeks, etc. (ADA-"resulting in serious infections").

"Coolness" is the norm for many today; meaning unexcited, lacking friendliness, or calmly insolent or arrogant, in fashion, chic, ('in the know'). Take also, "the current craze of teenage girls affectionately calling

each other sluts (dirty, immoral woman); no longer an insult, but an identity proudly worn, with slutty clothes, and behaviour to match." (New York Times). Cool!

#### *Bareness*

Moreover, baring of midriffs is common for women, and practically baring of breasts, not only seen in celebrities, but young and old alike, in the nominal churches, and among many professed believers! No one seems to mind this sort of sexual context, but, in the very natural context of breast feeding or nursing your child, the majority are uncomfortable with it, and are "offended" or "embarrassed" by women breastfeeding in public and think it's inappropriate; a "broken taboo" about showing a woman's breast. Whereas health professionals encourage women to breastfeed, as it is best for the baby, but, there is little support for it by the public.

#### *Boy Code*

There's also the phenomenon of a whole generation of boys messing up in school; which theorists say it's no longer undesirable to fail. No matter what level in social status, playing the part of an angry, ignorant thug is the height of coolness. Boys are responsible for 80 percent of school discipline problems. Not only falling behind in school, and dropping out, but getting in trouble outside of it. The suicide rate for boys has tripled since 1970, and is now four to six times the rate for girls. Popular culture teaches boys to suppress all emotions except rage.

This "boy code" prizes toughness and rebellion, and denigrates studiousness, and traditional achievement. "The message does not come across that being smart is really being cool," says a University Administrator. Parents are paying the price for boys' failure to achieve. Many, called the "boomerang kids," still live with their parents; although, it's a commonly acceptable practice in some cultures abroad.

#### *What Else?*

There's an overwhelming number of "Taboo Replacements;" too numerous to mention. But, for emphasis, some undeniably obvious ones merit listing: cascading drug addiction, frenzy of protests, immigration showdowns, falsified cloning research, war over evolution, obesity-gluttony (300,000 die each year;

more than AIDS!), fickle eating, scandalous priesthods, pornography-pedophilia, racist violence, domestic-violence, wife battering, child-abuse, abortions, infidelity, break, krumping, hip hop style dancing, on steroids, sporting scandals, notorious roguish behavior, profanity, serial killers, single mothers, homosexuality (male to male sodomy leading cause of AIDS), homosexual parents, family breakdown, bigotry, hatred, global terrorism, spiritualism, grotesque music, pleasure seeking and so on.

The travails of the groaning world, (“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain.” Rom 8:22), furthermore, clearly indicate that the apocalypse is at hand, but it’s not a sign that our ordained work in hastening the Lord’s return is diminished. Moreover, “never say never” for never is a bad word, because we never know!

So, you see, in conclusion, “The taboos have gone!”

The question I would leave with you is, “What has taken the place of the taboos in your life?” *Amen*

*John Theodorou, U.S.A.* 

## CORRECTION:

The article in the August Messenger titled: “A Necessary Preparation” was written by: Sis. Froso Georgoudi, Greece, and translated by Teresa Corti

The Publishers

# LOOKING FOR YOU!!

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*“And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability” Mathew 25:15*







Almost everyone has experienced fear at some point in their lives. Many people are fearful when they are in a situation where their life is in danger as they fear death. People may also fear financial ruin – being faced with a life of poverty and struggle. Some people are fearful of meeting new people, fearful of starting a new job. There are many situations that cause people to fear.

When people get fearful, they react in several different ways. Some will turn immediately to God and cry out for help. Some will curse God. Some will turn to worldly sources for safety.

Many churches also will use fear to increase their membership. They will preach an ever-burning hell fire – a cruel God, who loves to see sinners suffer therefore people come to church through fear. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible does, however, have a verse that mentions salvation through fear...

### **SALVATION THROUGH FEAR**

“And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.” Jude 22, 23

“I saw that when the truth is presented, it should be in the power and Spirit. Bring the people to the point to decide. Show them the importance of the truth--it is life or death. With becoming zeal, pull souls out of the fire.” 1T 152

*We do serve* a loving God although there are some who will be saved by fear. How can this be? Fear can lead people to seek a refuge in Jesus at which time their fears will be abated, turning into love. Fear can be a good thing if it leads a person to the foot of the cross. These types of people are like the publican who prayed in the temple, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” Luke 18:13. Once they meet Jesus, their hearts will be melted and the fear will turn into love.

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.” 1 John 4:18

The fear mentioned here is ungodly fear, and not the reverential awe felt by the true worshipers of his Creator. It is a fear of cowardice. Perfect love that centres on God will not be enslaved by this type of fear because they have the faith to believe that, “if God be for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31. Some think of God as a cruel tyrant and only worship Him because they are cowards, enslaved by this fear of an eternal burning hell, but He who truly loves has no fear of God. He also has no fear of the evil plots of men. Fear arising from a wrongly spent life brings its own immediate punishment, apart from any penalty that the future may hold in store.

Since there is no fear in love, one who fears demonstrates that he is not yet made perfect in respect to the high form of love of which the apostle is speaking.

Fortunately, development is possible. As we learn to know the Lord we begin to love Him, and our fear changes from a haunting dread of a powerful and avenging God to a “clean” fear that does not wish to disappoint a friend. The more we grow in love, the less we fear. When our love is perfectly developed and freed from all trace of self,

we shall be without cowardly fear of God or man. We shall not fear God because we know that He is love. We shall not fear man because we know that our loving Friend will allow nothing to come upon us that will not be for our ultimate good, and that He will be with us whenever our path leads through trial or danger.

“There are many who desire to love and serve God, and yet when afflictions come upon them, they do not discern the love of God in it, but the hand of the enemy. They mourn and murmur and complain; but this is not the fruit of love to God in the soul. If we have perfect love, we shall know that God is not seeking to injure us, but that in the midst of trials, and griefs, and pains, He is seeking to make us perfect, and to test the quality of our faith. When we cease to worry about the future, and begin to believe that God loves us, and means to do us good, we shall trust Him as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, and our will will be swallowed up in the will of God.” SD 193

During his ministry, the Apostle Paul encountered two people mentioned in the book of Acts who were fearful and they both reacted differently.

**The Jailer:** “And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” Acts 16:27-31

The Jailer trembled and was converted.

**Felix:** “And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when



I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.” Acts 24:24-26 Felix trembled at the thought of the judgment, however he ignored his conscience and eventually the voice of God became quiet to him.

“How wide the contrast between the course of Felix and that of the jailer of Philippi! The servants of the Lord were brought in bonds to the jailer, as was Paul to Felix. The evidence they gave of being sustained by a divine power, their rejoicing under suffering and disgrace, their fearlessness when the earth was reeling with the earthquake shock, and their spirit of Christlike forgiveness, sent conviction to the jailer’s heart, and with trembling he confessed his sins and found pardon. Felix trembled, but he did not repent. The jailer joyfully welcomed the Spirit of God to his heart and to his home; Felix bade the divine Messenger depart. The one chose to become a child of God and an heir of heaven; the other cast his lot with the workers of iniquity.” AA 426

Fear is not a bad emotion if it leads a person to repentance as it did the jailer.

Israelites built a golden calf when Moses had been away in the mountain for 40 days. They wanted a god that they could see. They lacked faith in the power of the God they could not see. They could have found salvation through this fear had they turned to the Lord, rather than the golden calf.

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.” Psalm 20:7

“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.” Jeremiah 17:5-7

Although we don’t see God, we see many evidences of His existence and of His watchful care. When people become fearful and turn to the world for support, they are showing they have a lack of faith and trust in God. They begin to trust in man, and this can only bring disaster. They are not saved through their fear.

**Finances:** Do we fear to trust our finances to God? Or do we need to put the majority of our money into our investments and give God only a few coins? Do we have more faith in worldly financial institutions and assets than we do on God? Some people also feel they must cheat on their income

## TURNING TO THE WORLD IN TIME OF FEAR

Some people lack faith in God and fear because they cannot see Him. They begin to trust only in what they can see. The

tax return so that they don't need to pay as much tax, assuring themselves that there is nothing wrong with this because the government is corrupt anyway and not using the money wisely. They fear to trust in God. There have been many times when we've studied the Bible with people and they accept many points of the message, however they have a job that requires them to work on Sabbath. This has proven to be a stumbling block for many people. They fear not being able to provide for their family if they should keep the commandments and lose their job. They do not have faith in God to provide.

**Health:** Do we trust the medical doctors before we will trust in God? Some doctors have been known to indiscriminately over-prescribe medications because they really don't know what the problem is – they are using trial and error in an attempt to mask the symptoms of illness and make a person believe they are well, when the underlying problem was never resolved and will resurface later. While there are good medical doctors who are beneficial to the healing process some are not. They don't practice in a holistic manner. Our ultimate trust should be in God, and God can either heal us directly or guide us to people who can assist us in the healing process. The medical doctor should cooperate with God's healing agencies.

If some person contracts a fearful disease like cancer often they comply with all the radical treatments that have been prescribed, which may do damage to other parts of the body, while God's healing agencies are ignored, such as proper diet, fresh air, sunshine, water and sleep. They fear death but don't find salvation in this fear. They don't come to the Lord.

The "health experts" in this world have convinced many people of the fact that, in order to have a balanced diet they must include items such as meat and dairy products to be healthy. Do we trust these "experts?" Are we fearful of stepping out in God's appointed way?

**Leisure Time:** Or we don't trust God that our life will be fulfilled if we spend our leisure time in missionary work rather than our own selfish pleasures. We fear we'll miss out on the good things of life and we'll live to regret it when we reach the end. Ask the Christian martyrs in the Dark Ages if

they had any regrets when they reached the end of their lives that they didn't spend more time for selfish pleasure rather than in serving the Lord. What will it matter after we've been in heaven for a million years? Will we be pining away at the fact that we missed a TV show, or some other form of entertainment that was supposed to fulfil us? I think the answer is obvious. There is no need to fear fulfilment in your life if you've devoted yourself to the service of God. This is a cowardly fear.

There are many ways in which we show lack of faith in God – and it can only bring a curse to us. It all stems from fear – fear to trust in God. We don't really believe the Lord can help us so we don't turn to the Lord. We want help from a source that we can see.

Dependence on the world is fatal.

### THE DISCIPLES' FEAR

The disciples of Jesus were in danger one night on the lake when a storm arose. Jesus was in the boat with them, but asleep. When the storm seemed about to overwhelm them, they cried to Jesus for help.

"And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm." Matthew 8:25, 26 In the same situation, in the book of Mark we see Jesus asking the disciples, *Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?* Mark 4:39, 40 To be fearful as such is to have "no" faith, according to Jesus.

"When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. But He rested not in the possession of almighty power. It was not as the 'Master of earth and sea and sky' that He reposed in quiet. That power He had laid down, and He says, 'I can of Mine own self do nothing.' John 5:30. He trusted in the Father's might. It was in faith--faith in God's love and care--that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God.

"As Jesus rested by faith in the Father's care, so we are to rest in the care of our Saviour. If the disciples had trusted in Him,

they would have been kept in peace. Their fear in the time of danger revealed their unbelief. In their efforts to save themselves, they forgot Jesus; and it was only when, in despair of self-dependence, they turned to Him that He could give them help.

"How often the disciples' experience is ours! When the tempests of temptation gather, and the fierce lightnings flash, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm alone, forgetting that there is One who can help us. We trust to our own strength till our hope is lost, and we are ready to perish. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save us, we shall not cry in vain. Though He sorrowfully reproves our unbelief and self-confidence, He never fails to give us the help we need. Whether on the land or on the sea, if we have the Saviour in our hearts, there is no need of fear. Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best." DA 336. Jesus can use fear to save us.

### FAITH FOR TOMORROW'S TRIALS

Do we have faith for tomorrow's trials? Do you become fearful at the thought of the trials awaiting God's people in the future? When you think of the Sunday laws, the persecution, Jacob's trouble, does it fill your mind with fear? Do you fear that you may not have the faith to endure the trials? The truth is that you do not have the faith for these trials. If you think you do, then you are deceiving yourself. God only grants you the faith for today's trials. Faith is progressive – it grows. As the trials become more difficult, our faith becomes stronger. It strengthens with exercise. We must believe that if God gives us the faith and strength for today's trials, He will most certainly give us faith for the future trials when we need it. We must cease to worry about the future and live each day to the fullest for the Lord. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:34.

*How will our faith grow?* "By constantly contemplating heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger. Our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love... We should meditate

upon the scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should seek to comprehend the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins." RH 06-12-88

You do not need to fear the troubles that will come upon God's people if you are being faithful today. They are minimal in comparison with the troubles that the wicked will suffer during the Seven Last Plagues. The martyrs in the Dark Ages perished with smiles on their faces. They were singing and praying to the Lord as they faced their persecutors. God will give you the faith to do the same. This is not how the wicked die. In the Seven Last plagues we see their suffering. They, "Blasphemed God of heaven because of their pains and their sores... and they gnawed their tongues for pain." Revelation 16:11, 10.

## CONCLUSION

Did Jesus have any fear? Fear that He will

fail in His mission? Fear that He would not be saved.? These types of fearful thoughts never entered His mind. He was too busy doing His Father's work that He had no time to entertain selfish thoughts about Himself.

Fear is actually a selfish emotion. We are thinking too much of ourselves and we are afraid that something bad may happen to us.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7 Again, the fear in this verse denotes cowardice. The genuine Christian will not be a coward.


Many worldly people who have been raised a Christian and renounced their faith for the world are full of fear and regret on their death bed. If only they had not given up their faith, how much better would life have been and what a better hope for the future they would have had. The opposite is rarely true. Not very many Christians reach their death bed full of regret that they didn't go to more parties in life and enjoy more entertainment. True Christians reach the end of their lives fully satisfied. They can say as did Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the

faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Timothy 4:7, 8

The person who fears is in bondage – they have no freedom. They do not have the peaceful abiding presence of Jesus. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Romans 8:15

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:8

If we find ourselves fearful, give it to Jesus. It may be that God is speaking to you. He wants to take away your fear and fill your heart with love. Just surrender your life to Him today. *Amen.*

*Wendy Eaton, Australia* 



# YOUR LIFE STORY

God is writing the book of your life story. No biography that has ever been written of great men is so accurate in detail than the book that God is writing of your life. It does not contain only your deeds, but every word that you have spoken and even your thoughts are written in.

The most important part of this book is the ending--what is written on the last page.

If you are reading a book and someone tells you the ending of it, you may lose interest in reading it any more.

God who knows the end from the beginning could tell you the ending now, but in His wisdom He has decided to keep it hidden from you. If He would tell you that you will be lost in the end, then you would lose interest in life, especially in a Christian life. Again if He would tell you that you will be saved, you might stop striving for perfection since you will be in heaven anyways.

God does not make decisions in your life; you make them all. Whatever you decide to do, God respects it and acts towards you accordingly and continues to write your life story.

Human life seems so futile and useless. We struggle here for a while and then die in the end. Kings, queens, and all famous and important people die and turn to dust, same as servants and poor people. In natural disasters, earthquakes, tornadoes, and floods, thousands of people die suddenly.

The Bible tells us, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Heb. 9:27.

Once a person has decided for God or against Him, his life in this world is not so important anymore. When he makes a full surrender to God, he is saved. If he dies, sooner or later, he has chosen eternal life for himself. If he decides against God and His salvation, then his life after that decision is meaningless. He would only accumulate more sin and have greater punishment if he continues to live a longer time.

The writer of Psalms recognized this, "Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast Thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" Ps. 89: 47, 48.

Many use this philosophy as a reason to live recklessly. Who cares how I live, as long as I enjoy the few years of my life.

"And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die." Isa. 22:13. The life story of millions of people ends like this, but it does not need to be so.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." John 10: 27, 28.

This promise of Jesus can give your life story a happy ending. Instead of death, there can be life that is never-ending.

But there is something that you must do in order to have a happy ending in the book that God is writing about your life.

The first thing is, read your Bible. "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 3: 15.

The word of God tells you exactly what is needed for the salvation of your soul. Therefore, daily Bible study is important.

Next comes obedience. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James 1:22.

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

If everybody would keep God's commandments, this world would be like heaven. There would be no wars, no crime, no adulteries, children would obey their parents and families would stay together. Therefore, we need to examine ourselves daily to make sure that we have obeyed the commandments of God.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." 2 Cor. 13:5.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Heb. 2:1.

By carelessness, we can forget the law of God and go on our own way. This would bring sadness to the Lord, that He would have to record sins instead of faithfulness. Also the Holy Spirit would be grieved. And the last page in your life story might be a disappointment to you.

The life in this world is really a school. We need to learn how to live and if we learn it, then God will give us eternal life.

Because the people do not know how to live, they make their own lives miserable and also the lives of other people.

Salvation really means to be saved from

the wrong kind of living habits. God Himself, the angels, and the Holy Spirit are all engaged in teaching us how to live. Jesus is the example of the perfect life. If we copy Him then our life story will have a happy ending.

But our time is running out. Soon the time to learn these lessons will be over. If we have not learned to live a perfect life, the last page in our life story will say lost, eternally lost.

A little girl was working very hard in the late evening. She was asked why she worked so hard, and she replied, "My candle is almost burned out and I have not got another."

The candle of our life is also almost burned out and we do not have another. Moses learned humility for 40 years in the land of

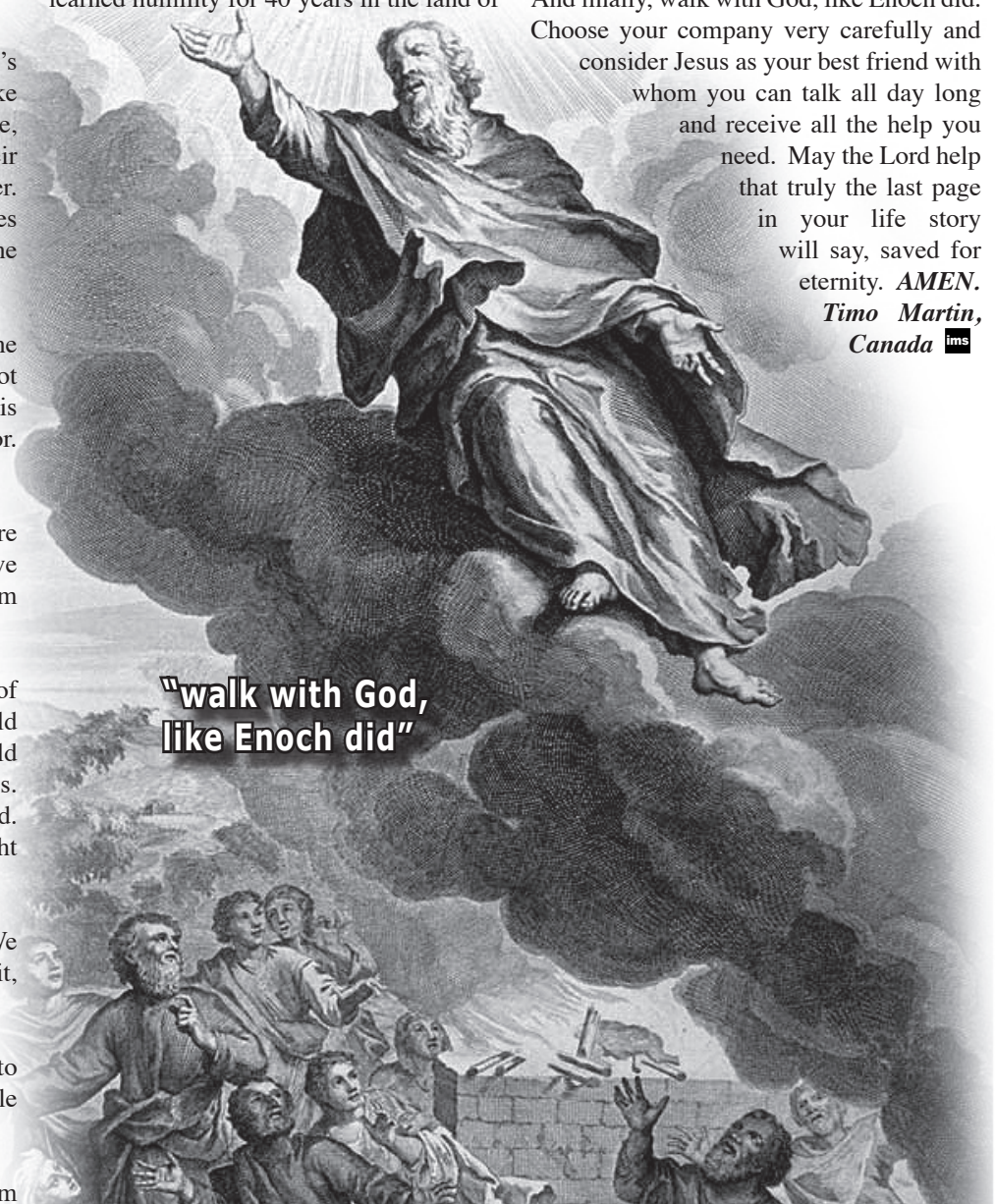
Midian and he became the meekest man on the earth. We do not have so much time, therefore we must hurry up and learn these necessary lessons faster, or we may lose everything.

In order to have a happy ending in your life story you need all the help you can get from the Lord, the angels, the Holy Spirit and also brothers and sisters. It is not easy to change a sinner into a saint, but it is possible.

Add beautiful chapters into your book: like being kind to someone who hated you, or when you gave the last of your money to someone needy, or even seemingly little things, like when you turned off the television and took the Bible in your hands to read.

And finally, walk with God, like Enoch did. Choose your company very carefully and consider Jesus as your best friend with whom you can talk all day long and receive all the help you need. May the Lord help that truly the last page in your life story will say, saved for eternity. **AMEN.**

*Timo Martin,*  
Canada 



**"walk with God,  
like Enoch did"**



Metal toxicity is when your body reaches dangerous levels of certain metals. Having an overabundance of certain metals in your system can cause health concerns and is not a routine consideration. You are exposed to elements of “heavy metals” everyday perhaps through your occupation or residential exposure.

Interestingly small amounts of elements of heavy metal are common in our environments and diet. Some of these elements are actually necessary for good health however; overexposure may prevent us from maintaining overall health.

Many people are starting to become aware that heavy metal accumulation is an often overlooked obstacle to optimal vitality. Without even realizing it, we are exposed to heavy metals that accumulate in our body. For example, the same mercury we have been warned about that is polluting our fish (i.e. tuna and salmon) is routinely used in dental fillings. Similarly, the aluminum foil that you cook with also represents a pathway to heavy metal accumulation. Also, contaminations can occur from the water we drink, food we consume or just things that we come into contact with every day. These substances can accumulate over the years, or be attained through one extreme exposure.

Am I a candidate for Metal Toxicity?

Everyone is exposed to these naturally occurring metal elements throughout their

life; some more than others. Symptoms of metal toxicity can vary greatly ranging from fatigue or lack of energy, poor sleep, occasional forgetfulness, occasional food sensitivity and more.

In addition to the everyday exposure to heavy metals, some people in certain professions or circumstances incur an even greater risk of reaching detrimental toxic metal levels. If you have ever worked as a painter, hairdresser, printer, plumber, mechanic, metal worker or as a machinist or carpenter, you may have increased exposure. Also if you have worked in heating and cooling or in manufacturing of chemicals or pesticides/fungicides, you may have an augmented risk of acquiring metal toxicity.

Further exposure to mercury could have occurred if you have ever worked as a dentist, hygienist, or dental assistant, also if you have “silver” (amalgam) fillings. Perhaps you are considering getting your amalgam fillings removed. You should be aware that fleeting surges of mercury can occur during the amalgam replacement process.

How can I find my toxicity levels?

Hair analysis is currently the safest, most reliable and cost effective method commercially available to determine levels of toxicity. In the environment of a quality laboratory, heavy metal levels in the body such as, Mercury, Lead, Cadmium

and Arsenic can be determined by hair analysis. This very well documented test is recommended as a method of proving evidence of accurate results and progress of applied remedies.

What are my options?

The introduction of a substance (or chelating agent) into the body which bonds to toxic metal in the blood and certain tissues, is a way of protecting the body; this process is called Chelation. The bound metals are then excreted through the gastrointestinal tract, kidney, sweat glands and hair.

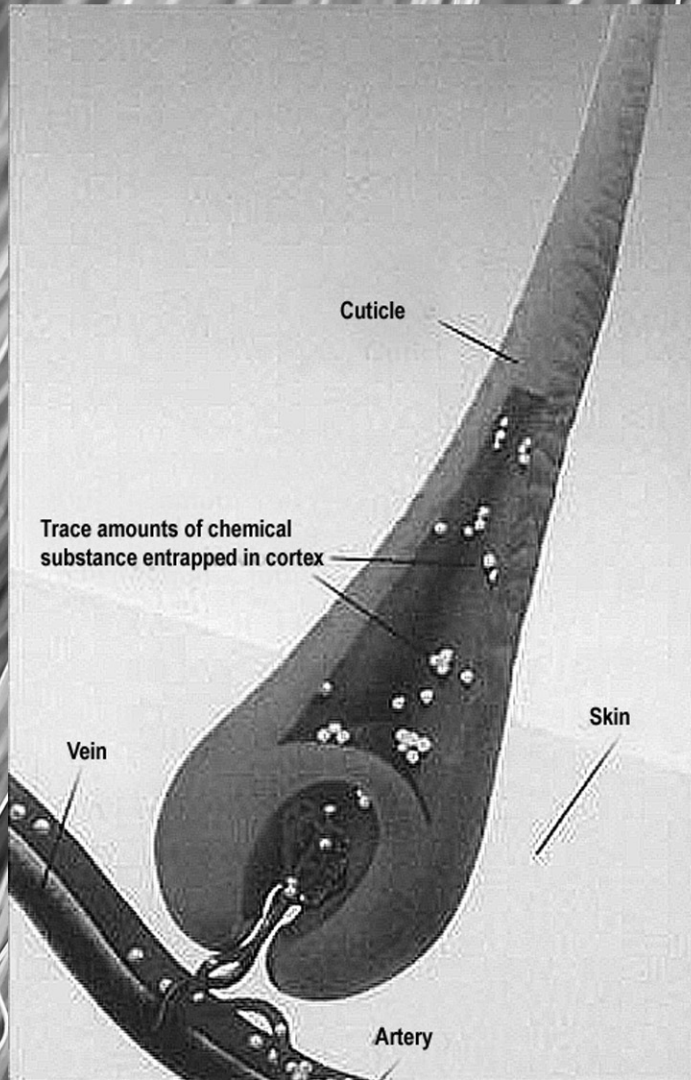
There are differences in chelating agents. Preferably the chelation agent chosen would be one with the least adverse side effects. Some synthetics have demonstrated a high incidence of adverse reactions. In people whose anti-oxidant defenses are depleted, synthetic agents have been known to release excessive amounts of metal toxins resulting in undesirable side effects. A naturally derived, effective chelating agent with little or no side effects is ideal. Also, ideally the chosen chelating agent should comply with cost and convenience concerns

Known natural chelators

There are many substances that have been known to assist in effective detoxification and reduce the body’s burden of expelling poisons. Vitamin E is supportive of thyroid function and serves as an antioxidant. Selenium enhances chemical detoxification

and aids in reduction of toxic metals. Also Vitamin C is an essential antioxidant and supports excretion of toxic metals. Magnesium aids in chelation and supports protection from free radical damage as well as replaces lost or chelated magnesium. Zinc reduces toxicity. Alpha-Lipoic Acid is instrumental in its ability to penetrate the blood-brain barrier and binds to toxic metals on an intracellular level to help remove toxins while quenching free radicals. Taurine improves biliary excretion and guards white blood cells. Chlorella traps toxic metals in the GI tract while L-Glutamine preserves and restores gastro-intestinal function and enhances excretion. Cilantro has been known to mobilize toxic metals from the central nervous system and other tissues. While these elements have been known to impart benefits when used individually, when combined, they work together synergistically to help maximize chelation results.

*Submitted by Fanny Ramirez* 





# MODERN DAY MISSIONARIES



## CHILDRENS CORNER

Often when we think of missionaries, we think of people who lived hundreds of years ago and travelled by boat to foreign lands where the gospel was largely unknown. They faced many struggles and endured hardships in their gospel ministry, yet they never swerved from their purpose. Their sole purpose in life was to bring the gospel of salvation to people who were steeped in false religion. They had found a friend in Jesus, and serving the Lord was of more importance than all the comforts they held in their native lands. They were willing to give up all for Jesus.

Are there modern day missionaries who suffer hardness and endure suffering and persecution? Yes, missionary work is a vital part of every Christian's life. Here are four stories of modern day missionaries who bravely stood for their faith amidst opposition, however their faith was not shaken.

### Rosa - Cuba 1999

"I was born into a Communist home where no one could even mention the word God. I remember being a little girl looking at a huge picture of Fidel Castro (the leader of the Cuban Revolution) in my living room.

"My parents are atheists. My father used to be a representative of a very important organization called the Communist Youth Union. Now he is in the Cuban Communist Party leadership. My mother is secretary of the Revolution Defence Committee. In summary, my home is a Communist 'nest.' However, my great-grandmother loves God and she has been faithful to God through all these years. She used to talk to me about the Lord and she sowed the seeds of the Lord's Word. On several occasions I tried to go to church with her, but my parents did not allow me to go.

"Years later my parents divorced, and then my mother allowed me to go to church, without my father's permission. Anyway, when I was twelve my mother tried to get

me away from the Lord, organizing and inviting me to parties. I went away from the Lord living that way. But my great-grandmother persevered in praying for me.

"One day I went to church and received the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour. My life started to change; even my way of dress changed totally. My mother did not accept it. She never beat me before, now she often does. When my father learned that I was a Christian, he told me to choose God or him. I chose the Lord because I have understood that He is the only thing really worthy for me. I know that God is faithful and He cares for me and He is going to do wonderful things for my family.

"My mother got married again to another Communist man. He had a five-year-old son. They don't allow me to talk to him about the Lord or to go to church, but I talk to him about the love of God anyway. Sometimes I listen to him praising the Lord.

"Now, even though I am only fourteen, I study far away from home. When I first came to this place I was the only Christian, but I have sown God's Word and now we are four. We meet under a tree, hidden, to share God's Word. We feel the presence of the Lord in such a special way. We keep sowing and waiting that soon we will be many.

"God is faithful. He never forsakes His children. Please, pray for me. It is not easy to follow the Lord in a country so hostile to Him where opposition comes not only from the system, but from our homes. Our parents are blind in this atheistic system and do not understand that we grow and make our own personal decisions. Mine is Jesus Christ. I will be faithful even at the price of death."

### Li De Xian and Zhao Zia China 2002

"Christ was the first to suffer," Pastor Li De Xian said. "We just follow Him. There are many thorns, but we are just injured a little on our feet. The suffering is very little.

Pastor Li has suffered greatly as a



Li De Xian And His Wife

consequence of his preaching in China, however his faith has not weakened. "I will preach until I die," is his motto. Despite continued pressure from the Public Service Bureau (PSB), Pastor Li refuses to miss a service unless he is in prison. He also refuses to change his message of salvation through Jesus Christ. During the period from October 2000 to May 2001, he was arrested fifteen times for preaching in his unregistered house church in Guangzhou. He has been arrested so many times during the past two years that he has lost count. During one recent detention, jailers tied his arms and legs together and chained his arms and legs to a bedpost for three days. When they finally released him from this torture, he was forced to work on an assembly line in the prison factory putting bulbs into strings of Christmas lights to send to America! He and the others had a quota between four and five thousand bulbs a day. "They suffered this inhumane treatment simply because they failed to meet their daily production quotas in the

Chinese labour camp.”

Yet rather than this experience teaching him to be afraid, it has taught him to be prepared. He travels at all times with a small black duffel bag that he keeps packed with a blanket and a change of clothes – the things he will need for prison whenever he is arrested next. “Arrests will come at any time, but we are not afraid, as we have prepared ourselves, and we have not done any crimes.” Whenever possible he will spend his time in prison reading the Bible, something he manages to smuggle in with amazing regularity.

His wife, Zhao Xia, strongly supports him in this and refuses to worry. “God will take care of him,” she says, “so there is no need to worry.”

In 2000, PBS officials also confiscated Li’s church and welded the doors shut. In early November 2000, in the city of Wenzhou Zhejiang Province, they reportedly blew up and demolished at least 450 churches, temples, and shrines. Government officials said religious leaders had built the churches and temples illegally.

“Don’t feel sorry for us,” Zhao Xia says of their lifestyle. “At least we are constantly reminded that we are in a spiritual war. We know for whom we are fighting. We know who the enemy is. And we are fighting. Perhaps we should pray for you Christians outside of China. In your leisure, in your affluence, in your freedom, sometimes you no longer realize that you are in a spiritual warfare.”

### **The Russian Captain – Hungary 1950**

The Russian army captain walked haughtily down the aisle of the church and up to the pastor. “I will have a word with you alone. Take me someplace where we can speak privately!”

The officer was very young and brash and seemed very conscious of his role as a conqueror.

When the pastor had led him to a small conference room, the officer shut and locked the door. He nodded towards the cross that hung on the wall. “You know that thing is a lie,” he said to the minister. “It’s just a piece of trickery you ministers use to delude the poor people to make it easier

for the rich to keep them ignorant. Come now, we are alone. Admit to me that you never really believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God!”

The minister smiled. “But, my poor young man, of course I believe it. It is true.”

“I won’t have you play these tricks on me!” cried the captain. “This is serious. Don’t laugh at me!”

He drew his revolver and held it close to the body of the minister.



“Unless you admit to me that it is a lie, I’ll fire!”

“I cannot admit that, for it is not true. Our Lord is really and truly the Son of God, and I would never deny Him in order to preserve my life. I am not afraid to die for the Lord,” said the minister. For a painful instant his muscles tightened as he awaited the bullet.

Instead the captain suddenly flung his revolver on the floor and embraced the pastor. Tears sprang into the captain’s eyes.

“It is true!” he cried. “It is true. I believe so too, but I could not be sure men would die for this belief until I found for myself one who would. Oh, thank you! You have strengthened my faith. Now I too can die for Christ. You have shown me now.”

### **Bible Smugglers – Romania – late 1940s**

In post-World War Two Eastern Europe, Bibles were considered as dangerous as guns for the countries controlled by the Soviet Union. Either was always immediately confiscated, and the bearer instantly imprisoned as a subversive. For this reason, the borders between the Soviet Socialist Republics were ardently guarded against any contraband that might come in from the freer Eastern Block countries that the Soviet Union had been awarded control over after helping to defeat the Nazis and to prevent any who might want to escape through the Eastern Block to Western Europe.

This cold winter night was no exception. Though the temperature was well below freezing, and several inches of new snow blanketed the hills, the Soviet guards were patrolling their usual routes. The sky was cloudy and there was no moon to be seen, so the soldiers traipsed through the snow with their flashlights shining in every direction.

Suddenly a whistle broke the silence of the night, and a flare shot into the sky. From all over, the sounds of dogs and shouting converged on the spot where the signal had been given. When the others arrived the guard merely pointed to the snow. Four sets of footprints were making their way towards Romania! The guards rushed down the path hoping to catch the fugitives before they crossed the border.

Some hours later the leader of the four Romanian Christians finished the story to the small congregation of the Ukraine underground church as they all held the Bibles he had given them into their hands. “Yes, brothers,” he said affectionately, “we stood there like statues, frozen at the sound. Then slowly, the noises grew more and more distant. And with our backs to the Ukraine, we continued walking backward through the snow, leaving footprints as if they were headed for Romania!” They all laughed at this with tears in their eyes, hugging their new Bibles with both arms.

Religious persecution is still active in some parts of the world. However, no matter where we live, when we decide to serve the Lord, the enemy will seek to find ways to make our life difficult. We will be faced with disturbances and persecutions, and only by the grace of God will we be able to endure.

**Tubing in Toronto Canada**



**Br. Dering Baptizes Br. Leo in Toronto, Canada**



**The Church in Zimbabwe**



# ASLEEP IN JESUS

## *Sister Kerttu Karhinen*

On August 6, 2006, Sis. Kerttu Karhinen died peacefully in her sleep, in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Sis. Karhinen was the oldest member in the Canadian Field, being 93 years old at her death. She was born on April 18, 1913 in Finland into a very poor family. She had a very difficult childhood, and had to work since the age of 8, when she was given to a rich family to take care of their home.

She married Onni in 1933. She went on to have 3 children, Anne, Leo and Juhani. Early in their marriage, during World War II, Kerttu and her husband had was ordered to leave their home in the town of Viipuri because that part of Finland had been taken over by the Russians. They moved to Helsinki where they lived in a small apartment. Sis. Karhinen worked several jobs to provide for her family, while trying to raise three small children.

Seeking for a better life, the family immigrated to a hard worker, working as a domestic to help

Canada in January of 1957. In Canada, Sis. Karhinen remained provide for her family.

In 1984, her husband died during a Russian territory. For the next 22 have people over to her house, and hostess to the family and various all. Her move into a nursing she could no longer fulfill her

trip back to his home town, which still remains in years, Sis. Karhinen lived alone. She loved to she was at her happiest when she could be a other visitors, preparing elaborate meals for home was initially very difficult for her, as role of hostess.

Sis. Karhinen was baptized at the age of 22 in Finland. came into contact with the shortly after, Sis. Karhinen and remained a faithful time of her death. She was and brought her children with her. Those in the She lived in Toronto up of 89, when most people or nursing homes, she buy herself a little house. We since then.



She lived on her own in her helping with the yard work and nursing home because of her failing to live on her own and take care of

into the Seventh Day Adventist Church When she came to Canada, the family SDA Church Reform Movement and was accepted into the Reform Church member of the Reform Church to the very faithful in her church attendance to church when they were still living Toronto church knew her very well. until 5 years ago, when, at the age who are still alive are in retirement decided to move to Thunder Bay and have all missed her smiles and hugs

house until the age of 91, with her son, Leo snow shoveling. She then had to go into a eyesight. She could no longer see well enough herself.

She had a stroke about a month ago, and before her death, she slipped into a coma. God blessing to all who came into contact with her.

since that time her health declined rapidly. The Tuesday had blessed her with a long life. And she remained a

Kerttu loved to sing. She had one of the church hymnals at home, and often when she woke up early in the mornings, she would take her hymnal and sing the beautiful songs she loved. When her hearing worsened, and she could no longer hear the preacher giving his sermons, she could still hear the music and would sing the songs from memory.

After her move to the nursing home, she developed Alzheimer's and became more and more dependent on the care of the nursing home staff. She was always a very independent woman who was used to being the helper, and had to adjust to others helping take care of her. Up until the time of her stroke, she was still able to get around on her own, often getting into "trouble" from the nursing home staff because she would refuse to use a walker.

Kerttu leaves behind her three children,-- Anne, Leo, and John; her six grandchildren,--Helen, Wendy, Ken, Lynne, Anna and Brett; and her three great-grandchildren,--Richard, Sharon, and Aiddan. She was a kind and loving grandmother, mother, wife and friend and we will all miss her. But, she is not completely gone from us. She will remain in our memories and in our hearts, and one day, if we are faithful, I am sure we will meet her again in heaven.

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