



The Reformation **Messenger**

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

*"I am the vine, ye are the branches:
He that abideth in me, and I in him,
the same bringeth forth much fruit:
for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5*

We Believe

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

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

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

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

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

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

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- Tel: 416-252-1197 Fax: 416-252-6625
- Email: timom@sympatico.ca
- Web: www.imsmessenger.org

In This Issue

CIRCULATION OF LIFE	3
FINISHING THE WORK	6
HOW TO DEFEAT SATAN	8
THE DRY BONES	11
CONFERENCE REPORT: LIVING ...	13
LIVING WATER JESUS ...	17
A HERB GARDEN	23
CC: JOHN CALVIN	25

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CIRCULATION OF LIFE

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

Speak Plainly

Jesus, when He was with the disciples, spoke of His death, resurrection and second advent. The disciples “said unto Him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.” (John 16:29). Jesus Christ spoke plainly to the disciples then, and still there is a plain message for us today. “Christ used the figure of the vine to help us remember His lessons.” (UL 182:1). Many of us know the parable of the vine in our opening verse.

Moon Glow

The disciples of Jesus were on the way to the garden of Gethsemane at the foot of Mt. Olive. As the tranquil moon was shining upon them, it revealed a flourishing grapevine. Jesus used it as a living symbol. He said, in essence, “I’m the true vine.” Well, why not the palm, cedar, or oak? “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” (Ps. 92:12). Because the vine stands alone,

having no support.

Help!

You see, in gardening or farming practices, not only grapes, but vegetables and flowers need a little help to reach the sky easier from a variety of supports and ties. They can, thereby, be “trained” to reach skyward. The vine, furthermore, depends on its climbing features. It needs, however, a trellis, or tuteur, stakes, and branches for support, growing heavenward reaching to the sun.

Vining plants, furthermore, need to climb upward to remain healthy. The stakes or trellis allow more “growth” of the same plants or to introduce “new ones” by permitting better air circulation and more sunlight to reach the plant. But, the branch, once separated from the vine, cannot live.

Vine School

“Adam and Eve were trained on the vine.” (GC 648). Christ, too, was dependent on divine power and support from His Father in heaven. He too, like the grapevine had to be “trained”, so as to “grow” and introduce “new ones” to the stock. Christ said, “I can

of mine own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father who hath sent me.” (John 5:30).

This was a unique relationship. Not only are we stewards of our planet’s botanical riches, but stewards of wayward souls, for we are “trained” and “grow” by the Holy Spirit, and introduce “new ones” to Jesus, not by our will but by the will of Jesus Christ.

First Prize

Christ was ready to leave the disciples. He gave this beautiful emblem of His relationship to believers. “The Jews (and Greeks) regarded the vine as a most noble plant, powerful, and fruitful.” (DA 675). The Lord says, “You prize the vine as a symbol. But, I am the reality. Prize me above all things earthly.” (5T 230). Israel was represented as a vine, which God planted in the Promised Land. In fact, Israel was the Lord’s vineyard; “My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.” (Isaiah 5:1-7).

The Jewish Connection

The Jews, however, thought and hoped for salvation simply by their “connection” to Israel. This thinking still persists today. But, Jesus Christ said, “only through Me is this spirited life received.” Saying further, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman” (vine-dresser). (John 15:1). This “True Vine” is real! All that the vine should be in a spiritual sense. Christ is not just a root, or stock, but the whole plant. Included in Him are His people. He’s the owner and the caretaker! His Spirit, His Power, is enduring and influences others, and they become holy.

Poor Vine

The vine is, again, “as Israel brought out of Egypt.” (GC 19-20). “God planted this vine on the hills of Palestine.” (DA 675). Many were attracted to this beautiful vine. But to the leaders in Israel it looked like a root in dry ground. They took it, bruised it, and trampled on it with their unholy feet. Their thoughts were to destroy it forever. After that, they killed it. “Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed. How, then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?” (Jer 2:21). Following this, they took it and replanted it on the other side of the wall. The vine took stock, but it was not visible. It was hidden from men. “I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.” (Prov. 24:30, 31).

Life Union

But, the branches hung over the remaining broken wall. Grafts were still united (the remnant), to the vine. “I am the vine and ye are the branches.” You see, the sinner unites his weaknesses to Christ’s strength, and “helps the sinner sustain the relationship with the vine.” (TMK 109:3). Once the union is made with Christ, one must be maintained. How? “Abide in Me and Me in you.” You see, “the union is not tied on but a part of the vine; thus oneness with Christ.” (UL 182:3). Every other union must perish. This is a “hard saying” for many. The disciples were tested, too, by doctrine. “Many, thereof, of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, this is a hard saying. Who can hear it?” (John 6:60).

Clean Up

You see, it costs something, too. It is not only full dependence on Jesus Christ, there is some suffering, and sacrifice. Here is where there is a need of the blood of Jesus Christ, a change of heart, a change of character, submitting your will to the will of God. It is a complete surrender. Yes, it is a struggle, I know. Prayer is the battle. You need to overcome. Overcome what? Well, here is the distasteful news for many. It is pride, self-indulgence, selfishness, vanity, worldliness, sins in all its forms. In essence it requires a cleaning of the Temple of God. Jesus Christ in the market-place, “cleaned the Temple” of vileness, and immorality.

Hooked

But, why do so many professed Christians find this so hard? Why are they so fickle and variable? Wavering? Double minded? Well, because they try to attach themselves to Christ without first separating, or detaching themselves from “idols.” They want Jesus Christ and the World. They want one foot on Earth and one foot in Heaven. So how can we preserve this bond or graft with Jesus after this powerful union is made with Him?

Brutal Warfare

Prayer, again, is the battle. We need sheer, ceaseless effort. Self-denying, willing, painful effort! You must resist and deny “self”, and conquer self. Why? Because the Christian life, the life of a saint, is a warfare. Who is the foe? “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” (Eph 5:12). Moreover, “Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” (Heb 12:4).

Deadly Sin

Today sin is cherished, excused. Moreover, “sin is cherished as darling idols.” (3T 543). But, “when cherished or excused it means sealing your soul’s destiny.” (6T 405). Furthermore, “common and seemingly insignificant sin, impairs your moral sense, and extinguishes the inward impression of the Spirit.” (FE 195). The sharp sword of the Spirit of the Word of God does not cut to the soul. Do you know why people sin? Sin is beautiful, sin is enjoyable, sin is charming... for them. But, when you know God... who God is, and what He is, sin is abhorred.

Cowardly Compromise

Therefore, has religion changed? Religious life at one time presented difficulties, problems, and demanded self-denial. But, all is made very easy now. Why? Professed people of God have compromised with the power of darkness. Compromised in health reform; (vegetarianism), dress code, tithing, doctrinal beliefs, marriage standards, Sabbath keeping, the Sanctuary message, Spirit of Prophecy, and so on. What is the result of such a stance?

Wind Tossed Fruit

“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” (John 15:2). There are four degrees in fruit bearing; (1)no fruit (v-2); (2)“fruit” (v-2); (3)“more fruit”(v-2); and (4)“much fruit” (vv.5,8). As we bear “much fruit,” the Father is glorified in us. The fruit may be converts (Rom 1:13); Christian character-the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23); and conduct-the fruits of righteousness (Rom 6:21-22; Phil 1:11).“Satan would convert the fruit of the vine into poison.” (Te 12).

Delicate Connection

Are the moralities and graces of Christianity, which are the fruit of the Spirit, merely imitated or duplicated in your life? Years ago, a Christian once asked Gandhi (late spiritual leader of India), “why aren’t there more Christians in India? Gandhi candidly answered, “When I see one I will let you know.” A sad commentary.

The graft may, in essence, appear united to the vine, but there’s essentially no real connection. How can one actually tell? It simply bears “no fruit,” the branches are false.

Moreover, every branch that does bear fruit needs to be pruned. From the chosen twelve disciples, one branch became withered and was “roped to a fatal branch.” The remaining eleven passed under the pruning knife of bitter trials. Now, pruning causes “soul-racking” pain. When you pray, ask that you will be ready for it when it inevitably comes. It is our gracious Father who wields the knife.

Rough Road

What further is needed? We need a revival of the true testimony. The path to Heaven is not smoother than it was in Christ’s days. We

need to be as a bright and dutiful child. Are you willing to surrender your chosen and worldly associations? Jesus says, "Abide in Me" (not man). How? Well, to abide in Christ is, on one hand, to have no known sin unjudged and unconfessed, no interest into which He is not brought, no life which He cannot share. On the other hand, the abiding one takes all burdens to Him, and draws all wisdom, life, and strength from Him. Furthermore, that nothing is allowed in the life which separates from Him. (1 John 1:3-7; 1 Cor. 10:16).

Smart Walk

What else? Well, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (in the spirit of Christ). (1 John 2:6).

RULE: Here is a rule that is given by which the true disciple may be distinguished from those who claim to follow Christ, but have not faith in Him.

1. The one class are fruit-bearing.
2. The other class is fruit-less.

This Year?

We as a people should preserve the living testimony among them, and that the true church should be kept pure from the unbelieving element. What closer relation could we have with Christ than to set forth in words and heed these words? "I am the vine, and ye are the branches." The Lord planted His church as a vine in a fruitful field. He nourished it and said, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" But, the vines turned to the barren and stagnant earth, and twisted around human supports. In the parable of the fig tree, we read further, "And he, answering, said unto him Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and fertilize it; and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." (Luke 13:8). Is this your year? The year to bear fruit? The Master, again said, "Why when I looked for it to bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes." (Isaiah 5:4). For, the vineyard "is as part of the elixir of life." (CH 170)

Church Problems

The fundamental principles of the Church have been corrupted and filled with "unclean spirits"; the principles of Revelation 14 – The Lamb (Jesus) and the 144,000 on Mount Zion, the Three Angels Message and the Mark of the Beast, and of

Armageddon. This is the last act unfolding before us. The "world is the stage – we are the actors." Man is living in a carnal state, "For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (1Cor 3:3). But, "many will be taken from the vineyard to give the last warning message." (Ev. 48).

Ringed Words

How should we then live? In the Temptation of Jesus, He "answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Math 4:4).

Furthermore, we are to be: Living by Christ:

- Supported by Christ
- Leaning on Christ
- Sticking to Christ
- Drawing nourishment from Christ
- Clinging to Christ.

Celestial Grape

As a small child brought up in the darkly grimy city of Chicago, one fond memory I have is of the yearly summer appearance of local Concord grapes. They were the only grape, as only local, seasonal produce was the way of life, not as it is today. They were opportunely plentiful, hung over fences and walls, and bounteously available in the corner grocery stores. The fragrance, color and taste was distinctly unique. It is a rarity today. But, the memory of this succulent fruit still lingers today. Once tasted, its aromatic, impeccable taste was branded into the impressible mind... a divine experience I still cherish.

Cultivated Taste

"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man who trusteth in Him." (Psalm 34:8). Once we taste in Him, we will bear the same fruits as Jesus. "The sap of the vineyard is like the power of the Spirit from Christ in the life." (TDG 252:2). "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shown toward His

name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister, and desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." (Heb 6:4,-6, 9, 10).

Timely Help

Help someone, tell someone about the trial or trials you had in life and how you leaned on Jesus, and by your connection with Him overcame, and by your own self could do nothing. Many children of God remain silent about their salvation, and growth, in the Tree of Life, or On the Vine. Go to the sinner if you expect him to come to the Saviour.

"Be brothers to the sinner, as well as to the saints." (DA 638). Remember, too, that "Christ hates sin but loves sinners." (DA 642). Furthermore, "He pleads and reasons with sinners." (4T 294). Yet, there are still "those persons who constantly talk of their sinless state, but in reality deceive themselves." (SL 12).

Blood Transfusion

His life must circulate through us as the blood circulates through our arteries and veins, with a vigorous, noble blood beat; abiding in the vine and being nourished by the same sap as in the vine. His Spirit, His vitalizing Power causes us to influence others to become Christ-like. This means, "entering the vineyard and working for souls." (TDG 163:3). And the "cultivation of God's vineyard." (PM 83:2) We can thusly, sharply and clearly be imaged to be basking in the superior knowledge of Jesus. This is the Circulation Of Life. Amen.

John Theodorou, USA 

FINISHING THE WORK



Isaiah also cried concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: for He shall finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the LORD make upon the earth.” Rom. 9:27, 28.

Yes, God will finish His work, and cut it short in righteousness. He will take, and is taking His work into His own hands. We will be surprised at the simple means that He will use.

God will do His work, and we must do ours. What is our work? Our first duty to God and man is self-development. “Our first duty to God and our fellow beings is in self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable. IN ORDER TO PURIFY AND REFINE OUR CHARACTERS, WE NEED THE GRACE GIVEN US OF CHRIST THAT WILL ENABLE US TO SEE AND CORRECT OUR DEFICIENCIES AND IMPROVE THAT WHICH IS EXCELLENT IN OUR CHARACTERS.” Child Guidance, p. 164.

It is our responsibility to guard ourselves. We must carefully guard ourselves that we do not stray from the straight and narrow way, and when we do stray away, we must return as quickly as possible.

In our unguarded moments we can do damage to God’s work, and to our own good characters and reputations. Our arch-enemy, Satan, the deceiver, the one who tricked and deceived Eve in paradise, is always at hand to trick and deceive us. And how much more susceptible are we than she, after having been weakened by six thousand years of sin.

Thankfully, “the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy’s power. The SAVIOUR is by the side of His tempted and tried ones.” 4T 582.

Do you speak and act hastily or unwisely sometimes? Do you feel afterwards your shame and disgrace? Perhaps you feel utterly defeated by life, and want to say with Elijah, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” 1 Kings 19:4. But we need not despair. Prayer is our shield and defense. Believing prayer is the essence of pure religion. We must learn to pray in faith. With God all things are possible. Through earnest, believing prayer, what seemed to be disaster and defeat can be turned into a glorious victory for God.

God can use the foolish and weak things of this world to defeat the wise and powerful. If we continue in watching and prayer, with fasting, that is, the careful use of healthful food, we will be on God’s side.

We must not become weary of the watch, or tired of the constant conflict against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Soon Jesus will come and every desire will be fulfilled, we will have all that our hearts could wish. Now is our time of battle, then is our time of release. We are not released yet; do not relax your guard.

We must beware and be careful of foolish talking and jesting. Sometimes it is easy to indulge in this in our fellowship and enjoyment of one another. At least I do know that I have been guilty of this, and my conscience has been scourging me.

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.” Eph. 5:1-4.

The work of God can get by without us, but we cannot get by without doing the work of God. That is, we need to do good works more for our own growth and development, than that the work will languish and die if we are removed.

controlled by the habits and customs of your old life in sin... Your promises are like ropes of sand... You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. If you fight the fight of faith with all your willpower, you will conquer.” Ibid.

“Jesus is the great Teacher... He is so willing, so ready to take you into a closer fellowship with Himself. He is willing to teach you how to pray with the believing confidence and assurance of a little child... Enroll your name anew as a student in His

“THE GREATEST VICTORIES gained for the cause of God... are gained in the audience chamber with God, when with earnest, agonizing faith, men lay hold upon the mighty arm of prayer.” GW 259

Our feelings, impressions and emotions are not reliable. Often the infirmities of our bodies affect our minds. We must fight the fight of faith with all our willpower. Then we will conquer. Our whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ, and even our thoughts will be subject to HIM. “For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man has, and not according to what he does not have.” 2 Cor. 8:12.

“Pure religion has to do with the will. The will is the governing power which works in the children of men unto obedience to GOD or unto disobedience...” Our High Calling, April 7.

“You desire to make your life such as will fit you for heaven at last. You are often discouraged at finding yourself weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and

school. Learn to pray in faith. Receive the knowledge of Jesus.

“Will you not sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of HIM?” Ibid.

YES. AMEN. So be it, LORD JESUS.

Kathleen Ross, Alberta, Canada

Appeal For Prayers

Dear Brethren:

*Greetings from James 5:14,15
and from (letter 66 1901)*

*“God’s miracles do not bear
the out ward, semblance
of miracles, often they are
brought about in a way
which looks like the natural
course of events. When we
pray for the sick, we also
work for them.” My dear
wife is very sick. She has
been asthmatic for 27 years.
In January 2006 she was
attacked with cancer. Doctors
say the cancer has spread; it
has damaged the uterus and
bladder, and no aid can be
given. I therefore appeal for
your prayers.*

*Thanking you in advance,
Your brother and co-worker
In Christ,
Pastor Golden Hayana
Hingabantu.*

HOW TO DEFEAT SATAN



This is the most important study for us: How to overcome Satan, how to overcome sin, and how to reach perfection.

We are in a war against a foe that is stronger than we. Our enemy is Satan, who was before in heaven in a high position. He was more intelligent than other angels; therefore he was able to deceive almost half of the angelic host.

Now after 6000 years practice in deceiving, he has become very skillful at it. Before the flood he had defeated and overcome the whole world. Only eight persons escaped his deceptions. Of the ancient Israel only few escaped his deceptions during the 40 years of the wilderness journey. Men of great intellect and great knowledge have not been a match to him. Powerful nations have fallen before him. Even professed Christians and ministers of the gospel have bowed their heads in submission to him.

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.: Rev. 12:9.

Even that he has on his side millions of angels, and almost the whole world, including millions of professed Christians, yet he is not satisfied. Frilled with great anger he goes to fight against the small remnant company who are still loyal to God. Against them he concentrates all his efforts, with his fallen angels, and many of them also have fallen victim to his devices.

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 12:17.

He is our mighty enemy, and him we must overcome or all will be lost. A promise has been given to the overcomer. “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” Rev. 21:7.

In our world today, one and a half billion people have started a war against Satan with the purpose of defeating him, and to receive the reward that is promised to the overcomer. But the Bible tells us that only a small remnant will be able to defeat the power of evil and to win the battle.

In the past 6000 years, men, women, and children have started the war against Satan, yet most of them have been defeated by him. Cemeteries have millions of victims of Satan, who passed from this life unsaved, fighting in vain. Their prayers, offerings, and all their religious exercises were in vain.

Yet Satan has been defeated. There are men, woman and children who have overcome him and his deceptions. How did they do it? What weapons did they use?

God has given us instructions, and if we follow them, we all will be in heaven; we all will have perfect characters.

Goliath was stronger and bigger than other men of war. All the host of Israel were afraid of him, and no one dared to go against him. But then comes a young shepherd boy, David, and defeats him so easily.



David had no fear, nor doubt in his mind. “Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.” 1 Sam. 17:45.

Those who were afraid and doubted would have been defeated by Goliath, because they had no faith in God.

The people of Israel defeated the great, fortified city of Jericho so easily when they followed the instructions. But a little later when they went against the small city of Ai, they were defeated badly. What made the difference? This time sin had entered into the camp. Achan had disobeyed the commandment of God. Because of this sin they had lost the power of God, and in their own strength alone, they were defeated by their enemy so easily.

Balak, the king of Moab tried to defeat the people of Israel, but he could not. Then he called Balaam to curse them, but every time he tried to curse Israel, God turned it into a blessing. Now Balaam made a plan to lead the people of Israel to do sin, and when this was accomplished in the great feast that Balak made for them, they were defeated easily.

Satan knows our weak points, and these are the areas where he is especially tempting us. And these weaknesses are the Goliaths that war against us.

To one, the Goliath may be his appetite; to another the love of money. Others are defeated by their desire of worldly pleasures and entertainment. Also pride and selfishness are terrible enemies that are out to destroy us. Even an unforgiving spirit has destroyed many professed Christians.

Because of these sins, Satan is reaping a rich harvest even of the so-called Christians; and the blessings what they expected to receive were turned to a curse.

“Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.” Jer. 5:25.

“The way of transgressors is hard.” Prov. 13:15.

David said, “For mine iniquities are gone



over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.” Ps. 38:4.

For a moment the way of Satan may look good, as to Adam and Eve, but soon there will be disappointment, depression and misery.

Now to overcome these enemies, the Goliaths that fight against us, we need to do what Moses did, “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” Heb. 11:25.

We must choose to serve God, and give up all worldly things.

Then next we continue, “For whatsoever is borne of God overcometh the world,

and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4.

We must be born again and believe, and then the Goliath, the love of the world will be defeated.

Thirdly we need power that is greater than human strength. “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12. Without this power we cannot win against our enemy.

Next we need to resist the Devil. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7.

If you take a worldly book or a magazine

to read, or watch a violent television show, you are not resisting the devil but inviting him to tempt you.

Also we need to pray without ceasing. Prayer is a mighty weapon against these enemies. Satan cannot listen to an earnest prayer.

Even fasting is a great weapon against bad habits. By fasting you gain greater willpower to overcome beset sins.

One more weapon needs to be mentioned, and it is love. We need to learn to love God and to hate sin. Eve did not hate sin, therefore she fell into it. It is easy to fight against an enemy that we hate.

We need to dwell on the scenes of Calvary. Thus we generate love to God and love to Jesus, and at the same time we learn to hate sin that caused this suffering to Him.

“Many desire the final reward and victory which are given to the overcomers, but are not willing to endure toil, privation, and denial of self, as did their Redeemer.” Test. Vol. 3, p. 491.

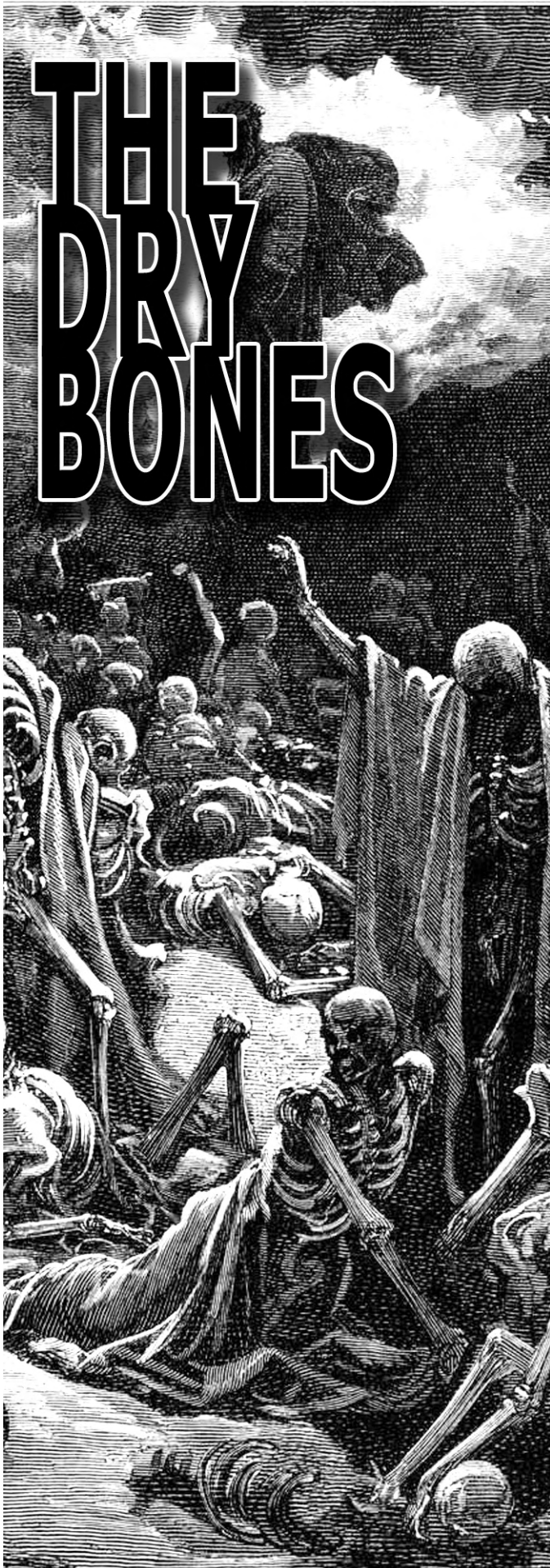
We must not fail. The help is available to each one. The Lord is mightier than Satan, therefore by His help the giant will be defeated; the weakest person can be victorious and Satan will be defeated.

“And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” 2 Tim. 2:26.

“One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, He it is that fighteth for you, as He hath promised you.” Josh. 23:10.

May the Lord help each one to overcome Satan and sin, and to reach perfection before our names are called in the heavenly court, is my prayer for each one of us.

Timo Martin, Canada



At one time the prophet Ezekiel was in vision set down in the midst of a large valley. Before him lay a dismal scene. Throughout its whole extent the valley was covered with the bones of the dead.

Ezekiel, describing the scene, says,

“The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” Ezek. 37:1-10.

A Vision of Our Work

“The souls of those whom we desire to save are like the representation which Ezekiel saw in vision, a valley of dry bones. They are dead in trespasses and sins, but God would have us deal with them as though they were living. Were the question put to us, “Son of man, can these bones live?” our answer would be only the confession of ignorance, “O Lord, Thou knowest.” To all appearances there is nothing to lead us to hope for their restoration. Yet nevertheless the word of the prophecy must be spoken even to those who are like the dry bones in the valley. We are in no wise to be deterred from fulfilling our commission by the listlessness, the dullness, the lack of spiritual perception, in those upon whom the Word of God is brought to bear. We are to preach the word of life to those whom we may judge to be as hopeless subjects as though they were in their graves.

“Though they may seem unwilling to hear or to receive the light of truth, without questioning or wavering we are to do our part. We are to repeat to them the message, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

“It is not the human agent that is to inspire with life. The Lord God if Israel will do that part. Quickening the lifeless spiritual nature into activity. The breath of the Lord of hosts must enter into the lifeless bodies. In the judgment, when all secrets are laid bare, it will be known that the voice of God spoke through the human agent, and aroused the torpid conscience, and stirred the lifeless faculties, and moved sinners to repentance and contrition, and forsaking of sins. It will then be clearly seen that through the human agent faith in Jesus Christ was imparted to the soul, and spiritual life from heaven was breathed upon one who was dead in trespasses and sins, and he was quickened with spiritual life.



“But not only does this simile of the dry bones apply to the world, but also to those who have been blessed with great light; for they also are like the skeletons of the valley. They have the form of men, the framework of the body; but they have not spiritual life. But the parable does not leave the dry bones merely knit together into the forms of men; for it is not enough that there is symmetry of limb and feature. The breath of life must vivify the bodies, that they may stand upright, and spring into activity. These bones represent the house of Israel, the Church of God, and the hope of

the Church is the vivifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord must breathe upon the dry bones that they may live.

“The Spirit of God, with its vivifying power, must be in every human agent, that every spiritual muscle and sinew may be in exercise. Without the Holy Spirit, without the breath of God, there is torpidity of conscience, loss of spiritual life. Many who are without spiritual life have their names on the church records, but they are not written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. They may be joined to the church, but they

are not united to the Lord. They may be diligent in the performance of a certain set of duties, and may be regarded as living men; but many are among those who have a “name that thou livest, and art dead.”

“Unless there is genuine conversion of the soul to God; unless the vital breath of God quickens the soul to spiritual life; unless the professors of truth are actuated by heaven borne principle, they are not born of the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever. Unless they trust in the righteousness of Christ as their only security; unless they copy His character, labour in His spirit, they are naked, they have not on the robe of His righteousness. The dead are often made to pass for the living; for those who are working out what they term salvation after their own ideas, have not God working in them to will and to do of His good pleasure.

“This class is well represented by the valley of dry bones Ezekiel saw in vision.” RH Jan. 17, 1893.

Light Bearers

In a special sense we have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. Christ says of His people: “Ye are the light of the world.” Matt. 5:14. It is not a small matter that the counsels and plans of God have been so clearly opened to us. It is a wonderful privilege to be able to understand the will of God as revealed in the sure word of prophecy. This places on us a heavy responsibility. God expects us to impart to others the knowledge that He has given us. It is His purpose that divine and human instrumentalities shall unite in the proclamation of the warning message.

Let us now take up the work appointed us and proclaim the message that is to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger. Tomorrow some of these “DRY BONES” may be where we can never reach them again. What is our influence over these fellow travelers? What effort do we make to win them to Christ? May we consecrate ourselves wholly to the work of God, He is our strength, and He will be at our right hand, helping us to carry on His merciful designs. *AMEN.*

Golden Hingabantu Kayawa, Zambia

"Living Water"

Canadian Field Conference 2006

Friday, August 4:

Welcome Message;

After many warm greetings from members and visitors from near and far, in Toronto we opened our Canadian Field Conference on Friday evening with an opening address from the Field president Br. John Bescec. Br. Bescec recounted to us the story of Elijah found in 1 Kings 17:1-6, when Elijah had just announced that there was to be no rain for three years. The drought happened just as he had prophesied. But at Cherith the Lord supplied the food that Elijah needed to survive. God performed a miracle. He sent ravens to feed Elijah. Elijah had food to eat when food was scarce. God supplied the bread and food and water that were necessary for Elijah to survive.

God has preserved a place for us today, His church, where we can come and obtain spiritual food and the water of life that is so necessary for our life and our spiritual well being. As in the time of Elijah, so in our time today, there is a drought for the true

word of God in the world. Do we have this water of life ourselves and are we able to share it with our friends, our neighbors, our coworkers, our friends, our brothers and sisters and relatives?

Evening Service;

Next we followed with a service from visiting Australian minister Br. Jerry Eaton in which he inquired from us as to whether we have ever experienced stale water. He drew comparisons between this stale water and the characteristics of fresh, life giving water. The core of Br. Eaton's message in this issue of The Reformation Messenger.

Sabbath Opening;

Br. Michael Mitov, our Bible worker in Vancouver then brought us the Sabbath opening service. Br. Mitov spoke to us about the woman at the well from Samaria and how she typifies all of us. All people are born with a thirst, not just physical thirst but a thirst to know their creator. Do we listen to this thirst?

"I am thirsty," says the Lord as He hangs on the cross for our sins.

"I am thirsty," says the Samaritan woman as she looks for stability and security in life.

"I am thirsty," says natural man as he looks for meaning and purpose in life.

"I was thirsty," says any Christian who has come to Jesus, and found in Him the well of living water.

Let us eat from the Table of the Lord, then, knowing that anyone who believes in Jesus "will never be thirsty" (John 6:35).

Sabbath, August 5:

Divine Service;

For the Divine Service, Br. Petkov, Secretary of the General Conference, spoke on our theme from John Chapter 4, the "Living Water." Br. Petkov asked us if we have dream for living water? If we do, God WILL guide us to it. In similar way, Israel was given manna. Ancient Israel, during their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land always they had the presence of the



Lord. He was there in a cloud by day and a fire by night. However just before they entered into Canaan they had a test...no water. If you have ever been in a desert, you will realize very quickly that if you have no water you will die. You need water.

In this terrible situation the people of Israel began to lose faith and doubt. They murmured to Moses and thirsted for water. They openly accused Moses, "wherefore have you brought us out of Egypt to die"



We know that soon after this the Lord gave them water. Not just water that satisfies physical needs but spiritual water that satisfies a spiritual desert. Do I have a spiritual desert in my soul or living water? Spiritual water is never stopped, it finds its way out. If we want this "Living Water" God WILL guide us to it.

Youth From Mississauga Church;

After a delicious lunch provided by the sisters of each church we were favoured with a program by the Youth from the Mississauga Church. It was entitled - God with us. Through song, multimedia and the spoken word, the youth of Mississauga presented Jesus, His life and times. They showed us the proof of Christ as prophesied in the Old Testament, Emmanuel: God With us.



The theme was based upon Colossians 1:16, 17, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."



They encouraged us to sing unto the world with a loud voice for the Lord endures forever. Majesty, worship Him in Majesty!

Baptismal Review;

Br. Henry Dering, our evangelist from California, encouraged us to repent & be baptized...it is the same call today as John the Baptist made two thousand years ago. Br. Dering stated "there is a young man here that wants to testify to you all his desire to be baptized and become part of the family of God." Our soon to be new Br. Leo Chiatto gave his testimony and commitment to following our Heavenly Father. It was a very happy occasion.



Missionary Meeting;

Next Br. Kelly Schultz, our Bible worker from Calgary Alberta, illuminated reading the Bible is like eating and drinking. Prayer is like our breath. But are we happy with just eating & drinking? No!! We want to get up and live, to go out and experience life. Well that is what missionary work is for a Christian...it is our experience. John 1:29, 34, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. And I saw, and bear record that this is the Son of God."

There was something about Jesus' life that commanded attention...something that attracted John. People have to see something in our life that commands attention.

Mid Day Service:

Br Henry Dering, through a modern multimedia presentation told us that he wanted to see that old-fashioned religion. He told us that while he was just in California, that Richard Eaton was visiting just before the conference and he asked him; "what are you going to preach about in Toronto?" I told Richard; "I'm going to preach an old fashioned sermon."

Br. Dering then contrasted the new theology that is being presented to the people of the earth, the da Vinci Code, Harry Potter etc. Br. Dering explained that it is the old fashioned theology that needs to be preached. The old fashioned truths are very relevant today. They apply for our time today.

Youth From Toronto Church:

The Youth from Toronto then presented a multi-media program entitled, "Missionary Work in the 21st Century." This program challenged us to modernize the methods with which we communicate the truth to the world. Just as Br. Dering explained earlier, we do need the old time message, but we need new ways with which to communicate the message. The youth explored themes such as:

- **Type of Society Do We Live in Today?**
- Knowledge is doubling every five years
- Internet is growing by 65,000 websites an hour
- Information has emerged as currency, but also as a pollutant.
- We are still communicating with the same

methodologies from 100 years ago.

• Our social impact.

- In the church, greeting people and demonstrating support
- Outside the church, kindness towards strangers

• Charity

- 2103 Bible quotes about caring for the poor.
- Think globally, act locally.
- 3 billion people live on less than \$2.00 a day.
- 1.2 billion people live on less than a \$1.00 a day.

• Food

- Why is meat bad?
- New and recurring diseases.
- Talking about health to others is relevant for people's lives.

• Using technology to advance the work.

- "Pushing" Information: Official Website, Newsletters, Flyers, Books, Sermon Audio Clips
- "Push - Pull" Information: Web Blog, Chat room, Q&A, online Bible Study
- Key Advantages: Anytime, Any-where, Any-one
- Statistics show large use of new communication technologies versus old.

• Peer Influences

- Communicating to our immediate circle at home, social groups and school or work

• The Printed Word.

- Newsletters & Posters
- Current, relevant articles

• Music

- Fastest growing media among youth.
- Sound one of the most potent influences upon the mind.

• New Media

- VHS, DVD, Video Games, MP3
- Positive and Negative Influences
- Where youth are at presently.

The people there present were asked "What about YOU?" What are you going to do? How are we going to participate in this new era of interactive communications to further the Gospel?

Testimony and Praise Meeting:

Br. Timo led this meeting. This was a www.imsessenger.org

time to give thanks for our Lord's leading, protection and blessings in our lives. Many testified to wonderful experiences over the past year and renewed their commitment to a closer walk with God in their lives.

Sabbath Close;

Br. Evald Pedersen gave one of the most poignant experiences of the conference for the Sabbath closing service. He related an experience from his life of digging a well at his new home and when they had dug very deep there was still only a few feet of water in the new well...but a funny thing about a well is the more you use it the more water it gets in it. When he checked the well months later there was over 50 feet in it. The same is with our faith - if we use it we will be overflowing with the living water of God's Grace.

Sunday, August 6:

Health Meeting;

Br. Conrad Bosse, our Bible Worker from New Brunswick, explained about balanced health in the human body. He also led a discussion about modern health risks affecting our world such as Avian Flu, Energy Drinks and Mad Cow Disease. Different people shared experiences and thoughts about these subjects and it brought to the forefront interesting insights from various perspectives.

Baptism Service:

On the shore of Lake Ontario, Br. Leo Chiatto gave his life to the Lord through a commitment in the watery grave of baptism. Br. Dering spoke about Mark 16 about our responsibility to preach the gospel to every creature. We have an assurance that if we believe and are baptized we will be saved but if we don't we will be damned.

Br. Dering then spoke about the example of Jesus' baptism and His example that He set for us to follow.

Br. Dering said it was a very special day today, the whole universe is watching this one event right now.

Acceptance Service:

Br. Petkov exclaimed, "it is a wonderful day today...especially the reason of why we are here today and that is to accept our dear brother into our family."

Br. Petkov spoke on Romans 6:4 and





onward where the apostle Paul speaks about baptism. Baptism is the symbol of Christ's death and when we come out of the water it is a symbol of His resurrection. From this moment onward we have a new opportunity in our life. Br. Petkov recounted his own baptism and explained how the church was illegal under communism and they had to go high up in the mountains in the midst of the snow and ice. But he said that despite this, no one even caught a cold.



With Psalm 37: 3,4 Br. Petkov welcomed our new Br. Leo into church membership.

Farewell Message:

Br. Morris Lowe, the Vice President of the Canadian Field, pointed out that as the theme of the conference says, the living water, we have heard many wonderful words.



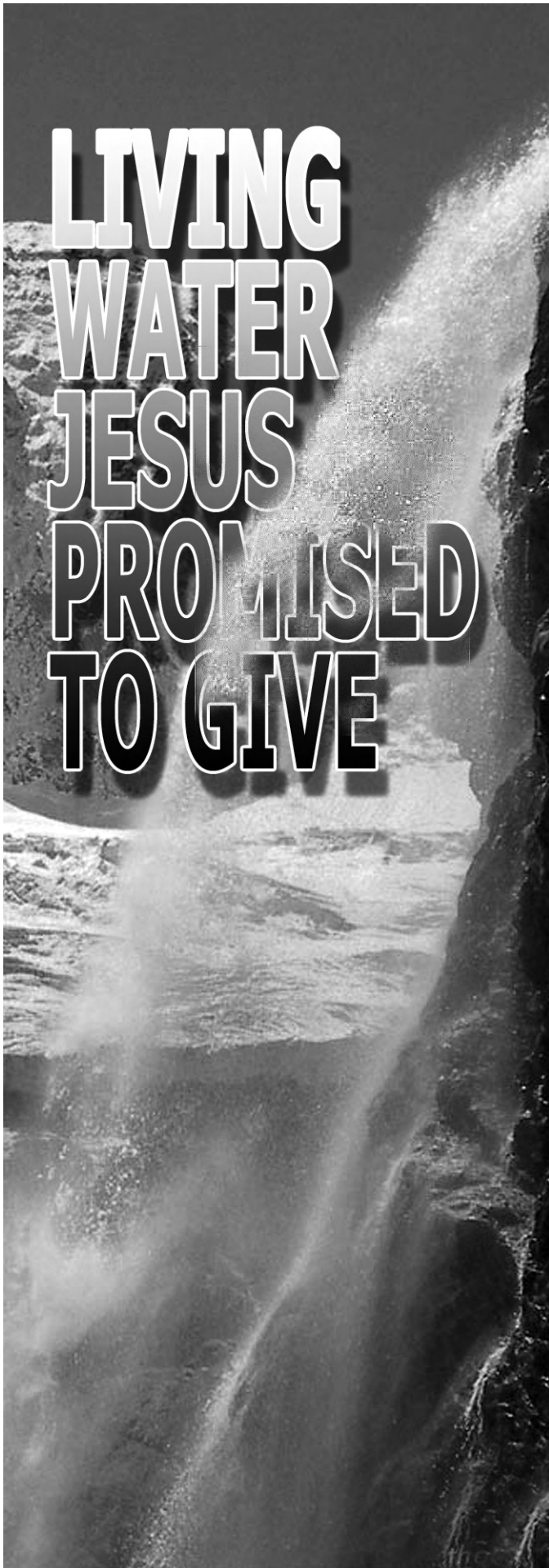
Br. Lowe recounted how he had received a phone call last night from a school friend. They said that another school friend, a lady in her 30's got sick even to the point of having a liver transplant. He told us of how they loaded her body with anti rejection drugs. This was a surprise to Br. Morris because this lady was away from school for a long time because of illness, then she came back to the course to finish. She then she disappeared for 2 months. Everyone was wondering what had happened to her. Br. Morris then received a call last night to say that she passed away. Br. Morris wondered, "Did I witness to her enough? Did I reach her with Christ's love?" When we die our salvation is fixed forever, there is nothing that can be done after.

It is not an accident that Jesus used water to symbolize the Holy Spirit. Water is the most important compound in the universe. Every tissue, cell and chemical reaction that happens in our body needs water. That's why we need the Heavenly water in our spiritual life.

With many new fond memories and a joyful sadness we closed our conference of 2006. Many farewell greetings followed as we went our separate ways, comforted in the thought that we are here joined in His love and Spirit until a time when we shall part no more in our Heavenly home.

John Formosa, Canadian Field Secretary





LIVING WATER JESUS PROMISED TO GIVE

Have you ever tasted dead water? Like boiled water, or stagnant water? They have done a lot of research into what makes water alive, and it is because the water carries minerals and in fact bonds to them, like being in a soluble form, that water is alive and healthy. So I guess you could say Jesus offers us water with the mineral of His righteousness and then only, can it be healthy and living. John 7:2-18, 24, 37, 38

Just two times in Christ's ministry, He promised living water to people – once to the Samaritan woman individually, and this time when He promised to all who would receive Him by faith, especially His professed people at the Feast of Tabernacles. What did the Feast of Tabernacles symbolize? The home coming of God's people to heaven in one way, and in another way the Feast of Tabernacles symbolized what we have today – a gathering of God's people for light and blessing.

The forces of the enemies are strengthening, and as a people we are misrepresented; but shall we not gather our forces together, and come up to the feast of tabernacles? Let us not treat this matter as one of little importance, but let the army of the Lord be on the ground to represent the work and cause of God in Australia. Let no one plead an excuse at such a time. One of the reasons why we have appointed the camp-meeting to be held at Melbourne, is that we desire the people of that vicinity to become acquainted with our doctrines and works. We want them to know what we are, and what we believe. Let every one pray, and make God his trust. Those who are barricaded with prejudice must hear the warning message for this time. We must find our way to the hearts of the people. Therefore come to the camp-meeting, even though you have to make a sacrifice to do so, and the Lord will bless your efforts to honour his cause and advance his work. {BEcho, December 8, 1893 par. 5}

John 4:10 Do you think it strange that the only individual He promised living water to, was a fallen woman? Perhaps we could say that she needed it more than anyone else, for her life had become so empty in seeking for happiness, but not finding it in merely sensual gratification and then Jesus promised living water to everyone who received Him by faith...

Apparently, Jesus **really** loved that Samaritan woman to promise this wonderful thing to her... the only individual that we know of that heard that message. And there in John 4 we see the process by which He aroused her interest in more than just another theological debate; this is something that we need to study, for it is the very way to lead souls to Him, the way, truth and life of Christ.

How can we tell if we have partaken of that living water? If we have confessed and forsaken all known sin, receiving the living water that only Christ can give, we shall have silence in the soul.

No. 1 -- We shall have Silence in the soul.

In all who are under the training of God is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. **Ps. 46:10.** Here alone can true rest be found. And this is the effectual preparation for all who labor for God. Amid the hurrying throng, and

the strain of life's intense activities, the soul that is thus refreshed will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. The life will breathe out fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men's hearts. {DA 363.3} Did you get that? Silence in the soul – very important.

No. 2 -- An attitude of prayer

Psalm 146. A turning of the heart to God, (and probably away from man) in seeking God's approval and God's peace.

Remember what Peter said when he was sinking that night out on the Sea of Galilee? Lord, save me, wasn't that it? That was his prayer. Why did he sink in the first place? Because of looking back at the boat to see what his friends were thinking – showing off. And what did Jesus answer?

Matt. 14:31. {TMK 228.1}

“Wherefore didst thou doubt?” said Christ to the sinking Peter. The same question may be addressed to us... The Lord has pledged Himself to give us strength to enable us to stand. As we search the Scriptures we find ground for confidence, provision for sufficiency. It is our privilege to say boldly, yet humbly, The Lord is my helper, therefore I shall not be moved from my steadfastness. My life is hid with Christ in God. Because He lives, I shall live also. Let us pledge ourselves before God and the angels of heaven that we will not dishonor God by speaking words of discouragement or unbelief... Close the door to distrust and open the door wide to faith. Invite into the soul temple the heavenly Guest. {TMK 228.2}

You may have your choice as to who shall rule your heart and control your mind. If you choose to open the door to the suggestions of the evil one, your mind will be filled with distrust and rebellious questioning. You may talk out your feelings, but every doubt you utter is a seed that will germinate and bear fruit in another's life, and it will be impossible to counteract the influence of your words. You may be able to recover from your season of temptation..., but others that have been swayed by your influence may not be able to escape from the unbelief you have suggested. How important it is that we speak to those around us only those things which will give spiritual strength and enlightenment! {TMK 228.3}

No. 3 -- Faith (Forsaking all I take Him – acronym)

An ever increasing faith. Now by its very essence, the concept of living water is in contrast to the dry dead bones of man's imaginings and doings – Ezek. 37:1-4. God asked the prophet if he thought anything could be done with those bones. What would you answer?

If you have partaken of the living water of Jesus, I think there is only one answer and Ezekiel gives it – thou knowest God – all things are possible with Thee, O God. Don't ever limit the power of God by looking so much to man, (even your own limitations) that you say He has done this for others, but He won't or can't do this for me.

Or even worse, by saying God cannot accomplish whatever He has to accomplish for you to provide healing, help and the power and ability you need to serve Him.

In prison? In an unbelieving home? When you have lost your job, lost your health or lost your hope? Yes, especially then we need the living water.

Mark 9:23 All things are possible to you if you will only believe. In the context in John 7 we see that Jesus said “Whoever believes in Me, out of his belly shall flow living water. What does this mean for us at this late date in the earth's history? Well, Jesus is coming soon – can't we see that, in what is happening in the church and the world? Separation and unity are increasingly being seen in our ranks. And every possible thing in the world being in upheaval.

And the very essence of the gospel is change that compels change- now what do I mean by that? Once we repent, that touches other people's lives to shun those same sins. And Jesus uses our experience to touch other people's lives – so the gospel is just like a chain, all made up of weak and erring human links, true, but links that have become strong in the love and peace of God.

So instead of looking to man for light, blessing or peace, we look to God – and others are inspired to do the same. This statement of Jesus in John 7 came at a time in the Jewish calendar year and experience that it was essential, for unless they learned to look by faith to what God was doing

through His Son, they would end up looking to the temple and it's emptiness for what it could not give – the living water that could only come from Jesus Christ.

The feast of tabernacles was a very special time of thanksgiving for what God had already done for them, because it came at the end of their year, thus it built their faith beautifully – if they saw the true meaning behind it was Christ rewarding the faithful at His second coming.

Mark 4:40.

Why are we so weak in faith?... We are so faithless, so unbelieving, that the Lord cannot do for us those things which He longs to do. There are doubts in our minds that are very saddening and very difficult to dispel. {TMK 227.2}

These doubts that bow down the soul we should each one bravely face, and tell the soul that we must conquer them at once. Make no delay, for there can be no peace where faith is lost. We need not express these doubts, for they may cause some poor soul to stumble. But examine them in the light of God's Word, then talk them over with Jesus with His Word of promise in your hand, and pray for their removal. Tell the Lord, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” (Mark 9:24). Let not doubt be placed in a comfortable, easy chair. It is a dangerous guest when it is left to rankle in the mind and counteract faith...

Genuine faith is life, and where there is life there is growth. The life which Jesus imparts cannot but grow more and more abundantly. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.

No. 4 -- The right attitude toward maintaining good works.

Believing that they are necessary to walk in, but seeing that faith is the first step before works.

James 2:26. One of the first things begotten in the heart of those who have received the living water, is the desire to share that living water with others. Do you remember the first thing that the Samaritan woman did, once she talked with Jesus? Went and told others, for the living water had refreshed her, and she wanted it to refresh others.

The famous Christian Pastor, Richard



Wurmbrand, who, together with his wife were from a Jewish background tells of meeting a former Nazi guard from Treblinka, who was personally responsible for leading thousands of Jews to their deaths. This man didn't know that Pastor Wurmbrand was from a Jewish background and bragged of how he had treated so many of the Jews, but he said that he was a Christian. The whole evening, Richard Wurmbrand just listened graciously and showed his guest hospitality. Later in the evening, he said he had a surprise for his guest. He mentioned that his wife, who wasn't feeling well, would awake to cook something for them, but first he had something to tell his guest. He mentioned that both he and his wife were from a Jewish heritage, and that many of their loved ones died at Treblinka. The former guard spluttered that he had thought them German because Wurmbrand was a good German name. He started to cry when he realized what he had done, and the enormity of his guilt in the eyes of God. He wanted to repent and wanted to know if Richard and his wife could ever forgive him?

Pastor Wurmbrand then led that former murderer to the foot of the cross in repentance, and assured him that when he awoke his wife, she would be happy to cook dinner for them. When he awakened his wife, he explained the situation, and his wife gladly and warmly welcomed her brother in Christ.

There is no excuse for sin or for indolence. Jesus has led the way, and He wishes us to follow in His steps. He has suffered, He has sacrificed as none of us can, that He might bring salvation within our reach. We need not be discouraged. Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through His grace we might be transformed into His likeness. When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit.

No. 5 -- A just appreciation for all of the good things that God has done for us

Ps. 31:19. The more our faith fastens to Christ in perfect trust, the more peace we shall have. Faith will grow by exercise. God's rule is, One day at a time. Day by

day do the work for each day as if you are conscious that you are working in the sight of the angels, cherubim and seraphim, and God and Christ. (1 Cor. 4:9). Matt. 6:11 We should grow daily in faith in order that we may grow up to the full measure of the spiritual stature in Christ Jesus. We should believe that God will answer our prayers, and not trust to feeling. We should say, My gloomy feelings are no evidence that God has not heard me. I do not want to give up on account of these sad emotions, for "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1). The rainbow of promise encircles the throne of God. I come to the throne, pointing to the sign of God's faithfulness, and cherish the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. {TMK 230.3}

This is the childlike spirit Jesus declared His disciples must have in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven--trusting as a little child in God their heavenly Father. Then Satan's temptations are discerned and more easily resisted, for there is in the heart a constant drawing nigh to God. The feeling of self-sufficiency which works the ruin of so many souls does not have an atmosphere in which to flourish. {TMK 231.3}

No. 6 -- Turning away from evil speaking, even when we are in negative circumstances.

Ps. 37:3. Putting away all self justification, and all accusation of others.)

"Trust in the Lord." Each day has its burdens, its cares and perplexities, and when we meet, how ready we are to talk of our difficulties and trials... Some are always fearing and borrowing trouble. Every day they are surrounded by the tokens of God's love, every day they are enjoying the bounties of His providence, but they overlook these present blessings...

Why should we be ungrateful and distrustful? Jesus is our friend. All heaven is interested in our welfare, and our anxiety and fear grieve the Holy Spirit of God. We should not indulge in a solicitude which only frets and wears us but does not help us to bear trials. No place should be given to that distrust of God which leads us to make a preparation against future want the chief pursuit of life, as though our happiness consisted in these earthly things...

You may be perplexed in business; your prospects may grow darker and darker and you may be threatened with loss. But do not become discouraged; cast your care upon God and remain calm and cheerful. Begin every day with earnest prayer, not omitting to offer praise and thanksgiving. Ask for wisdom to manage your affairs with discretion and thus prevent loss and disaster. Do all you can on your part to bring about favorable results... When, relying upon your tried Helper, you have done all you can, accept the result cheerfully. It will not always be gain from the worldling's standpoint, but perhaps success might have been the worst thing for you...

No. 7 Self-examination on an on-going basis.

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens. Lam. 3:40, 41. I would appeal to the youth to consider their ways, to take time to think, to weigh their actions... Compassed with temptation as you are, nothing will be sufficient as a safeguard against evil except the indwelling of Christ in your hearts through faith in His righteousness. You must practice His virtues, making Him your daily pattern...

Good character does not come by chance; it is formed by persevering, untiring effort. The youth should seek to make all that is possible of themselves, by improving every entrusted talent and capability to the glory of God. The world's Redeemer says, "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5). Faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour will give strength and solidity to your character. Those who have faith in Christ will be sober-minded, ever remembering that God's eye is upon them, that angels of God are watching to see what manner of characters they will develop...

The truth in the heart will surely have a correcting influence on the character. Hold the truth as from God, as a treasure of the highest value, that must not be dimmed or tarnished by evil practices that are completely out of harmony with its holy character. Under the divine influence of truth the mind will be strengthened, the intellect invigorated, and that which is useless will be discarded for that which is pure and beneficial.

We are never alone. We have a Companion whether we choose Him or not. Remember, young men and young women, that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, God is there. To your every word and action you have a witness--the holy, sin-hating God. Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape His infinite eye. Your words may not be heard by human ears, but they are heard by the Ruler of the universe. He reads the inward anger of the soul when the will is crossed. He hears the expression of profanity. In the deepest darkness and solitude He is there. No one can deceive God; none can escape from their accountability to Him. {TMK 234.3}

No. 8 -- Courage even if others don't have it or faith

Isa. 65:2. Now rebellious people are usually not too cooperative, especially if any of their sins are pointed out... And it takes courage, as it takes faith to continue to uplift the right even if others are sold to the wrong.

I just recently read a book about The story of Pastor Yun, one of the leaders of the House Church movement in China. It took him a lot of courage to stand in the face of persecution in Communist China, and just as much courage to stand in the West against the most common kind of persecution that we face here. Do you know what he says it is?

Emotional and spiritual persecution, because we have to stand against all of the cruel and godless things said in slander and backbiting here in the materialistic, sensualistic West. And quite often it comes from other Christians.

No. 9 -- Dwelling upon our sinfulness and God's willingness to forgive us, and other sinners who turn to Him.

The words falling from the lips of Jesus, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," (Matt. 9:2) are worth everything to us. He saith, I have borne your sins in My own body on Calvary's cross. He sees your sorrows. His hand is laid upon the head of every contrite soul, and Jesus becomes our Advocate before the Father, and our Saviour. The lowly, contrite heart will make very much of forgiveness and pardon...

(Gal. 6:7, 8). Youth is the sowing time,

and the words and deeds of the early life are like seeds that will germinate and produce a harvest after their kind. Then why not sow seeds of kindness, of love, of faith, of patience, of self-denial, and true benevolence, and keep all your passions under control? Such sowing will produce a harvest after its kind. Let every word and deed be a seed that will result in good fruit. {TMK 236.3}

If you seek the help and grace of God, the Holy Spirit will take possession of mind and character and work in you that which you can work out with all safety to yourself, and with all benefit to others... The atmosphere that surrounds your soul will be of a pure, healthful character. {TMK 236.4}

The Lord loves the youth. He sees in them great possibilities, and is ready to help them to reach a high standard if they will only realize the need of His help and lay a foundation of character that cannot be moved.

No. 10 -- Not retaining any of our former sinful thoughts, habits or practices.

And opening our hands and hearts to receive the blessings that God promises us to overcome these ways of the world.

Eph. 4:22-24. Ask the Lord to reveal to you yourself; place your life under His searching eye, and when He lays hold upon your case you will see that you have made grievous mistakes, and what you supposed was of little importance was offensive in the sight of Heaven. You will see that there is a decided need of thorough transformation of character. You will realize that you must put away the evil of your doings, and cooperate with God and heavenly angels who are sent to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation...

Self must die. Every practice, every habit, that has a harmful tendency, however innocent it may be regarded by the world, must be battled with until overcome, that the human agent may perfect a character after the divine Pattern...

The crooked ways, the perverse doings of those around us, are not to dim the luster of our piety or to lead us to conform our habits to, and assimilate our customs and practices with the world's. Let the prayer go forth from the lips of those who claim

to be the sons and daughters of God, (Ps. 139:23, 24).

The mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for all who love Him will be peopled by those who are free from sin. But sins that are not confessed will never be forgiven; the name of him who thus rejects the grace of God will be blotted out of the book of life. The time is at hand when every secret thing shall be brought into judgment, and then there will be many confessions made that will astonish the world. The secrets of all hearts will be revealed. The confession of sin will be most public. The sad part of it is that confession then made will be too late to benefit the wrongdoer or to save others from deception. It only testifies that his condemnation is just.

...You may now close the book of your remembrance in order to escape confessing your sins, but when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, you cannot close them. The recording angel has testified that which is true. All that you have tried to conceal and forget is registered, and will be read to you when it is too late for wrongs to be righted... Unless your sins are canceled, they will testify against you at that day.

No. 11 -- A true understanding of the nature of man, and therefore humility before God.

All are liable to err, therefore the Word of God tells us plainly how to correct and heal these mistakes. None can say that he never makes a mistake, that he never sinned at all, but it is important to consider what disposition you make of these wrongs. The apostle Paul made grievous mistakes, all the time thinking that he was doing God service, but when the Spirit of the Lord set the matter before him in its true light, he confessed his wrongdoing, and afterward acknowledged the great mercy of God in forgiving his transgression. You also may have done wrong, thinking you were perfectly right, but when time reveals your error, then it is your duty to humble the heart and confess your sin...

Whatever the character of your sin, confess it. If it is against God only, confess only to Him. If you have wronged or offended others, confess also to them, and the blessing of the Lord will rest upon you. In this way you die to self, and Christ is formed within...

Those who acknowledge reproof and correction as from God, and are thus enabled to see and correct their errors, are learning precious lessons, even from their mistakes. Their apparent defeat is turned into victory. They stand, trusting not to their own strength, but to the strength of God. They have earnestness, zeal, and affection, united with humility and regulated by the precepts of God's Word., They walk not stumblingly, but safely, in a path where the light of heaven shines.

This is the true meaning of receiving the living water that Jesus came to give...

Our Redeemer perfectly understood the wants of humanity. He who condescended to take upon Himself man's nature was acquainted with man's weakness. Christ lived as our example. He was tempted in all points as we are, that He might know how to succor all who should be tempted. He has trodden the path of life before us and endured the severest tests in our behalf. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief...

Christ took upon Himself our infirmities, and in the weakness of humanity He needed to seek strength from His Father. He was often to be found in earnest prayer, in the grove, by the lakeside, and in the mountains. He has enjoined upon us to watch and pray... Without a deep sense of our need of help from God there will be but little earnest, heartfelt prayer for divine aid. Our hearts are deceitful, our foes many and vigilant. If we neglect to fortify a single weak point in our character, Satan will assail us at that point with his temptations. He is constantly plotting the ruin of the soul, and he will take every advantage of our careless security.

Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Ps. 19:12.

We need to study the character of the motives that prompt us to action in the light of the law of God, in order that we may be made aware of our deficiencies. But while the human agent may see his sins, he is not to become discouraged, although he finds himself condemned by the precepts of righteousness. He is to see and to realize the sinfulness of sin, to repent, and to have faith in Christ as his personal Saviour. {TMK 242.2}

When Jesus spoke of the living water at the Feast of Tabernacles the vast majority of the Jews were going to harden their hearts and reject the message of His righteousness and join themselves to the traditions and pride of their temple.

I know the danger of those who refuse to walk in the light as God gives it. They bring upon themselves the terrible crisis of being left to follow their own ways, to do after their own judgment. The conscience becomes less and less impressible. The voice of God seems to become more and more distant, and the wrongdoer is left to his own infatuation. In stubbornness he resists every appeal, despises all counsel and advice, and turns from every provision made for his salvation... The Spirit of God no longer exerts a restraining power over him, and the sentence is passed, "He is joined to idols; let him alone." (see Hosea 4:17)... This is the process through which the soul passes that rejects the working of the Holy Spirit...

No. 12 -- Uplifting God's standards of personal and practical piety, in sobriety and candor.

God desires men and women to think soberly and candidly. They are to ascend to a higher and still higher grade, commanding a wider and still wider horizon. Looking unto Jesus, they are to be changed into His image. They are to spend their time in searching for the deep, everlasting truths of heaven. Then there will be nothing frivolous in their religious experience... The living water, which Christ gives, is not like a surface spring, which babbles for a short time, and then dries up. The living water springs up unto everlasting life. {ISM 172.1}

If we would be true reformers, we must show that we have partaken of the living water, by lifting God's standards higher in our lives, while doing so in a balanced and humble way.

It is never safe for us to feel that we are possessed of virtues, and that we may congratulate ourselves on our excellences of character and our present state of purity and piety. David often triumphed in God, and yet he dwelt much upon his own unworthiness and sinfulness. His conscience was not asleep or dead. "My sin," he cries, "is ever before me" Ps. 51:3...

As he saw the depths of deceit in his heart he was deeply disgusted with himself, and prayed that God would keep him back by His power from the presumptuous sins, and cleanse him from secret faults.

He who drinks of the water of life which Jesus gives, possesses within himself a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Though it shall be cut off from all created springs, it is fed from the hidden fountain. It is a perpetual spring, in immediate communication with the inexhaustible fountain of life.

The Lord is dishonored when any who profess His name have an emptiness. This misrepresents God. Nothing but Christ manifested in spirit and life and character can reveal God to a world that knows Him not.

We are not to believe because we feel or see that God hears us. We are to trust to the promise of God. We are to go about our business believing that God will do just what He has said He would do, and that the blessings we have prayed for will come to us when we most need them. Every petition enters into the heart of God when we come believing. We have not faith enough. We should look upon our heavenly Father as more willing to help us than an earthly parent is to help his child. Why not trust Him?

Yes, the living water only comes from Jesus. Not in all of the ways of the world, flesh and devil can true satisfaction or peace be found. Just look at the Samaritan woman to know from her experience that only Christ could give her something that the things and ways of man could not.

Look at the Jews, Jesus own people who could not find in all of the pomp and ceremony of the Temple or their own power, position or pride what only Jesus could give. Phil. 4:7 So seek Him, the way, truth and life, and then no matter what your life position, He will give you the peace that passes human understanding as you receive the living water.

Jerry Eaton, Australia/Canada

A HERB GARDEN



“Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, [and] doth teach him. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread [corn] is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break [it with] the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it [with] his horsemen. This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, [which] is wonderful in counsel, [and] excellent in working. “ Isaiah 28:23-29.

In the Word of God people are often compared with plants and trees. Each one of us is in God’s eyes a tender plant that must grow and bring fruit. In this case we are compared with aromatic herbs that are used to make food tastier. The Lord explains how every plant should be handled in order to grow healthily. There are some herbs that must be taken special care of and handled tenderly, while others must be beaten, “but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod”. Can anyone of us identify himself with the fitches or the cummin? When one is often beaten by hard trials, does it mean that the Lord does not love us? “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth,” says Paul in Hebrew 12:6.

Why does our heavenly Father handle some of His children in that way? “... for [our] profit, that [we] might be partakers of his holiness.” Hebrews 12:10. It is part of our educational process so that we may be partakers of His holiness! We are in this world in order to be educated to become inhabitants of the kingdom of God and members of the heavenly family. Our teacher is God Himself and our lessons are the different situations we live daily, in which our character is tested and formed. Our text book should be the Bible because, as it is written, “All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. “ 2 Timothy 3:16.

Generally, when people speak together, they always try to show how right they are or how correctly they have acted. But God’s word tells us, “But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” Isaiah 64:6. And Paul adds, “There is none righteous, no, not one” Romans 3:10. It is impossible for an unrighteous person to enter the kingdom of heaven. We all need to be instructed in righteousness.

Sometimes we think that we have to educate others, therefore we take the staff or the rod and start beating them with our words and piercing them with our looks, but the result is exactly the opposite of what we expected. We forget that the gardener is God. He is the One who knows how His plants should be dealt with. He is the only One who knows how to beat and at the same time show love. He is the perfect Educator.

All these wonderful herbs grow together, and each one is handled in a different way, because each one has a different aroma, another taste and is appropriate for a different kind of dish.

In God's plan each one of us occupies a different place, plays a different role and needs a special preparation to be able to fulfil his commission on this world and be a child of God that reflects his Father's character.

It is wonderful to be in God's school and to know that we are aromatic herbs meant to give a special flavour to this dark and unloving world. Let us not fear when we come across problems or when we are beaten. The word of God tells us, "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.

God's family, His church, is a Garden. We are His, the bride who will be translated when Jesus comes back. In Song of Solomon 4:12-15 we read, "A garden enclosed [is] my sister, [my] spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants [are] an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices, a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." All sorts of trees and plants grow in God's garden and He takes care of each one personally.

"Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, [that] the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." Songs 4:16.

When the winds blow the aroma will spread out. The wind that is called to blow is the Holy Spirit. Before Jesus' second coming, the Holy Spirit will be poured out in His fullness and the aroma of God's plants--the love of God's children for their Master and for their fellowmen--will spread out in the whole world and speak to every heart.

"Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits" Songs 4:16. Jesus comes to pluck the ripe fruits for His kingdom.

May the Lord give us faith so each one of us can see himself as an aromatic plant under the loving care of an experienced Gardener. *Amen.*

Teresa Corti



*"the Holy Spirit will be poured
out in His fullness"*

JOHN CALVIN



CHILDRENS CORNER

John sat on his mother's bed. She was unwell and found his games tiring, but she enjoyed it when they sat and talked together. "Tell me about when you were a little girl," he said.

His mother smiled. "My father and mother live in a small town right in the north of France. They have an inn and when I was a girl people were always coming and going. Sometimes I hid in the kitchen and listened to what the grown-ups were talking about. Most of them were traders on their way to England."

"Is my father a trader?" The five year old asked.

Smiling at the thought, his mother explained. "No, he is a lawyer and he works at the Cathedral here in Noyon."

"What did lawyers do?"

"All sorts of things," she said. "Sometimes his work is about buying and selling land."

"So he is a trader."

"I suppose in a way he is," laughed his mother. "But it's not his own things that he's buying and selling: everything he works with belongs to the church."

"The church must be very right," the little boy thought aloud.

"Yes," agreed his mother. "I think it is."

A few weeks later John was waking up in the morning and he went bounding up to his mother's bedroom to see how she was doing.

"Shhh! Please be quiet," the woman told John, just a few months later. "It's not nice to make a noise in a house of the dead."

"But I want my mother!" he sobbed. "I don't want her dead."

"Well, you'll just have to get used to it. And you'll have to be quiet too. Your poor father needs peace."

The child didn't know what peace was, but he knew there was something that he needed to help his sore heart.

"Do I need peace?" he asked the woman who had come to prepare his mother's body for the funeral.

When she looked crossly he went outside to get far away from her.

From that day onwards life was different for the young John Calvin. He did all the things that had to be done, but nothing was ever the same. There was no mother to answer his questions or to kiss him better when he fell and grazed his knees. He must have missed her softness, her nighttime kisses and their special times together. Life must have had its sad time for little John Calvin.

Seven years later, John's father called him into his office one day, "I have something I want explain to you," his father told John. It was the year 1521. "An arrangement has been made to give you a job."

John's face fell. "But I don't want a job. I want to study."

His father sat down. "If you would just listen to what I'm trying to say!"

Calvin took a seat in front of his father. "This is something that happens in the church. You are given a job and are paid for it, but you don't actually have to do the work."

"Why?"

"Because someone else does it for you."

"So what's the job and why doesn't the other person get the pay?"

"The job is looking after a church and he does get paid, through not very much. That leaves plenty for you."

"What do I need the money for?" John asked, puzzled.

"Education doesn't come cheap," his father said. "The money will help pay for it."

John puzzled over that. It seemed to him a very odd thing but he was glad to have the money.

When he was fourteen years old, Calvin went off to university, first in Paris where he studied Theology (that's the study of God) then, because his father wanted him to, he studied law in another French university. But before he had finished his studies in law, John's father died. He was on his own and could make his own decisions.

"I've decided to go back to Paris to study Greek and Hebrew," he told a friend.

"That's a dangerous thing to do," the other young man laughed. "If you read the Bible you might become like that man Luther!"

Calvin looked his friend in the eye. "I don't think I'm as easily convinced as he was," he announced. "I was brought up in the Catholic Church. It pays for my education. If you think I'm likely to leave it after all that and to start to preach that the Church is not telling the truth, you can think again."

"Keep your head on!" said his friend. "I was only joking."

It wasn't long before John Calvin had done exactly what his friend had joked about. "I was absolutely caught up in all the superstitions of the Church," he wrote later, "then I was suddenly converted and God tamed my heart and made me teachable." When he wrote to his friend to tell him what had happened, the letter that came back was not very encouraging.

“You’ve made a brave decision,” it read, “but a very dangerous one. If I were you I’d prepare to leave Paris, because if you don’t go you’ll be chased out. The Church and the King don’t like Reformers. Are you quite sure you really are one of them?”

“I’m certain,” Calvin wrote back. “The Church is full of things that need reform. Think about it. The money the Church gave me to do nothing paid for my education! And some poor soul did the work and got virtually nothing for it – all because my father was a cathedral lawyer. That can’t be right. It’s one of the many ways in which the Church is wrong. You were right about being chased out of Paris... this letter is from Geneva which I think will be my home now.”

“What will you do now?” he was asked by a Swiss Christian he met at a church.

“The thing I’m best at is studying, so I think that’s what I should continue to do,” replied John. “It’s all very well leaving the Roman Catholic Church, because of all the wrongs in it, but the Reformed Church will also make serious mistakes unless we really know what the Bible says and stick to it. I think that’s what God is calling me to do.”

“It’s a huge job,” His new friend said, smiling. “But God only gives work like that to those who can do it.”

“I feel safe here,” John told another friend in the year 1536.

“I know what you mean. It’s great that the people here voted to live according to the Bible and to abolish the teaching of the Roman Church in the city.”

“It means I can relax for awhile and get on with my writing without worrying about spies tracking me down.”

“I hope you’ll be here for more than awhile,” another Reformer said. “We need you to help establish a church in Geneva.”

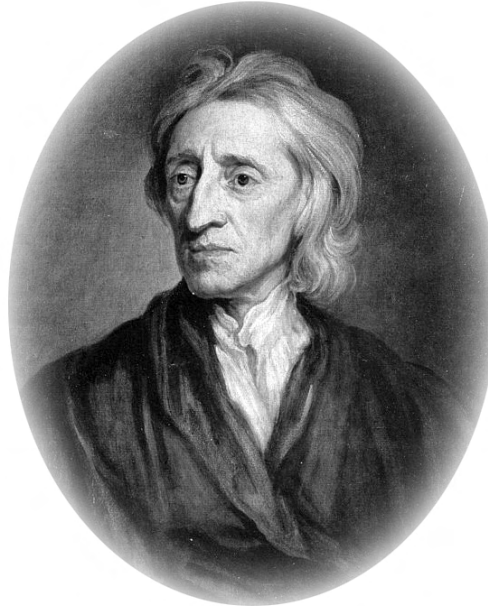
But two years later Calvin was on the move again. The town council had changed and he was no longer welcome. “Moving won’t stop my work,” he told his Swiss friends, as he packed up his papers. “A student can study anywhere.”

John travelled to the city of Strasbourg

where he spent a wonderful year. While there he met a young woman named Idelette, whom he married. Idelette provided him with an instant family. Her husband had died and she had worried about what would happen to her and the children. She never dreamed that she would love again and that her children would have a fine stepfather. It was a very happy year.

“The only thing is that I don’t get the same peace to write,” John said, half seriously.

“You knew what you were taking on!” his wife laughed. “And you’re not doing too



John Calvin

badly. You’ve just finished a book and you’re working on another one already.”

In the year 1541, John decided it was time to go back to Geneva. “I’ve worked out a system of church government that I think the Genevans will approve of.”

They did, even if they didn’t carry it out exactly as Calvin would have liked.

Reformers came from all over Europe to study with Calvin, many of them former priests in the Roman Church. Their discussions went on for hours and hours.

Eight years later, in 1549, Idelette died. John was heart broken. “First, my only son dies as a child, then my wife after just eleven years of marriage.”

“But you have us,” His stepson told him. “We’re your family.”

Calvin put his hand on the young man’s

shoulder. “I know,” he said. “And it’s very hard for you all to lose your father, then your mother, when you are still so young.”

“But we’re not alone,” the boy said. “You have us and we have you.”

The man looked up into the strong young face. “You’re right,” he agreed. “And God will care for us.”

Some years later the city of Geneva permitted John to set up a school. Students from all over Europe came to study as it was the few places in Europe where religious freedom was tolerated.

“It’s great to study with you, Mr Calvin,” a former priest told his teacher. “And all your many books are brilliant. I know I can believe every word you say.”

“That, young man,” John told him, “Is probably the most frightening thing anyone has ever said to me.” His pupil looked shocked. “You came out of the Roman Church because it was teaching you things that were untrue, and now you’re prepared to believe all I say. For goodness sake use the brain God has given you. I will never deliberately misguide you but you must check everything I say, everything anyone says, by what is written in the Bible. That is the only source of truth.”

The young man was upset, and Calvin felt suddenly sorry for him. “Listen to me,” he said. “I’m just an ordinary human being like yourself, and I, too, can make mistakes. If you ever find yourself thinking that I’m special, ask someone who knows me well. If I have a pain I’m like a bear with a sore head. And if I go to bed with a stomach-ache I assume I’ll die before morning, but I’ve not done that yet.”

In the year 1564, John began to age. “I’m not really well,” John told a fellow teacher. “I’m not sure that I’ll manage a lecture today.” Everyone at the university started asking if John Calvin was ill. Or was this just another of his days of thinking he was worse than he really was. “He isn’t actually looking very good,” one of the students commented. “And his colour’s a bit odd,” another added. They were right. John Calvin was ill, and he never got better. Having influenced the Reformation in Europe more than any other man, he died on 27th May 1564.



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