

The Reformation Messenger

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 5, MAY 2009

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



"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,
while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh,
when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;"
Ecclesiastes 12:1

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.

ABOUT THE COVER

*Photo: L. McTavish/E. Tedford
Young People In Sabbath
School, South Africa*

*Inside Cover: Emelina Ciatto
Sparrow, Toronto, Canada*

Volume 16, Number 5, May 2009

- 3 SINGLENES OF PURPOSE**
- 5 "TEACH ME THY WAY O LORD"**
- 7 BROTHER JASTIVA**
- 8 COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE PART ONE**
- 9 IF THEY SPEAK NOT ACCORDING TO...**
- 10 SPIRITUAL CAMPING**
- 11 SIN PROBLEM**
- 17 THE PEN OF INSPIRATION**
- 18 HEED THE WARNING**
- 22 THE HIDDEN TRUTH ABOUT MERRY CHRISTMAS**
- 26 CHILDREN'S CORNER: THE MEASURE...**

The Reformation
Messenger

Official Publication of the International Missionary Society of the Seventh Day Adventist Church Reform Movement, Canadian Field.

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

IMS
PUBLISHING

54 NEWCASTLE ST.
TORONTO, ON
CANADA
M8Y1A3

SUBSCRIBE TO THE REFORMATION MESSENGER

Order By Mail: Please Fill In

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

No. Of Annual Subscriptions:

_____ Black & White x \$18.00 each per year

_____ Colour x \$25.00 each per year

(Price includes 12 issues, one per month, including shipping & handling)

Purchase All 14 Years of the Messenger For \$200.00
(Price includes over 158 issues, including shipping & handling)

Amount of cheque: \$_____ Payable To: IMS Publishing

Or Order Online: www.ims messenger.org



Our life in this world is very complicated. So many things to take care of, and often we run out of time to do everything that seems necessary. Many times the salvation of our souls is put into second or third place and to provide our necessities takes the first place. That means that there is no time to attend prayer meetings; no time for Bible study or for missionary work.

Apostle Paul was very busy participating in the affairs of the Jewish government. Also he was occupied in destroying the newly established Christian church. But then his life changed. He found something more important to spend his time on. He writes, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13, 14.

Paul recognized that only one thing was important, therefore he said, "This one thing I do." He put all his efforts, his time, and his money into running the Christian race. He said, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1 Cor. 9: 26, 27.

As an athlete who is running a race puts everything into it in order to win, so also a Christian who is trying to win the heavenly crown must put every effort and time into it.

People admire beautiful paintings of the great artists, and wish that they also could paint such a beautiful picture. But if you study the

life-stories of these famous artists, they put everything into their work. Day after day they were in their studios painting, and often neglecting to eat and to sleep. Continuing their efforts for many years and often for a lifetime, they finally become famous artists.

The same is with music. It captivates the mind to listen to the concerts of famous musicians. Children often say that they want to learn to play music like them. So their parents go out and buy instruments for them, and enrol them in music lessons. Then begins the practice, hours and hours every day. Other children are playing their games outside while they are practicing their instruments. Soon many of these children become tired of this constant practicing and give up music. Those who continue become famous musicians.

The same thing applies if someone wants to become a great scientist, or successful businessman, or any other profession that requires great effort and skill. The secret of their success is singleness of purpose. But nowhere is it needed so much as in religion, trying to gain eternal life.

Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48. Nothing less is sufficient.

Sister White comments on it, "Singleness of purpose, wholehearted devotion to God, is the condition pointed out by the Saviour's words. Let the purpose be sincere and unwavering, to discern the truth and to obey it at whatever cost, and you will receive divine enlightenment. Real piety begins when all compromise with sin is at an end." MB, p. 91.

"If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. Purity and steadfastness of purpose are the conditions of receiving light from God." DA, p. 312.

Once Jesus came to the house of Martha and Mary with His disciples. Martha was busy preparing food and accommodation for the visitors but Mary sat at His feet listening to His teaching. Finally Martha asked Jesus to tell her sister to help her, but Jesus said unto her, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Luke 10: 41, 42.

Jesus could have said that two things are needful, but He did not; He said that only one thing is needful, and that Mary has chosen that good part.

Someone else had the same desire as Mary, and that was David.

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek often; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." Ps. 27:4.

As a king of the nation, he had many duties to perform and looking after the affairs of the people was a full time job; but his prayer to God was that he could attend all the religious services in the temple. He would not stay away from a prayer meeting. He practised the singleness of purpose. He said further, "For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand." Ps. 84:10.

If everyone today would have the same desire that David had, our prayer meetings would have a full church.

Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33.

To seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness means daily Bible study, constant prayer, attending church meetings, meditating, and obeying all God's commandments. If these are the priorities in life, then everything else will be in second place.

In the parable of the sower Jesus said that some of the seeds fell among thorns, "and that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." Luke 8:14.

Yet how many Christians put meetings, Bible study, and missionary work into second place. When all their worldly business is done, then if there is still time left they may devote it to spiritual things.

"Many who might be fruitful in God's service become bent on acquiring wealth. Their whole energy is absorbed in business

enterprises, and they feel obliged to neglect things of a spiritual nature. Thus they separate themselves from God... But many become so absorbed in business that they have no time for prayer, no time for the study of the Bible, no time to seek and serve God." COL, p. 51.

It is Satan who wants to make our life so busy that we have no time for spiritual things. Also it is lack of faith that we do not trust God to provide for us, that we must secure our necessities alone.

Jesus spoke of a parable of a man whose ground brought forth a great harvest. "And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12: 18-21.

Singleness of purpose is the only way to secure eternal life and heaven. Many professed Christians will fail in the end for trying to serve two masters. Only one thing is important and it must have the first place in our lives, and all other things must be put into second place. May the Lord help us to make the same sacrifice for Him that He has done for us. Nothing less is sufficient. **AMEN.**

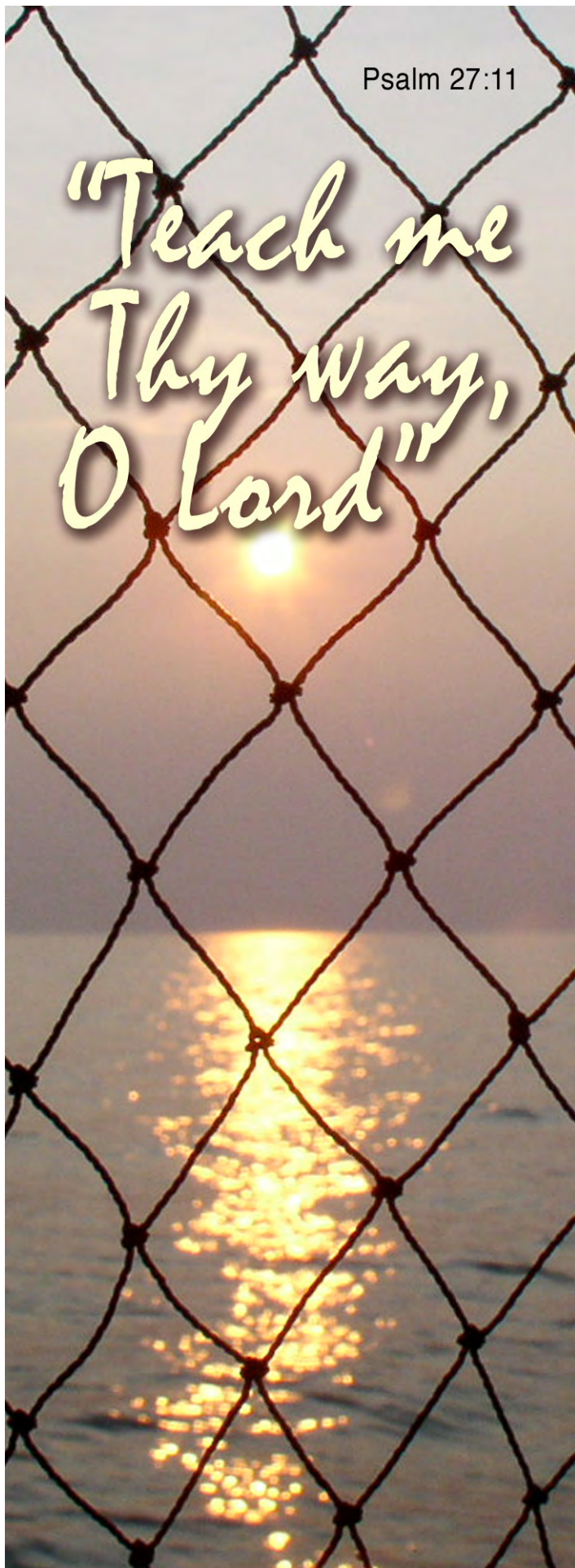
Timo Martin, Canada

INDEX TO THE MESSENGER

Now available, an updated to the end of 2008, complete guide to the Reformation Messenger Magazine with Index to each article and author.

Contact us to get your copy today!

ims
PUBLISHING



Psalm 27:11

"Teach me
Thy way,
O Lord"

On Sabbath April 11, 2009 many of the believers in the province of Ontario and also some from Montreal, Quebec gathered together for a spiritual feast, which was called a "Special Conference."

The theme of the conference was "Teach me Thy way, O Lord."

The purpose of this special conference was to focus on missionary work. There are different times and places that missionary work can be conducted. We are all called to be missionaries for Christ and there is a mission field all around us. There is missionary work within a family, with children and unconverted spouses. There is also missionary work within the church for new visitors, regular visitor, young people and children. Then there is also missionary work to the world.

Each person has a different area of missionary work as each has been given different talents, however, all are called to do some missionary work.

The Sabbath School Lesson that week happened to be about the Samaritan woman. We can see and understand the tact that Jesus used in reaching this woman, and how He broke down the walls of prejudice. Brother Bescec further developed the main points brought out in this story during the divine service. Jesus made a special trip to Jacob's well to meet with this one woman. She was coming to the well at mid-day, which is unusual. It was more common for the women to come in morning and evening, but this woman came at mid-day – perhaps through shame or embarrassment. Jesus knew when this woman was coming and made an effort to be there at the appointed time. There were no other people around either so they had a quiet interview with no distractions. This one woman than became a missionary for her fellow countrymen and a great harvest of souls was won to the faith. Whether we speak to large crowds or to a small audience, or even one person, our words and actions will have far-reaching effects.

After lunch on Sabbath, in a workshop, Brother Eaton shared the importance of doing missionary work within the church to new visitors. Some members may be shy and have difficulty meeting and talking to the new visitors. Others may be caught up with their friends, busily catching up with each other about the past weeks' activities, that they take little note of the visitors. We need to understand why we are at church. It is not just a social club, but a missionary outreach centre. Different methods were discussed in how to include the visitors and reach the youth and children.

Following this workshop, Brother Morris Lowe shared a power point presentation regarding missionary work and the giving of Bible Studies. He, again, referred to the meeting at Jacob's well and the methods of labour that Jesus used. Brother Lowe gave a brief presentation of the key prophecies and doctrines contained in our message as "present truth." If we are to share the faith, we must know the faith. It would do well for us all to have the knowledge and willingness to give Bible Studies.

After dinner Sister Rose Powell encouraged us to take action. Not just speak and learn, but to do. She asked us all to make a resolution beginning with the words "I will go..." and then we were to individually complete the sentence on a slip of paper. In the near future we will come back to these points to assess how well we have followed through with our commitment. The missionary leaders of the various churches were encouraged to assist the members in following through with their commitments.

During the adult workshops, the young people conducted and participated in their own workshops, encouraging each other in missionary lines. They made plans for missionary endeavours in the future.

Finally for Sabbath close, Brother Evald shared a few words from inspiration. Often we have wanted to do things our way in the past.

When we insist on our way, God sometimes allows us to go our way, but there is never success. We need to follow God's way of working.

Sunday morning brought us back together for a health meeting in the morning followed by a testimony meeting. Many stirring testimonies were shared regarding issues that were discussed at the meeting and how we can improve on our missionary work in the future. Many people expressed their thanksgiving for what the Lord had done, and for the knowledge of truth that has been entrusted to us.

May God help us to truly learn what His will is as we each pray, "Teach me thy way, O Lord" and then go forth and share what we have been taught. AMEN.

Wendy Eaton, Canada



Kenyan Union Secretary And Daniel

LOOKING FOR YOU!!

If you are interested in submitting an item for publication in the Reformation Messenger, please submit them to:

By email to:
timom@sympatico.ca

By Mail to:
IMS Publishing
54 Newcastle Street
Toronto, ON,
Canada
M8Y 1A3

SUBMIT:
• ARTICLES
• POEMS
• PHOTOS
• DRAWINGS
• ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please Send All Photos & Illustrations To:
imspics@yahoo.com

ims
PUBLISHING



Brother Jastiva

Philippines

“Greeting text from the words of God found in 1 Corinthians 16:13; “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.”

“We are now in this time that we need to be on guard against the enemy and his agents, to stand firm in the faith especially in this time that Satan lays all his means to hinder us to continue working for the Lord, but we must be as men of courage and with God we must be strong to face and carry all the burdens and the cross that God wants us to bring.

“In Philippians 1:29, it says; “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for his sake.’ ”

These are the opening words that our dear Brother Jastiva wrote in an email announcing the Philippine conference to be held in the month of May.

Due to modern technology, news reaches around the world quickly. This can be a blessing or it can be a curse. In the case of our dear Brother Jastiva in the Philippines, it has been a blessing. Many of us around the world quickly heard the news of the tragic fate of his wife and the difficult legal situation he found himself in. Although we united in our prayers for his beloved wife, the Lord saw it in His plan to allow her to be laid to rest, although in a rather unpleasant manner. We can only be grateful that she died with a heavenly hope and that Brother Jastiva and his children will be reunited, in the near future, with his beloved, and their mother. While she is resting in peace, Brother Jastiva is continuing in his work for the Master.

In recent correspondence with Brother Jastiva he expressed his great appreciation for the prayers, and support from the believers around the world. I would like to quote a few excerpts from his letter:

“Few weeks ago I felt so weak, and I got sick in thinking always about this crisis or the problems that come in our life. But when I read the Bible especially the promises of God, and also upon reading the letters from our brothers and sisters from Philippines and even from foreign countries, showing their sympathy, support and concern, I felt encouraged and have courage to face all of these trials and ready to accept what God wants to happen to me.

“I am happy upon knowing and realizing that that God loves me in allowing me to be a partaker of His hardships and difficulties. I am also happy upon knowing that there are many real Christian brothers and sisters who truly love me and my family and who are so concerned about us.”

He went on to explain the current legal situation he finds himself in and he states that there is “a bright sunshine coming.” One of

my favourite songs has a phrase, "Back of the clouds, the sun is always shining." I believe that Brother Jastiva is beginning to see some of this sunshine behind the clouds.

Yet through all of these difficulties his missionary zeal has not abated. Although his life may be in danger, his love for the Lord is greater than his love for his own life. Quoting again, "As of now, I am trying my best to step by step work in the church activities performing the Holy Communion Service, Foot Washing, Baptism, preaching and visiting interested souls. In fact next week we will baptise if God will allow 4 souls..."

"But we need to do it in a careful way especially that the accuser They said that they will not stop until I will be put back to the jail or to the prison cell again. "But my lawyers encouraged me and instructed me to be careful also."

Come Out Of Her My People - Part One

REVELATION 18:1-4

God uses His people to proclaim the everlasting gospel, the last message of grace to the impenitent. Three of these are the first, second and third angels of Rev 14:6-13, and the other is the angel of Revelation 18:1-4. As a result of the coming of this mighty angel, the message swells into a loud cry. (Christ Our Righteousness, by A.G. Daniels, p.58). The year 1888 marked the beginning of the Reform Movement represented by the angel of Rev 18:1-4. The 1888 general conference at Minneapolis marked an epoch in the experience of the Laodicean church, and this was the beginning of the light of that other angel of Rev 18. His mission was to present the counsel of THE TRUE WITNESS to the Laodiceans. After this 1888 conference closed somewhat in confusion and disappointment, later Ellen White wrote:

"I have been instructed that the terrible experience at the Minneapolis Conference is one of the saddest chapters in the history of the believers in present truth," (1MR 142) but it became a profitable chapter, for it revealed in shocking distinctness the lack of genuine Christianity on the part of many persons in high positions, IT MARKED THE BEGINNING OF A GREAT REFORM.

The first and second angels proclaimed their messages in the period of Philadelphia, and the third angel and the other angel brought their messages in the period of Laodicea. In other words, the first and second angel's messages were proclaimed from 1831 to 1844, and the third and the other angel's work is done from 1844 until the close of probation. But what happened to the people represented by these angels?

1. During the proclamation of the second angel, many separated from the fallen churches (GC 376)
2. The people proclaiming the third angel's message were the remnant of the second angel.
3. The Revelation 18 angel were the remnant of the third angel.

ONLY THE FEW WHO FOLLOW THE LIGHT WILL BE FOUND PROCLAIMING THE MESSAGES OF THE THREE ANGELS AND THE REVELATION 18 MESSAGE.

The Spirit Of Prophecy states, "The three angels of Revelation 14

Brother Jastiva is now awaiting his trial.

In closing his email, he requested the continued prayers from brothers and sisters around the world. "Please don't stop praying for me and my family and that the problem will be solved soon so that we can continue working in God's Work.

Once again, thank you for everything and may God give you the reward...."

Let us keep praying for our dear brother Jastiva and others around the world who are serving God while oppressed for their faith. If you wish to donate to support brother Jastiva, you can make your donation through the General Conference. My prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless His church as we work together in unity and truth.

represent the people who accept the light of God's messages and go forth as His agents to sound the warning through out the length and breadth of the earth." (5T 455-456)

That the work of God goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel, (TM 300) and that the final warning will be given by the other angel is clearly understood from the following:

THE ANGEL WHO UNITES IN THE PROCLAMATION OF THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE IS TO LIGHTEN THE WHOLE EARTH WITH HIS GLORY. (GC 611)

In connection with His message of THE OTHER ANGEL, the call is heard:

COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE... open the door and welcome the SAVIOUR in.

This announcement, uniting with the third angel's message, constitutes the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth. (GC 604; REV. 18-1-4)

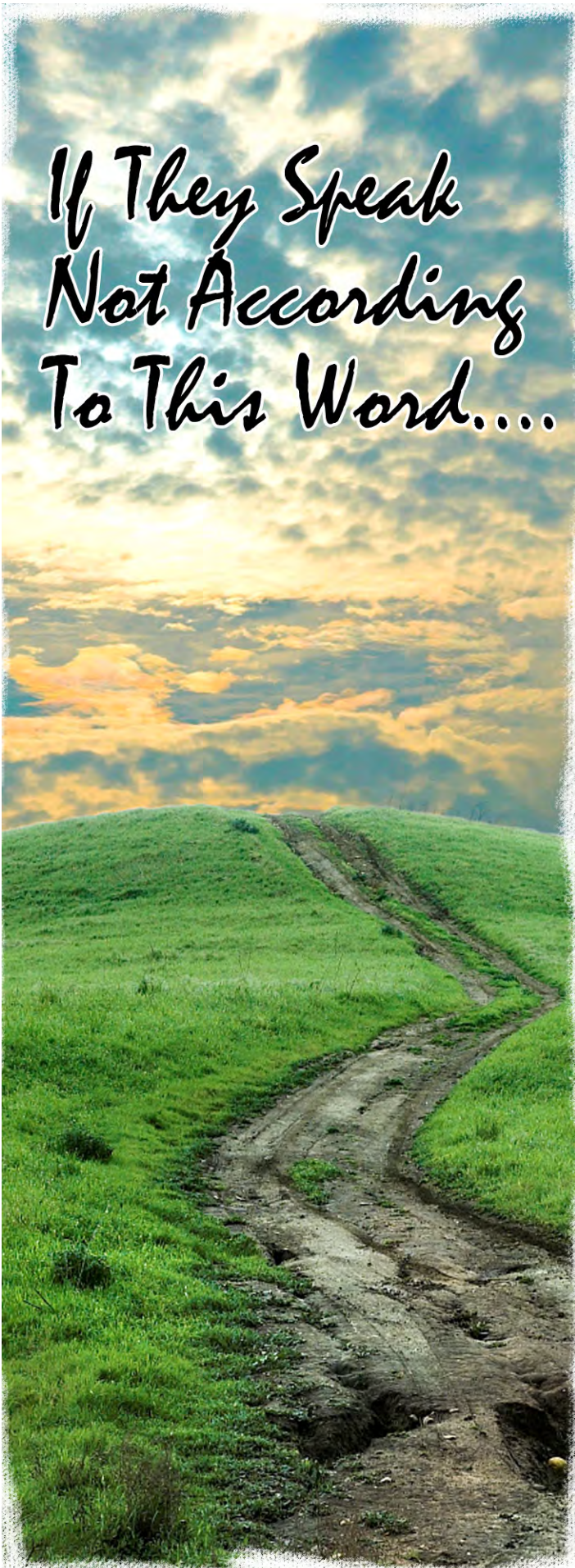
My mind is overwhelmed when I contemplate the history of GOD'S REMNANT CHURCH... THE I.M.S. S.D.A.R.M. CHURCH, WHICH IS GOING TO BE ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD IN THE YEAR 2014, that's just five tiny years away !!!!!

Over the following months I will be quoting statements from the pen of sister E.G. White regarding the condition of the church and also the appeals made year after year for a work of REVIVAL AND REFORMATION among the advent people.

This did not come , as we will see, during Sister White's life time.

Messages are quoted from the testimonies beginning from 1852, when for the first time the condition of Laodicea (lukewarmness) was applicable to the church.

JOHN WARNCKEN, AUSTRALIA



If They Speak Not According To This Word....

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20

“Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105

In John 7:40-43 we read, “Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him.”

What do we learn from these verses? That there were people who studied the Holy Scriptures and tested everything that happened according to what was written there. They were expecting the Messiah and they knew the prophecy in Micah announcing where He was to be born and what His genealogy was to be.

After Jesus' resurrection, two of His disciples were going back home, to Emmaus. They were sad because they were disappointed in their expectations. They had not understood God's plan of salvation because they were carnally minded. Their hope was fixed on this world and they believed what they wished, namely that the Messiah would come and set His kingdom on this earth; that He would bring about a new world order. They were absolutely disappointed when they experienced that the One whom they expected to be crowned as king of the Jews was crucified like a criminal.

The resurrected Saviour met them on the way and asked them, “What manner of communications [are] these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?” (Luke 24:16) And after He had heard what they had to say, He commented, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:26, 27

What do we learn from this dialogue? That it is very important to study the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testament, all prophecies about Jesus so that we may not be counted among the foolish virgins of the parable.

Jesus should soon come back, this time as King of kings and all Christians should know how this event will exactly take place. He Himself has warned us against false prophets so that we may not be moved from the platform of the truth. It is written that many will be deceived. Can it happen to us as it happened with the disciples of His time? Can we test with the Scriptures all events that are happening in the world in all levels? Today it is also spoken of a new world order and in many Christian churches it is taught that Jesus will set His kingdom on this earth, although the Master clearly said, “My kingdom is not of this world.”

The disciples from Emmaus were blinded by their own thoughts, feelings and imagination or ambition and they could not understand that the person who approached them on the way was Jesus Christ. When they sat at the table and "he took bread, and blessed [it], and brake, and gave to them... their eyes were opened, and they knew him." Luke 24:30, 31 Have our eyes been opened? Can we recognize His presence at all times? Do we believe, speak and act according to His promises? Have we already had that intimate dinner with Christ? Has He broken bread for us personally? Have we seen the signs of the nails and our names printed on the palms of His hands? His plea and invitation to the church of the end times is, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:20

We hear His voice when we study the Scriptures asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. His word has to find place in our hearts so that we cannot fall into the temptation of doubting. Only thus shall we be protected from false teachings and prepared for the events that are before us. His promise is, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Revelation 3:10

May the Lord help us to understand which is the most important book in our bookcase. **Amen.**

Teresa Corti

SPIRITUAL CAMPING: REVELATION IN THE ROCKIES CANMORE, ALBERTA, AUGUST 21- 23, 2009

By the grace of the Lord, we will have a spiritual camp in the Rocky Mountain area, Canoe Meadows, Kananaskis Country. It will start on Friday August 21st at 7:00 p.m. and end on Sunday August 23rd at noon.

The main subject that will be studied is the final events for the people of God, focusing on the time in which we will have to flee to the mountains.

Cost:

We will cover the transportation from Calgary (including from the airport) to Canoe Meadows and back. All food for the 3 days is also included.

Lodging:

Option 1: For Families or Honeymooners, \$250.00 Per Site, Bring your own tent. You can fit up to 6 people. All-inclusive.

See *Children Regulation

Option 2: \$60.00 Per Person, You do not have a tent and are willing to share. All-inclusive.

See *Children Regulations

Option 3: Negotiable - Contact us, You have your own tent but you are willing to share. Let us know how many people you can fit in your tent.

***Children Regulations:** Children are from 0-10, 1 Adult - 1 Child Free. Extra Child pays \$30.00 each

2 Adults - 2 Children Free. Extra Child pays \$30.00 each

Transportation:

People flying into the Calgary Airport will have to make arrangements to arrive sometime before 3.00 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 21st 2009.

People flying out of Calgary, will need to arrange a flight after 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 23rd 2009.

What to Bring:

Pack light. Day to day personal effects. Summer outdoor clothing. Personal and/or family bedding. Camera. Binoculars. Bible and/or Great Controversy. Note: There is NOT a shower facility at the campground. No power available.

Payments:

All Payments are in Canadian Funds. Payments are accepted by cheque before April 30, 2009. After May 1, 2009 all payments must be made by money order or wire transfer. Cheques and money orders should be made out to: International Missionary Society

Mail them to: P.O. Box 6122 Station A, Calgary, AB T2H 2L4

If you live outside of North America, make your payment by a wire transfer to: Oscar Oviedo, 403 542 4276.

Please, after your fill in the form (**On the back cover of The Messenger**), scan it and e-mail to: gatoscar_2001@yahoo.com

Health Insurance:

It is required for every individual to have health care insurance. For people living in Canada you must have your Provincial health card with you. For people outside of Canada, you must have proof of health care insurance for the time you are in Canada.

Additional Information:

Contact Br. Oscar Oviedo anytime at gatoscar_2001@yahoo.com or + 1 403 542 4276

***"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
Romans 3:23***

War!!

It's true, we are striving and struggling against sin; against outward and inward evil. Moreover, warring against sin daily, for our souls are polluted by it and perishing, as we are struggling in it by our own feeble strength. Furthermore, "The world is engulfed in sin and loaded with the curse of it." We have inherited it! (HP362:3; 263:2) Dubiously inherited by all descendents of Adam. It's a deathlike portrait of the Godless! It's everywhere!

We, therefore, need to be overcomers! You might be thinking, "it just doesn't seem possible to overcome." Many, regretfully, think this way. Maybe you're oblivious to it, insensible, ignorant, don't recognize it, or are presumptuous! "Or, worse yet, petting sin, infatuated with it, refusing to let go of it, or putting it away." (TSB 89:0; 91:2; FLB 102:4). In Greek "harmatomania" is an obsession with sin. Consequently, you're perplexed, fearful, and maybe anxious because of it... or, maybe not?

What Sin?

But, first, let's define sin! In mythology, "sin" is the Babylonian god of the moon. Simply, sin is a transgression of a religious or moral law, (namely, the Ten Commandments), especially when deliberate; of your own free will. Theologically, it's, again, deliberate disobedience to the known will of God; thusly, a woeful condition of estrangement from God resulting from such disobedience.

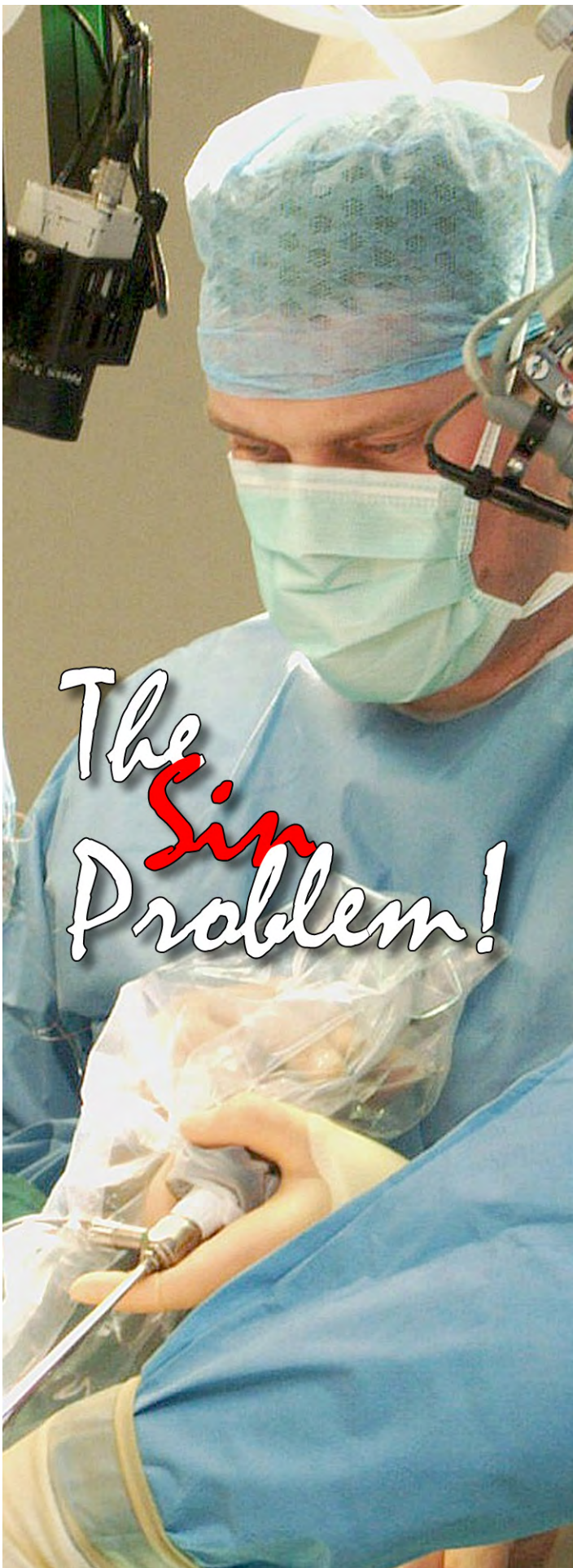
Also, overstepping of the Law, the divine boundary between good and evil (Ps 51:1); missing the mark, a failure to meet the divine standard (Rom 3:23); lawlessness or spiritual anarchy (1Tim 1:9); unbelief, or an insult to the divine veracity (Jn.16:9). Sin, consequently, is something shameful, deplorable, or utterly wrong! Consequently, "One's peace is destroyed by sin." (RC 278). Now that sin is defined – to continue in it is even worse as it is now "willful disobedience!"

Seeking or Sulking?

As the Lord's second coming is "at the door" should not it behoove us to prepare, prepare, prepare? The Lord is looking for a pure church, and a pure people; searching for such as the day approaches. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God." (Psalm 14:2; Luke 12:42). Therefore, overcoming sin needs to take preeminence over everything. Ah! But how? Before you opt to be dismissed, some points to exhort one another will be pointed out:

1. ALL HAVE SINNED:

I think we can all agree on this. But, to illustrate this further, we can



trace our steps back to another era for emphasis and clarity.

No Escape!

At the threshold of the early 19th century, New York City was once called “the city of contrasts.” Downtown New York was incredibly congested with buildings, people, horse-drawn carriages, filth, flies, and an onslaught of infectious diseases;(cholera, typhoid, typhus, malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, diarrhea – massive deaths, especially children); a world of dirt, offal and filth, insects, rats, and pungent smells.

It was a city drowning in “horse pollution”; horse manure, and streets, mired and thickly covered with horse manure and mud; rivers of muck, and stench everywhere – virtual cesspools. Horses each gave off 15-30 lbs. of manure and several quarts of urine a day; with a horse population of 200,000! Pigs, sheep, horses, cattle, goats, dogs, and cats, freely roamed the streets in packs and herds freely scavenging everywhere! Cruelly treated and overworked horses died after 2 years and were left to die and rot on the streets. It was a “horse pollution” crisis of the 19th century! Pitifully, there was no systemic street cleaning, sewer systems, flush toilets; and no solution; human waste was thrown out the windows from the “chamber pots” into the streets. Women wore parasols and men large brimmed hats; not just for the sun or rain. Ah! But, horses were essential for transportation. Without horses, New York City would “starve!” A revolting paradox! “Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.” (Jude 11).

Horse Power vs. Horsepower

Repulsive, loathsome, nauseous?! Yes, so is sin! The depravity, doom, and bitterness still prevails. Sin is stupefying... vile! I have deliberately belaboured the above to emphasize the fruitlessness and ugliness of sin. Sin and horse manure are a whole lot alike, and the noxious, but true picture of “horse pollution” then in New York City, can well illustrate the “sin pollution” today of mankind – cities mired in muck and sin... foul sin! You cannot escape it! It is a battle one can never quite win! It is manifested everywhere and difficult to get rid of. Ah! But you say, “today however, horse power is replaced by horsepower. Many street fatalities occurred then; horses, frightened by panic and noise, bolting, overturned carriages, kicks, bites, etc; “flight and fright engines.” The “horse pollution” then, resembles the auto in this age; air contaminants, noxious odours, noise... and “car fever!” So you see, the pollution continues, the putrefying persists; the filth of man’s greed and endeavours are capped with sin! It’s ever present, inescapable, worrisome, defiling, and oppressive! “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.”(Genesis 6:11). No change!! It is dull, obscene, despicable – an old New York era - desecrated, mucky avenues of dung and sin... everywhere!

Fancy Weeds

Ah! But, in another aspect and more palatable illustration, is a popular weed in Greece, the dandelion, or (horta-Gr), that grows wildly and is a treasured delicacy for hordes of Greek families that invade the mountains, wielding knives and bags to collect and devour the freshly picked treats later with lemon and olive oil as a “Spring Tonic,” a bitter, but succulent tonic.

Oh! But, in the lawns and gardens of many other countries, dandelions are a veritable “pest,” and “nuisance!” It seems that when you uproot one of the plants, another takes its place. It’s another lifetime battle one cannot quite win; difficult to get rid of; a noxious, pernicious weed... everywhere!! Sin is a whole lot like that... everywhere!!

Woe There!

Ah! But now, it’s true that our goal is to attain the glorious likeness of God. We all want to be like Him; a state of perfect patience. Isn’t that true? Have you reached that state of perfection; perfect patience? Ask someone close to you for the answer. Well, “what shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.”(Romans 3:9). David said, “I was born guilty. I was a sinner, in sin.”(Psalm 51:5). Yes, I was born guilty. I was a sinner from the moment of conception. As a baby I was born with a human nature, a sinner. Worse yet, the Bible says I am still a sinner as an adult! Woe unto me! You see, dandelions are a lifetime battle. From day number one until we die! So it is with sin. Woe unto us!

Hearty Greek

“For we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”(Romans 3:23). When we look at the word “come,” we find that the word “come,” (erhomenos), is in the continuous tense in the Greek! It means continuous, perpetual or unending! “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”(Genesis 6:5). So then, “we have all sinned in the past and we all continue to sin in the present and fall short of the glory of God.”(Romans 3:23). It’s everywhere, continuously!

2. SIN WILL EXCLUDE US FROM HEAVEN

Safe House!

It’s clear that you can’t get into heaven with sin. How do we know this? “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God?”(1Cor6:9). Wicked people will just not enter heaven. It’s clear that heaven is a pure, clean, safe place. It’s sacred, completely unpolluted, uncontaminated, sterile, and sanitary. No germs there, no pungent odours, no dust, no mud, no murkiness, no sin there. God cannot allow wicked people, or evil to enter and infest His

clean, bright land with contaminants or filth. Even if you have one speck of impurity in your soul, you will not enter Heaven. No sin can ever enter heaven. So, the repulsiveness of sin will exclude you from Heaven; left out... rejected!

3. ALL SIN MUST BE TOTALLY OVERCOME

Day Pack

“He who overcomes will inherit all this and I will be his God and he will be my son.”(Rev 21:7). Now, moreover, “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne.”(Rev 3:21). Therefore, sin must be taken care of first. Ah! But, how do you overcome? Well, the first step, and the most trying for many, is to unload the burden of past sins; its “back-breaking” and “heart-work,” so unload that daily beastly burden...now! If you do, you will be renewed, energized with a life-giving victory over sin and its past. But, this “victory cannot be achieved without faith, and by the merits of Jesus Christ.”(3SM 154:0; 360:4). It can only be relished, furthermore, “only by a union with Christ, and mingled with remorse and repentance.” (TMK318:3). You can and will do it! For, with “the strength from Christ you can overcome and have the victory over sin.”(HP 194:3). “With God all things are possible.”(Math 19:26).

Yes, You!

Furthermore, this is done through forgiveness. God can forgive you. You can, in fact, be forgiven, no matter how wicked you were in the past. The Apostle Mathew tells us, “And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men.”(Math 12:3). Past sins must be cast upon Jesus. Let Him carry your load. He can and will do it! Ah! But temptations may be weighing you down, as you are loaded with past sins. It can't work this way. So, to gain this forgiveness, we must repent and confess! “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1John 1:9). Repentance and confession also means your abandonment of sins! Just stop doing them! So, just ask Him. He will then bury them “in the depths of the ocean.”(Mi 7:19). Don't try to handle sin yourself. You cannot! But, “submit yourselves, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God; and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” (James 4:7, 8).

Remember this: “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”(Proverbs 28:13). So, stop trying to cover up sin. Let Jesus cover your sin with His precious blood. It can only happen when you take that first step, that first “second” in your mind; just one “second!” This is progress, when we become ready to uncover our sins to God. God then stands ready to cover them with the blood of His son, Jesus Christ.

Adopted Ethiopian

Furthermore, the big question again, is: “How do we overcome sin?” Well, again, it's impossible for us to overcome sin in our own strength! Jeremiah writes, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.”(Jeremiah 13:23). Ah! We see here that we're confronted with the pointed question: “Are we accustomed to doing evil?” Well, yes, we have some evil habits. Can you do any good then? By your personal efforts, to quit sinning will end up only in failure, and frustration. You cannot do it! Try all that you may! We're not perfect. Our hearts are sinful to the depths and core of our souls and hardened heart! Isaiah says, “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.”(Isaiah 1:5). So, again the repeated question: “then what are we going to do?”

4. WE NEED A NEW HEART

Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation

What did David say? “Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”(Psalm 51:10). You see, it's not for us to fight our own sins on our own, but to ask God to give us a new heart, a new experience, a new life, to radically transform what we are, rather than alter the things that we do. In essence it's a “heart transplant,” but with a “new heart!”

Jesus is the skilled surgeon. He knew that's what we needed, and always knows of our needs. He is always waiting to help us. We merely need to ask; to be changed into His image.

The trouble is that we have an alienated heart, calloused and riotous with self! It's been tempest-tossed and wasting away for years! It has been lacking the “blood beat” of Jesus; a transfusion of His life to abide in ours, to “jump-start” our life again.... with CPR but more!

Something Is Wrong!

The Apostle Paul bears this out, that we have the “wrong heart,” and that it needs to be changed. It's brute and labouring! Paul struggled with sin, saying, “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For, I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.” (Romans 7:18-20). He cried out in anguish, plagued as we often are, “What I do not want to do is what I do!” He's struggling, wrestling with sin. Paul was a Christian, a Christian writer, a Christian believer, who was the biggest contributor of sacred writings in the New Testament.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



Church in Johannesburg South Africa



Church in Kampala, Uganda



Fred Ayunga Youth Leader



Clinic in Uganda

Missionary Journal



children in South Africa church

To
Ab



Choir in Swaziland



ly
rica




Missionary school in Kenya



Fred, Leila, Edda, Gabriel

*It can only happen
when you take
that first step, that
first “second” in
your mind; just one
“second!”*



Yet, as a Christian leader, he was not doing what he wanted to do! He wrote the book of Romans after his conversion. His best efforts, it seems, ended up short of the goal!

So, you see, Satan has his “beachhead” and launches his attack on us through the mind, and his last stronghold.... the body, appetite, and the wily tongue! So, what is the answer to this dilemma; this battle with sin? The Psalmist cried out to God! (Psalm 23,38, 51). What is happening? Something is wrong! What is the answer here? Well, the answer is:

5. JESUS CHRIST

Radical Surgery!

“The converting power of God changes the heart.”(HP 164:2). Furthermore, “a clean heart and the cleansing of the heart is a gift from Christ.”(HP 7:2). “Then I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord.”(Jeremiah 24:7).

Jesus is our Saviour. Who is your saviour? Are you your saviour? Stop trying to be your saviour. Let Jesus be your Saviour and Surgeon. “Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). He will take away your sins. He’s your Saviour, not you. You’re not your saviour! He paid for our sins. It’s the blood of Jesus Christ that pays for the sin of the Christian. His perfect life is “accounted” to your sinful life. And, so, you are made perfect through Him. The Apostle John says, “But, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son purifies us from all sin.”(1John 1:7). His blood will purify you.

Blood Brother!

“The efficacy of Christ’s blood is mingled with sincere prayer. The circulation of blood is compared to Christ’s life in us.” (TDG 177:6; OHC 60:4). Not your perspiration, or your blood, but His blood, and only His, will purify you from all sin. It will cleanse you from all sin. “Simple faith in the atoning blood of Jesus can only save. Tell others! (TMK 336:3). The blood of Jesus is like the “blood on the doorposts to the Israelites, as the Passover angel spared the homes, and like the Sabbath, a mark on God’s people.”(HP150)

Count Yourself Dead!

Ah! But no human being can say he is without sin. Yes, you grapple with sin up to the time you die. When you are dead, you stop sinning. Dead people do not sin! That is the answer! That is the secret of overcoming sin! Paul says, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”(Galatians 2:20). Again, that’s the secret! You need to die! “In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”(Romans 6:11). Clearly, then, we don’t get victory by trying, we get victory

by dying. In essence, it's the outliving by the inliving Christ! This is the Christian life! Now, of course, you have to make some effort, but they won't bring the total victory. You need to have victory by dying to the old man of sin and having the new experience, the new heart in your life. That's how you get the victory! "But thanks be to God which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1Corinthians 15:57).

Victory is a gift from Jesus! This victory can be yours by dying to the old way of life and accepting that new gift of eternal life. By beholding Jesus every day, you will be changed. You'll be more and more like Jesus, until the moment in the twinkling of an eye you will be changed totally. (1 John 3:2, 3)

Beware The Monster!

Ah! But, that old man is always lying quietly at your feet, dormant-like, just waiting to be "energized." When the "old husband" is resurrected, that "old man," you are in a very dangerous position! He becomes extremely wicked! When you return back to sin, you are worse off than before! More bad news! All your former sins that were forgiven before are then all returned to you!! You see, sin is at the door of every household! It's like an old stray dog lying in wait at your doorstep, waiting for you to open the door, and he will rush into your house and your life! Sin (The Spoiler), is always waiting for an opportunity. That monster can be seconds away from you! Sin will not die until we die! Ah! But sin tells you, you'll never get caught! But, sin is not dead in you, but you are dead to sin! Obey not the desires of the flesh until Jesus comes! Sin is like malignant cancer; it destroys the whole self! Woe unto us!

The Sanctified Look!

"The more we contemplate the heavenly, the less we see desirable and attractive in the earthly. The more we continually fix the eye of faith on Christ, the more our faith grows, our hope strengthens, our love becomes more intense and fervent with the clearness of our spiritual insight, and our spiritual intelligence increases. The more we talk of His merits and tell of His power the more fully will we reflect His image in our own character and the less we shall submit our minds and affections to the paralyzing influences of the world, and the less they will be enveloped in the fog of doubt, and the more easily shall we lay all our trials, all our burdens, upon the Burden Bearer. Ask Jesus through His power to save you from sin" (The Sure Anchor of Faith. In Heavenly Places, pg. 127).

Yield The Right Of Way!

You see, sin is like those dandelions – bitter, troublesome, a nuisance... everywhere! Don't fight them all your life. Give the dandelion problem over to the Master Gardener, Jesus, and let Him take care of them. He will make them sweet and edible, too. The Greeks know! Turn your sin problem over to Jesus. Let Jesus give you that sweet victory. So, be an overcomer! Ask Him and He will

give you the victory. Believe that He will! Your life will never be the same again. Accept His gift of salvation and His victory into your life. Believe and recognize that you are totally saved by the wonderful grace of Jesus Christ. Remember, however, that the nearer a sinner is to Jesus, the greater he realizes his worthlessness as a greater sinner, for he sees himself as he is and not as God wants him to be. For, "I would not have known sin except through the law."(Romans 7:7). Finally, Jesus tells us, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous!"(1 John 2:1).

"Think good things." (Philippians 4:8). Believe and behave!

Give the sin and dandelion problem to Jesus. He'll solve THE SIN PROBLEM for you! **Amen!! John Theodorou, U.S.A.**

The Pen of Inspiration

"Money will soon depreciate in value very suddenly when the reality of eternal scenes opens to the senses of man." **[HYPERINFLATION]** - {True Miss, January 1, 1874 par. 10}

"Those who hold the reins of government... are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis." **[BAILOUTS]** - {9T 13.3} (early 1900s)

"There will be many great failures in earthly banks, and in speculations **[STOCK MARKETS]**, including mining **[COMMODITIES]** and real estate **[HOUSING]**." - {13MR 236.1} (1888)

"It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday-sabbath, that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced, and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." **[THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL SUFFER A LOSS OF MATERIAL & FINANCIAL PROSPERITY, WHICH WILL BRING UPON THEM CALAMITIES, WHEN THEY WILL THEN CALL FOR LAWS ENFORCING SUNDAY-REST.]** - {GC88 590.1} (1888)

"We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him?" Hebrews 2:1

In this opening verse we are told to give more earnest heed (give careful attention) to messages we have heard, otherwise they may slip. If we neglect to give heed, we may lose that which we had before.

In the Bible God has sent us warning after warning, and the majority of people just turn a deaf ear. Soon there will be a great time of tribulation on this earth which will take many people by an overwhelming surprise simply because they did not heed the warning signs God sent along the way.

Is it possible that some in God's church will be surprised? Yes, if the necessary preparations are not made today. The first warning given in the Bible was in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were warned not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. They were told what the consequences would be. Apparently Eve did not take the warning that seriously or she would never have parlayed with the serpent. Although we may disparage the actions of Adam and Eve, today people are doing just the same. "Men will not take warning from Adam's experience. They will indulge appetite and passion in direct violation of the law of God, and at the same time continue to mourn Adam's transgression, which brought sin into the world." RH Mar 4, 1875.

Many who have been faithful Christians may lose their way by indulging in what they consider "one small sin." They think that it is not so important how strict their dietary habits are, or what their dress is like outside of church. A little indulgence here and there will be overlooked. "Never should a morsel of food pass the lips between meals." {CTBH 50.1} Would you exchange your salvation for a morsel? Esau sold his birthright for a morsel of food.

BIBLICAL WARNINGS

All throughout the Bible you find many warnings that we are encouraged to take heed of.

Such as...

Idolatry: "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them." Deut. 11:16. Idols are not only material goods that we cherish closer to our hearts than Jesus, but there are also idols of attitudes and opinions. "Whatever shall divert the affections from God must be given up. Mammon is the idol of many. Its golden chain binds them to Satan. Reputation and worldly honor are worshiped by another class. The life of selfish ease and freedom from responsibility is the idol of



Heed The
Warning

others. These are Satan's snares, set for unwary feet. But these slavish bands must be broken; the flesh must be crucified with the affections and lusts." 5T 83

Burdening the Sabbath: "Thus saith the LORD; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring [it] in by the gates of Jerusalem;" Jeremiah 17:21 This verse not only includes burdening the Sabbath with physical labour, but also with mental and emotional labour. Anything that would detract from you experiencing a blessed and peaceful Sabbath rest, is burdening the Sabbath. It would be well to lay worries and cares aside before entering the Sabbath. Also important is to make all matters right between brethren before the setting of the sun, otherwise the Sabbath is burdensome and cannot be enjoyed with the joy and happiness that God intends.

To be seen of men: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 6:1. Some give offerings to be seen of men. They are always speaking of how much they gave here and how much there. In the world people put their names on buildings when they give. Some want positions in the church for the sake of prestige, however, when it comes to fulfilling the responsibilities included with the office – they are hesitant to fulfil the duties. All duties done for the honour and glory of self, is loathsome in the eyes of God. On the contrary – even the smallest duty, if done in simplicity and sincerity, in love to God, is accepted as a sweet fragrance.

Unbelief: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Hebrews 3:12. Are there unbelievers in the Christian World? Are there unbelievers in God's church? While we may acknowledge the teachings to be correct, do we disbelieve God when He tells us we can put away sin and live a perfect life through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? This is where many believers disbelieve. Do they disbelieve God when He states that He will close the doors of heaven for the one who would not give up his 'morsel' of sin?

Cares of this Life: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life." Luke 21:34. Don't become too busy with the affairs of this life that you have little time to pray and study. They are of secondary importance to your salvation. They will perish in the fire. Be careful not to become like Martha, but rather be like Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus. If you lack personal time with Jesus you may not detect the signs of the times that are fast fulfilling around you. You certainly won't be prepared to meet them.

Leaven: "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matthew 16:6 "Among the followers of our Lord today, as of old, how widespread is this subtle, deceptive sin! How often our service to Christ, our communion with one another, is marred by the secret desire to exalt

self! How ready the thought of self-gratulation, and the longing for human approval! It is the love of self, the desire for an easier way than God has appointed that leads to the substitution of human theories and traditions for the divine precepts. To His own disciples the warning words of Christ are spoken, 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.'" DA 409

May God help us to not be found in this position... having the leaven of the Pharisees.

We can find many more warnings in the Bible that we need to take heed of. It would do us well to read of them and take notice.

While God sends messages of warning. Satan also sends messages of fear to prevent us from going forward by faith. Take the example of Nehemiah.

NEHEMIAH

In refusing to come and have a meeting with Sanballat and Tobiah in the plain of Ono, the enemies of Nehemiah thought of another way to put a stop to his work. The first idea didn't work so they tried something else. He received a warning. His enemies had hired a friend of his to try to turn him aside from the work he was doing.

The Warning: "Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who [was] shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee." Nehemiah 6:10

Ignored: "And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who [is there], that, [being] as I [am], would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in." Nehemiah 6:11.

Why: "And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. Therefore [was] he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and [that] they might have [matter] for an evil report, that they might reproach me." Nehemiah 6:12, 13.

Rationale: "Again and again had Satan been defeated; and now, with deeper malice and cunning, he laid a still more subtle and dangerous snare for the servant of God. Sanballat and his companions hired men who professed to be the friends of Nehemiah, to give him evil counsel as the word of the Lord. The chief one engaged in this iniquitous work was Shemaiah, a man previously held in good repute by Nehemiah. This man shut himself up in a chamber near the sanctuary as if fearing that his life was in danger. The temple was at this time protected by walls and gates, but the gates of the city were not yet set up. Professing great concern for Nehemiah's safety, Shemaiah advised him to seek shelter in the temple. 'Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple,' he proposed, 'and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay

thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.’

“Had Nehemiah followed this treacherous counsel, he would have sacrificed his faith in God, and in the eyes of the people he would have appeared cowardly and contemptible. In view of the important work that he had undertaken, and the confidence that he professed to have in the power of God, it would have been altogether inconsistent for him to hide as if in fear. The alarm would have spread among the people, each would have sought his own safety, and the city would have been left unprotected, to fall a prey to its enemies. That one unwise move on the part of Nehemiah would have been a virtual surrender of all that had been gained.

“Nehemiah was not long in penetrating the true character and object of his counsellor. ‘I perceived that God had not sent him,’ he says, ‘but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.’

“The infamous counsel given by Shemaiah was seconded by more than one man of high reputation, who, while professing to be Nehemiah’s friends, were secretly in league with his enemies. But it was to no avail that they laid their snare. Nehemiah’s fearless answer was: ‘Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.’” PK 655, 656

This warning was not from God, and Nehemiah knew it, so he ignored it.

We have another example of an ignored warning, but with a different result.

GEDALIAH

The Warning: “Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know [it]: wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish?” Jeremiah 40:15.

Ignored: “But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.” Jer. 40:16

Result: “Now it came to pass in the seventh month, [that] Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah. Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land. Ishmael also slew

all the Jews that were with him, [even] with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, [and] the men of war.” Jer 41:1-3

Was this warning from God or from Satan? Should Gedaliah have heeded the warning? By ignoring it, he lost his life.

You can read many stories from history of faithful servants of God; sometimes they fled to a new area, sometimes they remained and stood faithful, sometimes they lost their lives in the process. Who can understand the ways of God? “For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:9

For this reason we need to walk close to the Lord. We need to be sanctified. How is sanctification defined? “Sanctification means a habitual communion with God.” RH March 15, 1906. Then, “thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” Isaiah 30:21

Take the example of David regarding the city of Keilah (1 Samuel 23:1-13). God revealed to him when it was time to go help the city, but also when it was time to leave.

We will then know when to flee; when to remain. In the time of the end, some will be required to flee to the mountains – others will be required to remain and answer for their faith in a court of law. How will we know our duty? The only answer is by walking with Jesus. We need to discern whether the warnings come from Jesus or from Satan.

Noah had a warning for the people. They did not pay heed to it, rather they ignored the warning and in a rather defiant manner, until it was too late.

THE WATCHMAN

When the Watchman has given the warning his job is done. It is the duty of the citizens to heed the warning. If they do not heed the warning, then it is not the fault of the watchman.

“They that heed the warning shall not be left in darkness...” 1 Thess. 5:2. The Watchman has given us a warning. It would do well for God’s people to heed the warning so, that that day should overtake them unawares. But to them that will not watch, “the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” 1 Thessalonians 5:2-5.

“Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.” Mark 13:33. Do you know the time in history we are living in? Are you listening to the Watchman? What are you doing about it?

If we do not take heed to the warning, the end result could be sin against the Holy Spirit. “When men willfully reject the Spirit...” (5T 634) and “persist... in rejecting light and the conviction of the Holy

Spirit" (TM 74), His voice becomes quieter.

TAKE HEED

There are some things we need to make sure we take heed to DO...

Speak the word of God: "And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?" Numbers 23:12. Share the good news. Jesus is coming soon. Let your friends, neighbours, workmates know that the end of all things is near at hand. Jesus is coming soon. Get ready, get ready, get ready.

Keep Covenant: "Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you." Deut 4:23. Don't forget your baptismal vows. God made a covenant with you. Have you made any promises to Him? Have you kept them all?

Love God: "Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God. "Joshua 23:11. Let your love be seen in your actions, and not by your words only. Your words have no value without corresponding actions.

Keep Commandments: "But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." Joshua 22:5. Obey all the requirements of God with a willing heart, understanding that they are all for the benefit of mankind. They were given to improve life, and not to burden life. Do not let a morsel keep you out of heaven.

Spiritual Pride: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10:12. Examine yourselves, your motives, the direction of your life, your growth in grace. Is it upward? Stagnant? Or definitely downwards.

"Here is a solemn warning for the people of God today, to allow no unchristian trait to live in their hearts. A sin which is fostered becomes habitual; and, strengthened by repetition, it soon exerts a controlling influence, bringing into subjection all the nobler powers. Balaam loved the rewards of unrighteousness. The sin of covetousness, which God ranks with idolatry, he did not resist and overcome. Satan obtained entire control of him through this one fault, which deteriorated his character, and made him a time-server. He called God his master; but he did not serve Him; he did not work the words of God." ST Nov. 1, 1880.

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you." Mat 24:4

Visible Danger: When you see danger, take heed. Don't ignore it.

We may not be required to flee, but we should take heed of, and pray, asking God for the appropriate action in the circumstance. If we ignore the seen danger, disaster may result as with this man, "But Amasa took no heed to the sword that [was] in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth [rib], and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died." 2 Samuel 20:10

THE GREATEST WARNING TO HEED

"We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

"The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

"The condition of things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us." 9T 11

But we have the promise that, "God's chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them." 9T 17.

"God's word to His people is: 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate... and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters.' 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.' 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18; 1 Peter 2:9. God's people are to be distinguished as a people who serve Him fully, wholeheartedly, taking no honor to themselves, and remembering that by a most solemn covenant they have bound themselves to serve the Lord and Him only." 9T 17

Keep the candle burning. By neglect, it can go out. "Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness." Luke 11:35. The darkness on this earth is getting deeper, therefore our light will shine brighter. May God help us not to let our candle go out but make diligent efforts to keep it burning by taking heed of every warning, counsel, admonition, and encouragement given by the heavenly Watchman as written in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. **AMEN.**

Wendy Eaton , Canada

Have you ever wondered why December 25 was assigned for Christ's birthday, when it is not? Read the true history, and you'll be shocked by this exposure! (Prelude: The purpose of this article is just to reveal the plain truth; not to attack. But the problem is that sometimes truth hurts... It is your choice if you want to know it!)

Christ's birth not on December 25

"'Christmas is coming,' is the note that is sounded throughout our world from east to west and from north to south. With youth, those of mature age, and even the aged, it is a period of general rejoicing, of great gladness. But what is Christmas that it should demand so much attention? ...

"The twenty-fifth of December is supposed to be the day of the birth of Jesus Christ, and its observance has become customary and popular. But yet there is no certainty that we are keeping the veritable day of our Saviour's birth. History gives us no certain assurance of this. The Bible does not give us the precise time." (Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, Dec. 9, 1884)

Tracing Christmas to the Root

Now, if December 25 is not Jesus' birthday, then why was it chosen as His birthday? Whose real birthday is this?

Actually, according to history, "From pre-Christian times, during the season of the solstice, the Romans engaged in their boisterous feast of the Saturnalia (December 17-23). They did this in honor of Saturn, the god of Agriculture. In addition, the expansion of the Empire introduced Romans to many Oriental cults, one of which was the worship of the Persian sun-god Mithra, whose birthday was celebrated December 25." (Christmas The Untold Story p. 2, a pamphlet)

Furthermore, the New Catholic Encyclopaedia blasts this truth: "Christmas originated at a time when the cult of the sun was particularly strong in Rome... Though the substitution of Christmas for the pagan festival cannot be proved with certainty, it remains the most plausible explanation for the dating of Christmas."

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia continues, "the birth of Christ was assigned the date of the winter solstice (December 25 in the Julian Calendar, January 6 in the Egyptian) because on this day, as the sun began its return to northern skies, the pagan devotees of Mithra celebrated the dies natalis Solis Invicti (birthday of the invincible sun)."

Now, as we can see from the above citations and from other various references, today's Christmas – December 25 – is largely attributable to the birthday of pagan's sun-god. Different places and empires held different names for their sun-god: Baal, Bel, Horus, Osiris, Sol, Tammuz, etc.



The Hidden Truth About Merry Christmas

Going back to the earliest Biblical account of sun worship and occultism, "The first city built after the flood was Babylon. Satan set up his headquarters here. Semiramis was the Queen of Babylon, and Nimrod led the people into rebellion against God... Semiramis married Nimrod, and historically, he has been called 'The Son, The husband of his Mother...' Semiramis was a beautiful witch, completely sold out to Satan... Death by crucifixion was also one of her ideas. Crosses were originally designed as occults symbols to be worshipped both in ancient Babylon and Egypt... Nimrod was a master warlock (male witch). Under his direction, astrology was developed. He also laid the ground work for both white and black witchcraft.... He was called Moloch. Sacrifices to Moloch were not uncommon... One of Noah's sons, Shem was still living. He killed Nimrod to end these occult practices... After Semiramis proclaimed that she was a goddess, she demanded that babies be sacrificed to her. The sign of the cross was cut into the baby's chest, and the heart removed. This would please Semiramis and, in turn make peace with their god, Nimrod... When Nimrod was killed, the people wept. Their hero was dead. Satan used Nimrod's death to his advantage... Semiramis quickly moved to keep him a god. She called Nimrod "Baal," the sun-god, and demanded that he be worshipped. Then she became pregnant, claiming she was still a virgin. She gave birth to a son and called him "Tammuz," telling everyone that Nimrod had been reincarnated. Semiramis claimed to be the 'Spirit of God,' incarnated in a human mother, her symbol was the moon. She was 'the Virgin Mother,' and soon, statues of her holding the little sun god appeared everywhere. She claimed he was their saviour... The stories told of Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz spread across the world. The fables became popular in mythology. Gods and goddesses were dreamed up, all based on these people. They became 'The Holy Family.'

XX"Semiramis became known as 'The Queen of Heaven!' To deceive the world with lying wonders, Satan used 'The force' from (his evil angels) time to time throughout history by having demons form an image of Semiramis, appearing in different locations and in various shapes. These phenomena became 'miracles.' Satan set it up according to race: Japanese, Caucasian, Hindu, Black and Hispanic. This is reincarnation in its fullness, and it is demonic. Each country has its own patron saint or virgin. (Rev. 18:2-3)... Has Satan the power to make a statue move or speak? Yes, he's done it in the past, and he'll do it in the future. These miracles will deceive the people and destroy their souls forever. (Rev. 13:15; 16:13-14).

"These visions and apparitions have appeared in the pagan religious and in Roman Catholicism under the names of Venus, Diana, Isis, The Madonna, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Fatima, etc. As the time approaches for the second coming of Jesus, these 'miracles' will again momentum. Even in the past, Jews worshipped the Queen of Heaven. (Jer. 7:17-20)...

"In the Old Testament of the Bible God raised up a nation of people to be a light to those in Satan's dark world. These people were to represent Him. They were called the children of Israel. God allowed

them to be slaves in Egypt for 400 years. During this time, 'They built for Pharaoh Treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.'(Ex.1:11)... The religion of Semiramis and Nimrod spread into Egypt. Soon sun worship became the religion of the land. The gods of Babylon were given Egyptian names.

"The Egyptian temple priests practiced transubstantiation. They claimed to have magical powers which enabled them to change their great sun god, Osiris, into a Wafer.

"Then in a religious ritual, the faithful would eat their god to nourish their souls.

"IHS stood for the Egyptian Trinity: Isis, Horus, Seb...

"God revealed to His prophet Ezekiel, three abominations that the children of Israel were committing in secret.

"God revealed 70 elders of Israel in a dark room with incense, worshipping images of unclean creatures and idols of every sort. It was a secret society, similar to masonry. (Ezekiel 8:10-12)

"God showed Ezekiel another abomination: "Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz' (Nimrod). (Ezekiel 8:14)

"Third abomination: 'And He brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, ... were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.'(Ezekiel 8:16) (This is Baal worship) ...

"The Queen of Babylon (Semiramis) ordered the world to celebrate the birth of her son, 'Tammuz.' He, of course, was the 'Sun god, Baal,' representing Satan. She set December 25th for Baal's birthday. Her astrologers told her that the sun is at its farthest point from the earth during the winter solstice. So they told the people that on the 21st of December the sun, or Baal, dies. Then on the 24th of December, he starts coming back to life, and the 25th is his birthday.

"As time passed, all over the world on the 25th of December the sun was worshipped by these various names: Tammuz, Horus, Osiris, Sol. Etc. it was a time for orgies, sacrificing of babies to Baal, drunkenness and merriment. Semiramis ordered trees to be decorated with little balls representing the sun.

"God fought this evil holiday by ... forbidding the Jews to decorate trees as the heathens were doing. (Jer. 10:1-4)

"When the mass was first said on midnight, December 24th, around the year 394 A.D., it was the mass of Christ, or Christmas. The

religious machine changed it from Baal's birthday to the birthday of Jesus. The pagans loved it. It became the biggest day of the year for the Roman Catholic institution.

"It is a festive time of lights, songs, Christmas trees, gifts, but also suicides and despair for the homeless.

"We see Yule logs, parties, kids waiting for Santa Claus to leave them presents. We see the Virgin Mary and a little baby, both with the sun around their heads. Does the Bible instruct us to celebrate the birth of Christ? No! Neither Christ nor the apostles ever taught this. There is no record that the early believers ever celebrated Christ's birth, much less "Xmas." This unbiblical practice was instituted by the Vatican to tie Christ to the Mass. Today, Protestants are pressured into observing this Roman Catholic 'Holy Day.'" (Jack T. Chick, *The Force* pp. 9-26)

Actually, Satan is a diligent Bible student, and he knew well the prophecy of a coming Messiah to be born of a Virgin as prophet Isaiah told us. With this, he made in advance a counterfeit messiah (Tammuz) who was to be reincarnated thru a virgin (Semiramis), made in his most subtle way that he may garb paganism with Christianity in the future... And now we can see in almost every place a virgin carrying the baby Tammuz, the reincarnated sun-god Nimrod of the Babylon. Oh how skilful Satan had prepared that! Amazing, that only the diligent truth seeker can know that!

Christmas and Sunday keeping, the key to understand Catholicism's true nature and foundation

"The [Catholic] Church took the pagan buckler of faith against the heathen. She took the pagan, Roman Pantheon, [the Roman] temple to all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs; so it stands to this day. She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday. The sun was a foremost god with heathendom. Balder the beautiful: the White God, the old Scandinavians called him. The sun has worshippers at this very hour in Persian and other lands... Hence the Church would seem to have said, 'keep that old, pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.' And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday, sacred to Jesus. The sun is a fitting emblem of Jesus. The Fathers often compared Jesus to the sun; as they compared Mary to the Moon."- William L. Gildea, "Paschale Gaudium," in "The Catholic World," 58, March, 1894.

"The Church made a sacred day of Sunday... largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun; - for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals endeared to the people by tradition, and to give them a Christian significance."- Arthur Weigall, "The Paganism in Our Christianity," 1928, p. 145.

"Remains of the struggle [between the religion of Christianity and the religion of Mithraism] are found in two institutions adopted from its rival by Christianity in the fourth century, the two Mithraic sacred

days: December 25, 'dies natalis solis' [birthday of the sun], as the birthday of Jesus, - and Sunday, 'the venerable day of the sun,' as Constantine called it in his edict of 321 [March 7]." - Walter Woodburn Hyde, "Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire," p. 60.

"Is it not strange that Sunday is almost universally observed when the Sacred Writings do not endorse it? Satan, the great counterfeiter, worked through the 'mystery of iniquity' to introduce a counterfeit Sabbath to take the place of the true Sabbath of God. Sunday stands side by side with Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy (or Maundy) Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Whit-Sunday, Corpus Christi, Assumption Day, All Soul's Day, Christmas Day, and a host of other ecclesiastical feast days too numerous to mention. This array of Roman Catholic feast and fast days are all man made. None of them bears the divine credentials of the Author of the Inspired Word." - M.E. Walsh.

"Sun worship was the earliest idolatry." A. R. Fausset, "Bible Dictionary," p. 666.

Sun worship was "one of the oldest components of the Roman religion." - Gaston H. Halsberghe, "The Cult of Sol Invictus," 1972, p. 26.

"Babylon, the mother of harlots,' derived much of her teaching from pagan Rome and thence from Babylon. Sun worship - that led her to Sunday keeping, - was one of those choice bits of paganism that sprang originally from the heathen lore of ancient Babylon: 'The Solar Theology of the "Chaldeans" had a decisive effect upon the final development of Semitic paganism. [It led to their] seeing the sun the directing power of the cosmic system. All the Baals (sun-god) were thence forward turned into suns; the sun itself being the mover of the other stars - like it eternal and 'unconquerable.'... Such was the final form reached by the religion of the pagan Semites, and following them, by that of the Romans...when they raised 'Sol Invictus' [the invincible sun] to the rank of supreme divinity in the Empire." - Franz V.M. Cumont, "The Frontier Provinces of the East," in "The Cambridge Ancient History," Vol. 11, pp. 643, 646-647.

"Constantine labored at this time untiringly to unite the worshippers of the old and the new into one religion. All his laws and contrivances are aimed at promoting this amalgamation of religions. He would by all lawful and peaceable means melt together a purified heathenism and a moderated Christianity... Of all his blending and melting together of Christianity and heathenism, none is more easy to see through than this making of his Sunday law: The Christians worshipped their Christ, the heathen their sun-god... [So they should now be combined]." - H.G. Heggtveit, "Illustreret Kirkehistorie," 1895, p.202.

Summary

From history we've learned that Dec. 25 is Tammuz's birthday, and not Christ's. And it (Christmas day) sprang solely from pagan traditions. Semiramis, being the Queen of Babylon, ordered the world to worship his son "Tammuz" - the reincarnated sun-god

(Nimrod).

Through Christmas also, and a host of other traditions, now we can see that, Catholicism in its true nature and foundation, is not at all derived from pure Christianity. It is just vested with nominal Christianity outside, but profound paganism inside. To be specific, there are no pagan celebrations most popular and most widely accepted by the world, even by professed Christians, other than these two traditions, namely (1) Christmas Day (dies natalis Solis Invicti or the birthday of the invincible sun, Dec. 25) and (2) Sunday keeping (venerabili die solis or the sacred day of the sun). By employing merriment (that's why merry Christmas) and grandeur as fronts, the arch deceiver has successfully blinded and bound us to follow big rites of the ancient pagans.

Edward Timonera

IMS PUBLISHING ANNOUNCEMENT

We would like to advise you of the literature that are available for purchase. Over the next few issues we will be highlighting different publications and pamphlets/flyers. They are great for missionary work and make excellent gifts.

Shipping costs will be added to the price. Volume discounts are available. If you would like to purchase a complete set of publications or require further information please contact us at:

BY MAIL: 54 Newcastle Street
Toronto, ON
Canada M8Y1A3

BY EMAIL: timom@sympatico.ca

PUBLICATIONS & PAMPHLETS

- Living by Principle, by E. G. White - 75 cents each
- Is God a Committee? - 75 cents each
- Why I am a Vegetarian – 25 cents each

The following pamphlets are all 50 cents each:

- Israel & the Remnant, by C.A. Anderson
- The Time and the Work
- 35 Reasons why I keep the Sabbath, by Robert Corneia
- The Sabbath Commandment, Has it been changed? H. Dering
- Selected Gems of thought from the Pen of E.G. White
- Cutout Without Hands and Understanding the Principle Identity of God's Church
- The Humanity of Christ, by E. G. White
- The Beginning of the Work in China and Korea, B. Cholich
- The Remnant and Babylon Identified
- Emmanuel God with Us, by J. Thiel
- The Sanctuary, by O.R. Crosen
- The Place of Herbs in Rational Therapy, by E. White

www.imsmessenger.org

Visit the Reformation Messenger Website, which is located at: www.imsmessenger.org.

To date we have served over 28,000 visitors. The website has added features including the entire catalogue of the magazine published from 2000 to present. This includes more than 80 issues comprised of over 1100 articles that are available in both text and PDF format. Both formats may be searched by various methods.

The use of the website and access to all of the articles continues to be free.

Additionally we have also added an online subscription service with various rate plans comprised of both printed format and on CD, that can be mailed to you. There is also a donation service for those who would like to support the important work that the magazine accomplishes throughout the world in spreading the gospel message to each continent.

We hope that you will find the website convenient and worthwhile. May God bless your support of His work throughout the world and may these efforts hasten His soon return. Amen

Makes A Great Gift!

www.imsmessenger.org

The Measure of Forgiveness

Christ Object Lessons

E. G. White



CHILDREN'S CORNER

Based on Matt. 18:21-35.

Peter had come to Christ with the question, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" The rabbis limited the exercise of forgiveness to three offenses. Peter, carrying out, as he supposed, the teaching of Christ, thought to extend it to seven, the number signifying perfection. But Christ taught that we are never to become weary of forgiving. Not "Until seven times," He said, "but, Until seventy times seven."

Then He showed the true ground upon which forgiveness is to be granted and the danger of cherishing an unforgiving spirit. In a parable He told of a king's dealing with the officers who administered the affairs of his government. Some of these officers were in receipt of vast sums of money belonging to the state. As the king investigated their administration of this trust, there was brought before him one man whose account showed a debt to his lord for the immense sum of ten thousand talents. He had nothing to pay, and according to the custom, the king ordered him to be sold, with all that he had, that payment might be made. But the terrified man fell at his feet and besought him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

"But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him."

This parable presents details which are needed for the filling out of the picture but which have no counterpart in its spiritual significance. The attention should not be diverted to them. Certain great truths

are illustrated, and to these our thought should be given.

The pardon granted by this king represents a divine forgiveness of all sin. Christ is represented by the king, who, moved with compassion, forgave the debt of his servant. Man was under the condemnation of the broken law. He could not save himself, and for this reason Christ came to this world, clothed His divinity with humanity, and gave His life, the just for the unjust. He gave Himself for our sins, and to every soul He freely offers the blood-bought pardon. "With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption." Ps. 130:7.

Here is the ground upon which we should exercise compassion toward our fellow sinners. "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." John 4:11. "Freely ye have received," Christ says, "freely give." Matt. 10:8.

In the parable, when the debtor pleaded for delay, with the promise, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all," the sentence was revoked. The whole debt was canceled. And he was soon given an opportunity to follow the example of the master who had forgiven him. Going out, he met a fellow servant who owed him a small sum. He had been forgiven ten thousand talents; the debtor owed him a hundred pence. But he who had been so mercifully treated, dealt with his fellow laborer in an altogether different manner. His debtor made an appeal similar to that which he himself had made to the king, but without a similar result. He who had so recently been forgiven was not tenderhearted and pitiful. The mercy shown him he did not exercise in dealing with his fellowservant. He heeded not the request to be patient. The small sum owed to him was all that the ungrateful servant would keep in mind. He demanded all that he thought his due, and carried into effect a sentence similar to that which had been so graciously revoked for him.

How many are today manifesting the same spirit. When the debtor pleaded with his lord for mercy, he had no true sense of the greatness of his debt. He did not realize his helplessness. He hoped to deliver himself. "Have patience with me," he said, "and I will pay thee all." So there are many who hope by their own works to merit God's favor. They do not realize their helplessness. They do not accept the grace of God as a free gift, but are trying to

build themselves up in self-righteousness. Their own hearts are not broken and humbled on account of sin, and they are exacting and unforgiving toward others. Their own sins against God, compared with their brother's sins against them, are as ten thousand talents to one hundred pence --nearly one million to one; yet they dare to be unforgiving.

In the parable the lord summoned the unmerciful debtor, and "said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." "So likewise," said Jesus, "shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." He who refuses to forgive is thereby casting away his own hope of pardon.

But the teaching of this parable should not be misapplied. God's forgiveness toward us lessens in no wise our duty to obey Him. So the spirit of forgiveness toward our fellow men does not lessen the claim of just obligation. In the prayer which Christ taught His disciples He said, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matt. 6:12. By this He did not mean that in order to be forgiven our sins we must not require our just dues from our debtors. If they cannot pay, even though this may be the result of unwise management, they are not to be cast into prison, oppressed, or even treated harshly; but the parable does not teach us to encourage indolence. The word of God declares that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. (2 Thess. 3:10.) The Lord does not require the hard-working man to support others in idleness. With many there is a waste of time, a lack of effort, which brings to poverty and want. If these faults are not corrected by those who indulge them, all that might be done in their behalf would be like putting treasure into a bag with holes. Yet there is an unavoidable poverty, and we are to manifest tenderness and compassion toward those who are unfortunate.

We should treat others just as we ourselves, in like circumstances, would wish to be treated.

The Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul charges us: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:1-5.

But sin is not to be lightly regarded. The Lord has commanded us not to suffer wrong upon our brother. He says, "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him." Luke 17:3. Sin is to be called by its right name, and is to be plainly laid out before the wrongdoer.

In his charge to Timothy, Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, says, "Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:2. And to Titus he writes, "There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers. . . . Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." Titus 1:10-13.

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee," Christ said, "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matt. 18:15-17.

Our Lord teaches that matters of difficulty between Christians are to be settled within the church. They should not be opened before those who do not fear God. If a Christian is wronged by his brother, let him not appeal to unbelievers in a court of justice. Let him follow out the instruction Christ has given. Instead of trying to avenge himself, let him seek to save his brother. God will guard the interests of those who love and fear Him, and with confidence we may commit our case to Him who judges righteously.

Too often when wrongs are committed again and again, and the wrongdoer confesses his fault, the injured one becomes weary, and thinks he has forgiven quite enough. But the Saviour has plainly told us how to deal with the erring: "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." Luke 17:3. Do not hold him off as unworthy of your confidence. Consider "thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1.

If your brethren err, you are to forgive them. When they come to you with confession, you should not say, I do not think they are humble enough. I do not think they feel their confession. What right have you to judge them, as if you could read the heart? The word of God says, "If he repent, forgive him. And if he trespasses against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Luke 17:3, 4. And not only seven times, but seventy times seven--just as often as God forgives you.

We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others....

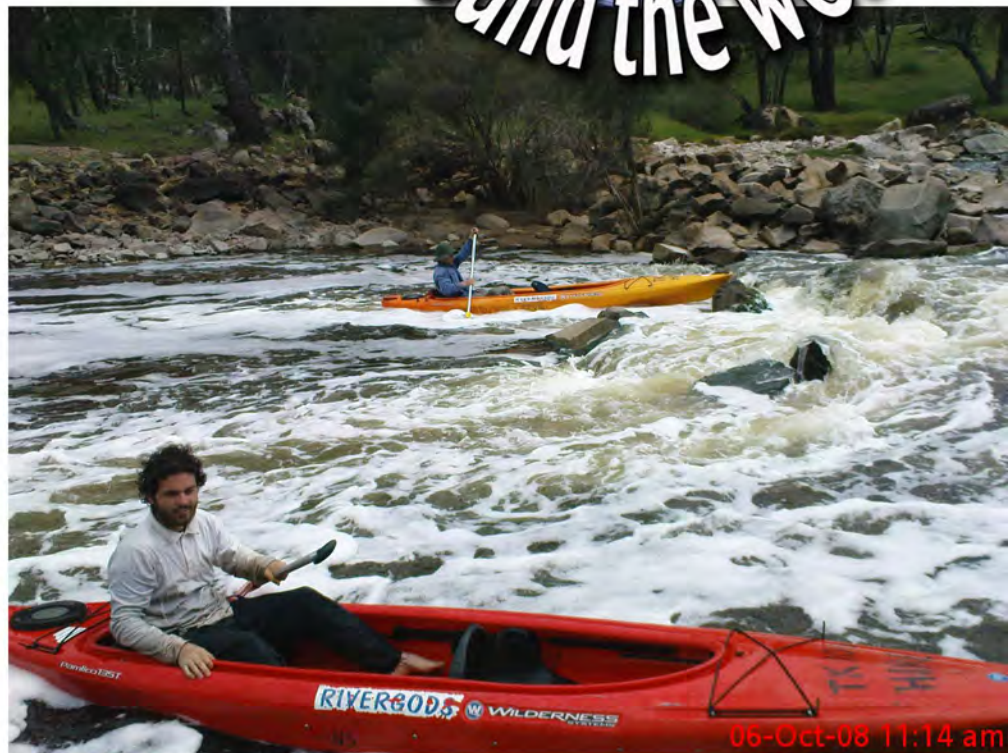
We are not forgiven because we forgive, but as we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God, but by our attitude toward others we show whether we have made that love our own. Wherefore Christ says, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matt. 7:2.



Missionary Trip To
Meghalaya



Youth Canoe
Trip In
Australia



06-Oct-08 11:14 am

REVELATION IN THE ROCKIES
Camping Retreat Reservation Form
Canoe Meadows, Alberta - August 21 –23, 2009

Personal Information:

Last Name		First Name	Middle Name
Street Address			
City	State/Province	Zip/Postal Code	Phone Number
Age	(circle) <i>Male Female</i>	E-mail address	

Additional Family members:

Last Name	First Name	Age
Last Name	First Name	Age
Last Name	First Name	Age

(Add additional family members in a separate sheet)

Emergency contact Info:

Full Name	Phone	Email
-----------	-------	-------

Allergies/Special Needs:

--

Travel Information:

Method of travel (circle one) <i>Car Plane</i>	Arrival/Departure City
Flight #	Airline
Arrival Date and Time	

Choose Your Option:

Mark an X

X	No.		Cost
		Option 1	\$ 250.00
		Option 2	\$60.00
		Option 3	
		Total	

E-mail it to: Gatoscar_2001@yahoo.com