



The Reformation **Messenger**

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

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:
not as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."
John 14:27

WE BELIEVE: The all-wise, loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ; He is its Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth, convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine; the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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Site of Revelation In The
Rockies*

Inside Cover: Finland

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The Reformation
Messenger

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Be United, Joyful, And In Prayer

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:4, 6, 7.

IT'S POSSIBLE!

Ah! Here is the secret of the “peace of God!” An inward peace, the state of the soul of the Christian who, having entered into peace with God, has committed all his **anxieties** to God through prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.” (supplication = to beg humbly and ask earnestly). Christ left His disciples internal rather than external peace.” (AA84).

Therefore rejoice in the Lord at all times! Rejoice! It's much like happiness; you must pursue it to obtain it. But, for many, the pursuit has hit a dead-end! They are melancholic—the traditional opposite of happiness... making everyday life a chore! They live somewhere in between the no-man's land of “religion and pharmacology!”

An intelligent, thoughtful happiness is possible. For you see, our

innerattitude does not have to reflect our **outer life circumstances**. Paul says “look to life for the right and full perspective of things.” That means with a broad spiritual view, but realistically! Take the time to examine the world around you, analyzing what you see, hear and feel; life's experiences and opportunities... Jesus' footprints!

If Jesus Christ is with you, then nothing can happen to you! “Who can be against you?” It's a lofty, overpowering view to live by. But, yielding without retaliating!

So, Paul portrays the peace of God (Greek-phroureo, “keep”) in a military term, meaning to “guard or garrison.” The peace of God shall keep or guard as a sentinel standing watch over the citadel of **man's inner life—the mind, will and affections!**

My greatest happiness comes, to know in my heart, that my sins are forgiven and I can have eternal life! Moreover, I have a new life, knowing that one day I will see Jesus. Of course, for some their favorite joy is their wife, or husband, too... or children! But, Jesus Christ is our ultimate joy! Not sometimes, but always, because life could be worse! It's true, however, that the hostility and heathenism of this world could easily give rise to anxiety.

This can be dispelled by prayer; **prayer in anything... and everything**, and sufficient to cause anxiety if not prayed about. "To care is a virtue, but to foster cares is a sin." (Muller, op.cit., pg.141). Our rejoicing and happiness comes from Jesus Christ. Jesus is my ultimate joy; rejoice always in whatever trial you may be going through. "Be not anxious for nothing. But, in prayer and supplication and thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God." (Philippians 4:6). So, never, never, never, worry about **anything!**

It's still possible in this life. Yes, even if it seems impossible! Ah! But, how?

YOU TURN!

Turn your worries into prayer! You will worry less when you pray more! Karl Marx said, "religion is the opiate of the people." Marx was an alcoholic. As an atheist, he turned to drinking to forget his problems, as many do, and condemned religion as an opiate, or drug, to escape from problems. Nothing could be further from the truth, for religion gives one the **peace of God**, without alcohol or drugs.

When you pray, you forget your problems, because you put them into God's hand. So, whenever you start worrying, start praying. It's that simple! It's an unexpected turn in your life. "Taste and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:8)

STRESS-WORRY SYNDROME

So, you see, when you're worrying and start praying, then, you'll find yourself not worrying anymore. Beat away those death-dealing worries with prayer! God will take care of you. "Be anxious for nothing!" For, God will take care of you. You're in the hands of Jesus! Try it!

When you worry, then you are literally **choking yourself!** Choking is an old Anglo-Saxon term, meaning "suffocating." It's a reaction to the stress-worry syndrome. Furthermore, worry in Greek, (stenohoria), is defined as "narrowness: narrow mindedness, narrow, closed, confined quarters or environment; oppressiveness, repression!"

You see, the stress-worry syndrome is incompatible with faith! **If faith is strong, then worry weakens. Worry destroys faith in God!!** But many, needlessly, and neurotically worry, and are perpetually miserable souls!

WOE-COMFORTING

Ah! But God will take care of your worries. When I worry, I use three woe-comforting Bible passages in our walk with Jesus:

1. UPHOLDING VERSES: Isaiah 41:10, 13. "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen

you, Yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."(v-10). "For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you ; Fear not, I will help you."(v-13). I find great power and impregnable strength with these verses. They keep my head above water!

2. OPTIMISM VERSE: Romans 8:28. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." Working together is, in fact, a Greek word, (suneryia), meaning, "synergistic." Different negative elements of nature work differently and independently, but produce a greater effect when working together. For example, chlorine and sodium are two highly poisonous substances, and can kill you, but when synergistically joined together, produce a very useful product... table salt. (NaCl). The same with hydrogen and oxygen; both are subtle, negative gases; e.g., hydrogen to blow up balloons, and oxygen as a life-saving element, but when synergistically joined, liquefy into common water! (H2O). Amazing phenomenon! A majestic symphony of nature!

Well, Jesus works, too, in a phenomenal way with us. He takes all the things that work against us, things in a sinful world, things that are not for our common good, things that will destroy us, and works in them for your good.... "for those who love the Lord!" Ah! You see? You **must love the Lord!** Otherwise, it will not work and does not work! He brings all of those things together, and works them together for your spiritual good and growth! Incredible!! Again, the condition is, you **must love the Lord!**

3. KEEPS ME GOING VERSES: Psalm 7:14 "Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood." Isaiah 28:16 "Whoever believes will not act hastily." The message in these verses is, "**Wait on the Lord!**" Why did David use these thoughts? King David, as a mere child of 13, became an heir and was anointed at 16 to the throne of Israel, but was ordained to possess it only until the age of 30. King Saul, however, pursued him like a wild beast of the field. His own rebellious son, Absalom, pursued and haunted him also. David, however, waited on the Lord.... for **fulfillment!** Moreover, he dutifully waited on the Lord for **deliverance**, and the appointed time to assume his place as the rightful King of Israel. But, he had to **patiently wait!**

Make good use, however, of your "**waiting time!**" Ah! If you do, you'll discover what God wants you to do... your purpose. But, take your time. **Do not be hasty!** It's tough to wait. But, wait until He works out His purpose for you... even unto death! But, when you are hasty, mistakes are usually made. The Lord in essence is saying to us, "don't go ahead of Me." The sheep always follow the Shepherd!

Hastiness and worry move in **complete opposite directions** to each other and must be done away with to have God's presence. Hastiness denies us God's blessing! What a pity it is, as God

cannot impact our lives! Don't make haste as it also denies our attention. The Lord, therefore, cannot get your attention through the Word. Moreover, look into your life and see yourself! Is your worship acceptable in the sight of God? If not, then you offer a sacrifice of a fool!

Subsequently, **"wait on the Lord!"** Still, when waiting, and if you truly love Him, He will not disappoint you. **"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."** **"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."** (Phil. 4: 6, 7)

SILENT CONTROL

Ah! But, this peace with God; how do we receive it? Well, when God is in **complete control of your life!** But, remember, too, that **"the sense of sins forgiven brings peace."** (MYP 73). Always remember, however, that God is in complete control. When you accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour, (rescues you from the abyss), He take the reins of your life... He takes over!

You're then **a citizen of the heavenly Kingdom of God.** Peace will emanate and infuse the surrounding air of your life and those near to you, knowing you will be present there one day. Now, just secretly imagine yourself walking there... being there! Oh! Praying to God that I will one day see His magnificent glory!

HEAVENLY HOME

Gazing heavenward once, while in a slumberous state, I beheld a vivid blue sky; even bluer than that in Greece or the Aegean Sea. Then I saw three moons, and I reached up to take God's outstretched hand... but then, my wife took me by the hand. But, why, I asked? She answered, "if I did not wake you up, you would leave me!"

Yes, we yearn for the heavenly home, delivered from the earthly difficulties, trials, and pains of life. But, know that one day things will change. **Our home is not here!** It does not make any sense to gather more and more shoes, suits, hats, purses, clothing, earthly treasures, and piling them into dingy, dusty closets, because we will have to leave them all here! This world is not our home, nor ever was! Don't dig "stakes" in your tents too deep. Your destiny is here! **Victory over sin is certain!**

Ah! But, if you walk around telling yourself repeatedly you're a sinner... you'll never, never, overcome! You see, if we have the **peace of God,** He will tell us of our sins and they're forgiven. The peace of God is that **tranquility of spirit** that God enjoys and only God can give! That is the utter inability of man's mind, to fathom God's peace, which far surpasses all our **careful planning** and **clever ideas** as to how we can resolve our own anxieties.

PEACEFUL SLEEP

By faith, you can have the victory and have peace and calm of mind; **sleep well,** as all is in the hands of Jesus Christ. So, rejoice in the Lord. **Do not complain! Be anxious for nothing;** in all the difficulties, and fires in our lives. Rejoice in the Lord! God is going to lift you up! **Ah! Always be thankful before your requests, for what God has given you, and what He has done for you!** This is the proper spirit in which to make new requests. **Rejoice!** God can bring all things together to work for you... by synergetic forces!

IN THE LORD!

"Chairete" was the common Greek expression for farewell. But, when Paul said, rejoice... **always,** he had its deeper meaning, **rejoice,** in mind! For the Philippians, this may have seemed strange and unreasonable, and therefore, repeated it, saying **"again, I will say rejoice!"** Christians and believers can be commanded to rejoice, because their ground for rejoicing is **not in circumstances, your environment, or personal affairs, but in the Lord! He is our foundation, our pillar, our cornerstone!**

Again, "The peace of God is as a sentinel standing watch over the citadel of man's inner life; the mind, will, and affections."

Visiting a village school one day, King Oscar II of Sweden asked the pupils to name the greatest kings of Sweden. The answers were unanimous: Gustavus Vasa, Gustavus Adolphus, Charles X. Then the teacher leaned over to one little boy and whispered something in his ear. "Oh! And King Oscar," volunteered the little child. "Really? And what has King Oscar done that's so remarkable?" asked the king.

"I-I-I don't know," stammered the unhappy child.

"That's all right," said the king, "Neither do I."

Don't look outwardly, however, to your achievements in life for peace. All the striving in our culture for achieving may cause us to overlook the riches and peace of the familiar, and near in hand of Jesus' love.

Finally, the **"twin pillars of rejoicing"** are not only **"the peace of God" (v-7), but also the "God of peace."** They will be with you!" So, take this into account (Greek-logizomai), and keep **practicing** all the distinctive Christian ethics and morality you have **learned.** (Greek-prassete) (v-8,9)

Therefore, **BE UNITED, JOYFUL, AND IN PRAYER,** always! **Amen!**

John Theodorou, USA

In The Power Of The Holy Spirit

Jesus was a very special person and wherever He went His influence was great. People were amazed by the way in which He spoke, dealt and lived. He led a dynamic life in the midst of society and although most people were corrupt and dishonest, these contagious diseases did not touch Him. He moved among seriously ill people, touched the dead, ate and drank with the sinners and visited them in their homes; the power that came out of Him brought health, consolation and life to every person who believed and accepted Him.

When He was walking along the Galilean Sea, He called a couple of fishermen and they left everything to follow Him, without asking why, where to, or what for.

Even the tax collector, Matthew, who had a good and profitable position, considered being a follower of Jesus much better than all the riches of this world.

What was there in Him that had such a power to attract people? Luke gives us the answer in chapter 4:1, *“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”*

The Spirit of God dwelt in Him fully and ruled His whole life, spoke through Him and led His steps, therefore His teachings and dealings were so different from the ones of the scribes.

In Mark 1:21, we read, *“And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.”* He went to the synagogue and taught and the people were amazed about His teaching, *“for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.”* Mark 1:22.

The scribes had studied many years in school, they had a good knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, they had authority over the people, but their teaching had no power, did not touch hearts, did not lead to conversion, did not reveal the power of God’s love.

In chapter 23 from Matthew there is a hard speech addressed to the Pharisees and scribes. What was the problem with the spiritual leaders of the people? The words of Paul to the people are also valid for the leaders of Israel, *“Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.”* Acts 7:51.

Without the power of the Holy Spirit our life is empty, our words are powerless and our deeds senseless. It is in us to open our heart to the influence of the Holy Spirit so that we may live that real metamorphosis of our whole being.

The Holy Spirit was sent from heaven in order to lead us into the whole truth. And when He comes- writes John- *“he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”* John 16:8.

The Holy Spirit speaks to our conscience and shows us what is

wrong in us, that the measure for righteousness is not our own imagination, opinion, concept, feelings, but God's eternal law and Jesus' character; and convinces us that we need a Redeemer in order to be able to stand before God's throne at the time of the judgment. We need an advocate; we need Him who loved us so much that He gave His own life for us. We need Jesus!

The examination of our heart is not a pleasant task, it is actually painful and unpleasant, but extremely necessary, so that we may be baptized with the Holy Spirit and become instruments in God's hands, who live and move under His grace.

Jesus went to the synagogue on Sabbath and taught and His listeners did not look at their watches, they did not doze, did not speak amongst themselves, but they were amazed at His teachings since what He spoke was not knowledge extracted from books, but wisdom from God, personal experience and conviction.

The Holy Spirit is the wonderful promise God makes for His followers and it is written that God gives the Spirit without measure.

Not only Jesus, but all His followers at all times, all prophets of God who had a powerful message to give to the people were full of the Holy Spirit. The prophet Micah speaks about himself, *"But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin."* Micah 3:8. Micah, who gives the wonderful message that God casts our iniquities into the depths of the sea, had to tell the people their transgressions to their faces. This was not an easy mission. The prophet Ezekiel also had a hard message to give the people and the Lord warned him, *"But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel [are] impudent and hardhearted"* and He adds, *"Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they [be] a rebellious house."* Ezekiel 3:8, 9. Although the Lord knew that the message would be rejected by the majority, He still sent His prophets to them. The prophets could not give such messages in their own power; they needed a preparation and the power from above.

What kind of message should be given to the people at the end of times? The three angels' messages in Revelation 14: "The time of the judgment has come"; "Worship God and not the beast"; "Come out of Babylon because it is fallen, otherwise you will drink from the cup of God's wrath." No pleasant message, but absolutely necessary so that a people may be prepared for the most solemn event of all times: Jesus' second coming in the clouds of heaven.

The Lord has given us the promise to pour out His Spirit so that this message can be given with His own power and not with ours. The Spirit needs empty vessels, people who can say like Paul did at his time, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not*

I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20. Paul was an empty vessel and became an instrument in God's hands. How wonderful is what he writes to the Corinthians, *"And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."* 1 Corinthians 2:4, 5.

After Jesus' ascension to heaven and after Pentecost, His disciples did not only have power to preach, but also to work miracles. When Peter healed a paralytic, we read, *"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, [even] by him doth this man stand here before you whole."* Acts 4:8-10.

Peter had the power to work miracles and to tell the truth. Was Peter not full of the Holy Spirit when he preached to the Jews? He had the courage to tell them, *"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* Acts 2:22, 23. He also explained to them that the apostles were not full of wine, but of the Holy Spirit and that was the reason why they could speak in such a way that people from all nationalities and tongues could understand what they said.

What happened as a result of his preaching and the things they saw and heard? *"Now when they heard [this], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."* Acts 2:37, 38. Only the Holy Spirit has power to move hearts. The first church was full of this power from above, *"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."* Acts 2:42.

When the church was organized, they looked for men full of the Holy Spirit and truth to occupy a position and among others they chose Stephan who, like Peter, spoke before a large crowd of Jews and his words were full of power and touched the hearts. But the reaction of these Jews was completely different from the reaction of those who had listened to Peter's preaching. Let us read Acts 7:24-60, *"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with [their] teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice,*

and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast [him] out of the city, and stoned [him]: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon [God], and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

In the most critical moment, when a child of God is like a sheep among hungry wolves, the Lord gives him a confirmation from heaven, a powerful sign that his message is true and that he is not alone.

Today we are living just before the sounding of the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11. Our message is Christ our Righteousness. Our call is to come to His rest. Our works, our piety cannot save us, only Jesus, "sola gratia", only His grace. This knowledge, this deep experience with God's love fills our hearts with gratitude and a strong desire to do His holy will expressed in His commandments. *"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."* 1 John 3:24.

The Holy Spirit in us means heaven in us, Christ in us, the hope of glory. The Spirit of God in us keeps the commandments and announces their validity. What reaction will this message awaken? *"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth."* Revelation 11:18. Shortly before Jesus' second coming the nations will be angry against God's children who give a warning message and call people to repent so that they may be saved. But, what will happen? Something similar to what happened at the time of Stephan--heaven will give a sign that our message comes from God, *"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."* Revelation 11:19.

As children of God at the end of times, with a very solemn message to give to the world, we need the same power that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, John the Baptist and Paul had--the power of the Holy Spirit.

We have been created to be temples of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is ready to pour His Spirit in its plenitude. We just have to be empty vessels.

May the Lord help us to be ready for that very solemn hour so that we may be counted among the wise virgins when Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven. **Amen.**

Teresa Corti



Doing The Impossible

When we think of the word “impossible” we think of a hopeless situation. Something that cannot possibly be done. It is not possible to happen; not possible to exist; unattainable; hopeless.

There are many things that we understand as being impossible, such as it is impossible for man, on his own, to live forever. Also, in day-to-day life, it is impossible for man to do things like fly without any mechanical aids. However, many things deemed impossible in the past, man has found a way to make possible today. Just look at the technology exploding in the modern world; technology that was thought impossible 100 years ago, whether it be in the medical realm, in travel, communications, information technology, entertainment, etc. Man is ever seeking to invent a more highly sophisticated society. Things that seem impossible today, they hope to make possible tomorrow.

Many people, in this day and age, think themselves highly intelligent and not in need of God in order to create a well-ordered society.

Yet there is one thing that man cannot do. It has always been, and will continue to be, impossible. Man has found no way of preventing the aging process; preventing death. They try to delay death as long as possible, but it is an inevitable event for all mankind.

Man has also found no way to change a sinner into a saint. While they put criminals into prison or enforce probations and management courses, unless there is an inner desire to change their course of action, nothing that outside sources can do can evoke a change within. There may be an outward change in order to keep oneself out of prison, but if there was no one looking... no one in authority who would bring an accusation, they will likely revert to their old ways.

NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD

“Is any thing too hard for the LORD?” Genesis 18:14 “For with God nothing shall be impossible.” Luke 1:37

What a wonderful God we serve; one for whom nothing is impossible. He CAN change a sinner into a saint and He CAN prevent death. “Our divine Lord is equal to any emergency. With Him nothing is impossible. He has shown His great love for us by living a life of self-denial and sacrifice and by dying a death of agony. Come to Christ just as you are.... Cast yourself wholly on His mercy. There is no difficulty within or without that cannot be surmounted in His strength.” HP 17. ‘It is not faith to talk of impossibilities. Nothing is impossible with God.’ ” LS 209

Jeremiah recognized the awesomeness of God. “Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, [and] there is nothing too hard for thee.” Jeremiah 32:17

NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE FOR MAN

Although I mentioned at the beginning that man faces many limitations and there are things that are impossible for man to do, how can we reconcile this with the fact that God is asking us to do the impossible? Man thinks it is impossible to live a perfect life without sin. And outwardly this is true. It is impossible. But we are told in the Bible, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

Apart from God, many "wise" men on this earth glory in their own wisdom, but they cannot do the impossible. They are limited to the human realm.

God is asking His children to do the impossible but He doesn't leave us to work alone. Sometimes the task given to us by God appears overwhelming and well nigh impossible and we shy away from the required duties. Jeremiah felt this way when called to be a prophet. "Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Jeremiah 1:6, 7. Jeremiah was promised help from the Lord if he would be faithful to the given tasks. He trusted in God and went.

Moses also felt this way when he met God at the burning bush. First he said, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Ex 3:11. Then he went on to say, "But behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee." Ex. 4:1. Even though the Lord promised "Certainly I will be with thee" Ex 3:12, and also gave some miracles that he could perform in the sight of Pharaoh to help his cause, Moses was still overwhelmed with the task and gave still another excuse. He said, "I am not eloquent... but slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Ex 4:10. "The Lord's anger was kindled against Moses." Ex 4:14. God was not pleased with the excuses, but He met them all. He took away all of Moses' excuses. On this final excuse, he sent Aaron to be his mouthpiece. Without the help of God, is it humanly possible to feed and clothe, and keep in perfect order over a million people in the desert? Seems almost like an impossible task but Moses and Aaron made it happen with the help of God. Could any human being go through the rejection, imprisonment and humiliation that Jeremiah suffered and still have peace in their hearts?

The story of the Christian martyrs also tell the story of having peace in adversity. They faced the seemingly impossible task of facing death with peace in a person's heart. This is not possible without Christ. All human inventions cannot provide peace when one is facing death. No amount of money or entertainment can bring relief to a troubled conscience. The thief on the cross realized this at the 11th hour of his life. One thief found peace, the other only torment. Sometimes the duties required of us may appear as impossible tasks to us. We think we simply cannot fulfill them; we don't have

the time or ability to carry them out. But God says, "Yes, go." He will give the ability, strength, wisdom and time for our spiritual duties. He takes away all our excuses as He did with Moses. Then we need to make the decision to either comply with God's requirements by faith, or turn away as did the rich young ruler. (Mat 19:16-22)

MIRACLES OF HEALING

Were miracles of healing only performed by Jesus?

"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Matthew 17:19, 20. "And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27

Miracles of healing did not cease when Jesus returned to heaven. "Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." Acts 5:15:16

We serve a living God, and it is He who continues to perform miracles through His servants on the earth. "And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Acts 4:12, 13, 16

Paul performed miracles in Christ's name also. "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." Acts 19:11, 12. "And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed." Acts 28:8, 9

Miracles of healing continue today. When medical science has nothing more to offer a sick and dying person, what man deems as impossible, God is able to perform through His servants. There are incurable diseases man cannot cure even with their best medical expertise. From lung cancers, to AIDS, there are a host of diseases that are deemed terminal. The only cure that has ever been found for terminal illnesses are the cures wrought by much prayer and

fasting on the part of God's children. A miracle from God. God was able to perform the impossible task. People who have been given up to die by the medical profession and given only weeks and months to live have lived years because God performed a miracle.

IMPOSSIBLE TO BE LOST

Many Christians, upon reviewing their lives, see nothing good. They see that all they have done is filled with self and sin. They feel ashamed to come before the Lord in this their sinful condition; that all is lost; that it is impossible to be saved. "Satan suggests that you are helpless." FW 37 He says you are hopeless. You have gone too far for God to love you any more. He says it is impossible for God to save you. But this is not true. "Jesus loves to have you come to Him just as you are, hopeless and helpless, and cast yourself upon His all-abundant mercy and believe that He will receive you just as you are." {HP 119.3} "None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ." MH 93 "Whatever the mistakes or failures of the past, we may, with the help of God, rise above them." MH 516

How is this made possible? Only through the infinite sacrifice that was made on the cross of Calvary. It would do well for us to keep fresh in our minds the agony of Gethsemane and the shame of Calvary that our Master bore for us. Also the darkness caused by the separation from His father that moved Him to cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Ps 22:1. What kept Him going on that blood-stained path? "The angel came not to take the cup from Christ's hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father's love. He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved as the result of His sufferings. He assured Him that His Father is greater and more powerful than Satan, that His death would result in the utter discomfiture of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved." {DA 693.3}

He did it so you and I do not have to endure that dark separation from God. He did it to deliver us from sin. He did it to bring salvation to a lost humanity. The promise is that, "In dying, Jesus **has made it impossible** for those who believe in Him to die eternally... Christ lived and died as a man, that He might be God both of the living and of the dead. It was to make it **impossible for men to lose eternal life** if they believe on Him. The life of men and women is precious in the sight of God; for Christ has purchased that life by being executed in their stead. Thus He made it possible for us to attain to immortality." {7BC 926.2}

"What more could our Lord do to strengthen our faith in his promises? The clean heart, the right spirit, He requires of us, which is the gift of Jesus Christ, Christ worked to this end, and man co-operates with him. The divine and human efforts are united. The white robe,

the crown of righteousness, an eternal weight of glory, is laid up for those who love God and keep his commandments. Then let all pride, all self-sufficiency be laid at the feet of Jesus. He is faithful that hath promised. If we approach him with a lowly, child-like trust, he will give us his grace and the treasures of eternal life as a free and everlasting gift." {RH, April 5, 1887 par. 13}

As we contemplate what He has done for us, is any duty that He asks too hard for us to perform? Is any sin too hard to give up? Is there time for prayer, study and service to the Lord? Or are our interests too many that the work of the Lord gets left behind? Is it placed on the bottom of our priority list? No, nothing is too difficult or too important. If the Lord gives us a commission, He provides the time and the energy. We can have the confidence of Paul. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil 4:13 Paul didn't say "some" things. He said "all" things. Even those things that may appear impossible to our human sight.

IMPOSSIBLE TO SIN

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." 1 John 3:9 **If we are born of God, we CANNOT sin... meaning it is IMPOSSIBLE to sin.** How few believers in Christ actually believe this to be true. How, when and why do we sin? It is when we have taken our eyes off Jesus; when we have removed our hand from His hand. Even if we disconnect from Christ for just a moment, the devil is there. He does not sleep; he is vigilant; he is "a roaring lion" seeking to devour the souls Christ has come to save. We can do the impossible if we keep our hands and eyes firmly placed on Jesus at all time. "The enemy **can never** [impossible] take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises." MS 92, 1901

"Those who, through faith in the merits of the blood of Christ, have clean hands and a pure heart, will receive the white robe, the crown of righteousness, and the life that will run parallel with the life of God. There is no limit to the blessings that we may receive in answer to sincere, fervent prayer. The love of God to fallen man is measureless, and if our Father sees that we will not be lifted up with the blessings he has power to bestow upon us, but will receive them with humble and grateful hearts, he will abundantly grant unto us our requests. He says: 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.'" {ST, December 23, 1889 par. 3}

SALVATION FOR THE WEALTHY

We often think that salvation appeals to the poorer classes of society more. When we go to the poor, impoverished countries, it is true that the churches have more members. They have a more sincere faith in Christ and an earnest longing for salvation. The rich tend to trust in their riches, while the poor don't have this security

blanket. The rich young ruler thought he was a good man, but Jesus found one plague spot in his character. He was outwardly keeping the commandments, but he was a very selfish person. He did not consider the needs of the poorer people around him. For this reason Jesus spoke these words to the disciples:

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.” Matthew 19:23-26.

It may seem almost an impossibility for the rich to be saved, however, this is not always true. Many rich men have found salvation, although the amount of poor people far outnumber them. The vast majority of wealthy people trust in their wealth more than trusting in God.

Yes, the wealthy can find salvation with God; all things are possible. In this verse, the disciples were not only addressing the rich, but all men. “Who then can be saved” the truth is, without Christ, no one can be saved, whether rich or poor. But *in Christ*, all men can be saved. God will do the impossible. He will change the human heart from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh. He only who can change the leopard’s spots, or the Ethiopian’s skin, can bring salvation to any soul that surrenders their life to Him.

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

IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD

Although the Bible states that there is nothing impossible with God, we do find several verses where the word “impossible” is associated with God.

Impossible for God to lie

“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie.” Heb 6:18. What a wonderful assurance this is for us. All the promises He has made in the Bible, He will keep. “And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.” John 4:21

Impossible for salvation

Is it impossible for some people to be saved? Did we not read earlier that none have fallen so far that they cannot find salvation? “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again



unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” Heb 6:4-6.

What is meant by these verses? Here is the answer.

“Christ is able to save to the uttermost all who come to Him in faith. He will cleanse them from all defilement if they will let Him. **But if they cling to their sins, they cannot possibly be saved;** [impossible] for Christ’s righteousness covers no sin unrepented of. God has declared that those who receive Christ as their Redeemer, accepting Him as the One who takes away all sin, will receive pardon for their transgressions. These are the terms of our election. Man’s salvation depends upon his receiving Christ by faith. Those who will not receive Him lose eternal life because they refused to avail themselves of the only means provided by the Father and the Son for the salvation of a perishing world.” 7BC 931. There is salvation for all. Yet it is those who refuse this salvation that will be lost. It is not on the part of God, but man has separated himself from God. We often call this the “Sin against the Holy Spirit.”

“What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan. It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men willfully reject the Spirit and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which had been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness. Thus the words of Christ are verified: ‘If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!’ For a time, persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy’s ground, standing under his black banner.” 5T 634

“Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” Isaiah 59:1, 2 “Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.” John 9:31

IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD WITHOUT FAITH

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Heb 11:6. How can we believe and serve


a God who we do not believe in? Many say they believe, but during a time of crisis, their faith wavers. Many don’t believe until they **see** the answer to their prayers. Their faith will not see them through the final crisis on this earth. Their faith will not hold them up during Jacob’s trouble when all the world is arraigned against God’s commandment keeping people. At that time we will need to “walk by faith, not by sight” 2 Cor. 5:7.

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” Acts 2:22-24 **Not possible for the grave to hold Jesus** and we have the confidence that it is not possible to hold even one sincere follower of Jesus. The devil “disputed about the body of Moses” (Jude 9) with Jesus. It was not possible for the devil to keep him in his grasp. Jesus came to set him free from the grave.

What a wonderful God we serve. “Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.” SS 8:7

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:35-39. No it is not possible for the devil to separate us from the Love of Christ if we hold onto Him by faith, as did Jacob when he wrestled with the angel. Do not let go of the hand of Christ and then you can do the impossible. **AMEN**

Wendy Eaton , Canada



God's Love Versus The World

We are in a contrasting conflict, which one will we love, the Lord or the world? And we are gathered here to worship the Lord at the shrine of heavenly love. We are here to marvel over His indescribable love. Love, and the chase of its internal satisfaction is mankind's occupation. They yearn for internal fulfillment of love, and indeed there are many shrines of worship, that are established, where souls plunge themselves in to indulge in their craving of the elixir of love. There is not one human being that does not want to drink that elixir – that love.

And where, and what is your shrine?

We worship here, and while we are here in the presence of God's love, is your heart elsewhere?

Many children and youth long for the closing of the Sabbath, to rush back into the pleasures that the Sabbath forbids. Indeed there is many a heart, that while worshipping God, is also preoccupied with another shrine at variance with the worship of God.

There are many shrines.

“The great sin of God's people at the present time is, we do not appreciate the value of the blessings God has bestowed upon us. We serve God with a divided heart. We cherish some idol and worship at its shrine. The truth of God is elevated and holy, sanctifying the soul, if brought into the life and interwoven with the character. God is seeking with His truth to make us a separate and peculiar people. This is the influence of the truth. Our obedience and devotion are not equal to our light and privileges, and the sacred obligations resting upon us to walk as children of the light are not fulfilled by us. As Christians we fail to come up to our high calling.” TDG 50

People serve God with a divided heart. Serving God at His shrine, and simultaneously worshipping at some other shrine. And when we think of worshipping God at a shrine, Sis.. White says in Prophets and Kings that it does not necessarily mean a visible shrine.

“And for us, ‘upon whom the ends of the world are come’ (1 Corinthians 10:11), it has special significance. History is being repeated.. The world today has its Ahabs and its Jezebels. The present age is one of idolatry, as verily as was that in which Elijah lived. No outward shrine may be visible; there may be no image for the eye to rest upon; yet thousands are following after the gods of this world--after riches, fame, pleasure, and the pleasing fables that permit man to follow the inclinations of the unregenerate heart. Multitudes have a wrong conception of God and His attributes, and are as truly serving a false god as were the worshippers of Baal.” PK 177

And remember Elijah's message: “How long halt ye between two opinions?” He knew under inspiration that Israel was worshipping God and Baal at the same time.

Though no outward shrine can be seen, there are many shrines in the heart. Sis. White writes about the shrine of fashion. The shrine of perverted appetite. The shrine of my children. The shrine of personal interests. Because of this, my purpose today is to ask you, look with me on the enrapturing love of God. And then to open your heart to Him, and then to close your heart to all opposing forces.

There was a powerful minded young man, to whom Jesus came. He was ambitious; He had a thunderous disposition. He was very tempestuous and ardent in nature. As Jesus came to him and called him, he had high aspirations in continuing in his father's business. And here was Jesus saying, "Come away from this, come with Me." And as this young man made his choice to follow Jesus, He began to be molded by a love that completely transformed this impetuous, ambitious passionate being, into a gentle lovable being. We read of this young man in the book of inspiration

"The confiding love and unselfish devotion manifested in the life and character of John present lessons of untold value to the Christian church. John did not naturally possess the loveliness of character that his later experience revealed. By nature he had serious defects. He was not only proud, self-assertive, and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injury. He and his brother were called 'sons of thunder.' Evil temper, the desire for revenge, the spirit of criticism, were all in the beloved disciple. But beneath all this the divine Teacher discerned the ardent, sincere, loving heart. Jesus rebuked this self-seeking, disappointed his ambitions, tested his faith. But He revealed to him that for which his soul longed--the beauty of holiness, the transforming power of love." AA 539

Indeed, this is what our purpose is, **to come into the presence of God, and to behold like John a love that is matchless.**

"As John beholds the height, the depth, and the breadth of the Father's love toward our perishing race, he is filled with admiration and reverence. He cannot find suitable language to express this love, but he calls upon the world to behold it: 'Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.'" 4T 563

He says this: "Behold that we **the "sons of thunder"** are called the sons of God. What a value this places upon man. Through transgression men became subjects of Satan. Through the infinite sacrifice of Christ and faith in His name the sons of Adam became the sons of God. Behold this indeed. Gaze upon this love that John is trying to excite our minds to behold. Let us do this, let us gaze upon love that transformed this ambitious impetuous "son of thunder." Take a look at the present condition of this world. We've become accustomed to it. But every now and then something shocks us. Australia regards itself as a lucky country. But even here in Australia there is horror around us. Continually young people are taking their own lives. They launched out, thinking: "We are going to have a fantastic time" And in their fantastic time, they have seen their futility of indulging their pursuit of love from a



false perspective. And it crushes down all around them. And every young person who hears this message needs to understand that if he thinks that there is something nice to satisfy him at the shrine of love in the world around them, it will leave them absolutely dry, and worse than dry. The world is not a place to find love. We see it around us. Everywhere hearts are empty. And the world is just moving along in a downhill path of continually disappointed hopes. Whether it be by natural events around them destroying everything they have worked for, or whether it be looking for love in the family. How sad it is today. Every family has had experiences of hopeless yearnings for love. Wherever you look. Today's experience is no different to what is described in:

*"The deception of sin had reached its height. All the agencies for depraving the souls of men had been put in operation. The Son of God, looking upon the world, beheld suffering and misery. **With pity** He saw how men had become victims of satanic cruelty. **He looked with compassion** upon those who were being corrupted, murdered, and lost. They had chosen a ruler who chained them to his car as captives. Bewildered and deceived, they were moving on in gloomy procession toward eternal ruin,—to death in which is no hope of life, toward night to which comes no morning. Satanic agencies were incorporated with men. The bodies of human beings, made for the dwelling place of God, had become the habitation of demons. The senses, the nerves, the passions, the organs of men, were worked by supernatural agencies in the indulgence of the vilest lust. The very stamp of demons was impressed upon the countenances of men. Human faces reflected the expression of the legions of evil with which they were possessed. Such was the prospect upon which the world's Redeemer looked. What a spectacle for Infinite Purity to behold!" DA 36*

We know full well that this is a description of our time.

"With intense interest the unfallen worlds had watched to see Jehovah arise, and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth. And if God should do this, Satan was ready to carry out his plan for securing to himself the allegiance of heavenly beings. He had declared that the principles of God's government make forgiveness impossible. Had the world been destroyed, he would have claimed that his accusations were proved true. He was ready to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above. But instead of destroying the world, God sent His son to save it." DA 37

Didn't He have justice to do it? Doesn't God have the right to get rid of this slovenly, slack and unloving people. Instead—*God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the **alien province, DA 37***

What are we? What is this world? An alien province. The world talks about aliens from other planets. This is this other planet.... *a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the*

*embassage of divine grace. **Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race.** Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled" DA 37.*

You are here to worship; take to heart the detail of what I have described here. What a ghastly world this province is, a terrible, ugly, gloomy scene presents itself before us, because men are deciding to do the opposite of what God wants them to do.

And look at God's love. God sends His only begotten Son – **Behold this love.**

Why has God today not let men destroy himself yet? He could have done it in the First World War. He could have done in the Second World War. He could have done it all along since the beginning of His work in the Most Holy Place. But why did He not yet destroy the planet?

*"He gazed in pity on the remnant, then raised His hands, **and with a voice of deep pity cried, 'My blood, my Father, My blood, My blood, My blood!'**" EW 38*

This is the very reason why God has not destroyed the planet yet. Can you behold this love as you discover the corruptions and the perversity of your own heart? And God looks upon the remnant. We are here, a little remnant. And are we still of a double heart in the issues of life? The rest of the world has concluded its damnation, they have rejected this wonderful love. And here in these last days, Jesus is still delaying the destructive forces. The angels are holding back the winds of strive because of the remnant that Jesus does not want to be destroyed. And He cries: **"My blood, my Father,"** And He repeats it three more times. Knowing what that means; Jesus came to this alien province to shed His Blood in appeal to warm the hearts of these derelicts. And then He stands there as the High Priest, to keep on working to reach the hearts, and He delays the destruction. Jesus was sent to partake in our temptations, and to partake with us in our guilt, in our woe and His heart wrenching work is still going on now. He still feels the same sufferings while He was still here on earth. **That's why He is crying with agony of spirit: My blood, My blood !**

Why is He doing this? **Why?**

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. 3:9.

He sees this double hearted people, and He knows if the angels were to let go the winds of strive, there would be death and destruction without hope. Without repentance we will perish, and

He gives us the incentive to repent, the incentive to do the right thing we know we should be doing - to be like Jesus. And so He sees our weariness, our sleepiness and spiritual slackness, and instead of saying: "Go to sleep, go on, keep on going," He doesn't. He looks down in compassion on our spiritual lethargies, and He says: "Give me your heart, make the worship you are entering into everything in your life." Indeed, He saw us, the way that we are, and in such a condition of sin and unrepentance He commends His love. What is this kind of love? While I am carelessly going on doing my own thing, only every now and then referring to my love for God, while I am so occupied, fluctuating between conviction and indulgence, while this is going on, even before we have a response to Him, God commends His love.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:6-8.

I am spending time with you now to behold this love. And you know we read these texts many times before, and we say: "Yes," and yet sleep on. The Laodicean condition is very heavily upon the people of God. But let us shake ourselves out of our sleepy condition. Let us arouse ourselves out of that torpid sense that is upon us, and wake up to that amazing characteristic of God. "As a member of the human family, He was mortal." 5BC 1127.

Think ! It is so easy to just read doctrine, **meditate** at the shrine. He, the eternal God becomes a member of the human family. "He was mortal; but as God He was the fountain of life to the world" 5BC 1127... Then it describes there what He could have done, but He didn't. He submitted Himself.

*"He bore the sins of the world, and endured **the penalty, which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul.** He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die."* 5BC 1127

Why did He do that? So that anyone that looks at Jesus comes to the conclusion, "I will make a decision, I am going to pursue the love of God."

"He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will. This was humility. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man. He brought into His human nature all the life-giving energies that human beings will need and must receive. Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature." 5BC 1127

And you know the gloom that He came into.

"He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and the plan

was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world..."

He descended the gloomy path that every human is descending. He stepped lower and lower. It goes on to say:

"But He stepped still lower; the man must humble Himself as a man to bear insult, reproach, shameful accusations, and abuse. There seemed to be no safe place for Him in His own territory." 5BC 1127 He had to flee from place to place for His life. That's what Jesus did, what a life!

*"He was betrayed by one of His disciples; He was denied by one of His most zealous followers. He was mocked. He was crowned with a crown of thorns. He was scourged. He was forced to bear the burden of the cross. **He was not insensible to this contempt and ignominy.**"* 5BC 1127

How do you feel when you are treated like this? People have come to me and said: "Oh, such and such has happened to me. This or that person has done such and such to me. I can't bear this, it is so wrong." What did Jesus bear? Much worse.

*"He submitted, but, oh! **He felt the bitterness as no other being could feel it. He was pure, holy, and undefiled, yet arraigned as a criminal!**"* 5BC 1127

Was that fair? Was Jesus treated fairly? When you will be treated unfairly – remember this.

*"The adorable Redeemer stepped down from the highest exaltation. Step by step He humbled Himself to die--but what a death! **It was the most shameful, the most cruel the death upon the cross as a malefactor. He did not die as a hero in the eyes of the world, loaded with honors, as men in battle. He died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth--died a lingering death of shame, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased, crime-loaded, profligate multitude!**"* 5BC 1127

All that happened here to Jesus, does that compute in your brain? This is the love of God.

"Man was a criminal under the sentence of death for transgression of the law of God, as a traitor, a rebel; hence a substitute for man must die as a malefactor, because He stood in the place of the traitors, with all their treasured sins upon His divine soul..." 5BC 1127

*"In consideration (do you really consider this, meditate, and take it in ???) of this, can men have one particle of exaltation? As they trace down the life and sufferings and humiliation of Christ, can they lift their proud heads as if they were to bear no trials, no shame, no humiliation? **I say to the followers of Christ, Look to***

Calvary, and blush for shame at your self-important ideas. All this humiliation of the Majesty of heaven was for guilty, condemned man. He went lower and lower in His humiliation, until there were no lower depths that He could reach, in order to lift man up from his moral defilement." 5BC 1127

We are looking here at the shrine of love, and permitting it to enlarge in worship. And here as we do so we are lingering at a shore of love that satisfies the craving of every man's heart, if they will only look.

"In the contemplation of Christ we linger on the shore of a love that is measureless. We endeavor to tell of this love, and language fails us." AA 333 (For this reason I describe it under inspiration. I can't find the best descriptive ways. I communicate with you what is in front of my face, and I hope that under inspiration the Holy Spirit will put it in front of your face.

"We consider His life on earth, His sacrifice for us, His work in heaven as our advocate, and the mansions He is preparing for those who love Him, and we can only exclaim, O the height and depth of the love of Christ! 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'" AA 333

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God..."1 John 3:1

So few people behold this long enough until it penetrates the soul. Behold what love, that we should be the sons of God, that we, this profligate people, these half-hearted, sleepy, lazy people, as we identified ourselves to be. You don't see it until you examine yourselves. Notice our scripture reading and we contemplate this love, and we open our hearts to it

"Therefore the world knoweth us not, for it knew Him not." 1 John 3:1.

For the world has so many shrines, that they do not know Him. And He is among them, and they know Him not. But those who do look **intensely**, so that they may know Him, and if they know Him, how will the world be regarded by them? The purpose of this message is to hear the voice of Jesus saying to each one of us here who worship God:

*"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." Lam. 1:12. **Here is Jesus plaintive cry !***

God has anger to sin; and those who are attached to it, He could have wiped of the planet, **but no!**

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? What My sorrow is?

The world is occupied. To them their love is on their idols.

Will we walk on, with our love still divided? A little bit of the world and a little bit of God. Is this our response?

As Sis. White says: "It is." And Jesus says: "Is that nothing to you? I am pleading for you – My Remnant." Or shall we instead of walking past, say: "I will keep on looking and yield to this strong power of love, and suffer as Jesus suffered, because I want to respond to this love and go all the way with Him." Both John and His brother James had experienced the contrast between their thunderous nature and the amazing love of Jesus Christ.

Here are John's words, who made the decision as a young man to remain in the presence of Jesus and be transformed: *"Love not the world, (get rid of that shrine) neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2:15.*

If I choose to continue to lean on some shrine of idols, the love of the Father is not in me.

"And as soon as any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world,(and remember, fashions is not just fashions of clothing, any fashions of the world) that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as His children. They are the children of the world and of darkness." 1T 137

God is telling me, if I am double minded, the love of the Father is not in me.

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 John 2:16, 17

Very powerful simple directions from John the beloved disciple. He made it quite plain that if you want the love of God in you, in an age where *"iniquity abounds, and the love of many grows cold,"* **turn your back on the world.** Because the love of the Father can't be in you while you are still indulging somewhere.

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." James 4:4.

This text is from James, the "son of thunder." What's this double-heartedness? You love God and you also love something else that God is not part of?

What happens in a marriage? How do you feel, ladies, if your husband shows you love and then he shows another woman love? How do you feel? You would be upset and hurt – this is how God feels.

There is no in-between. Which love will we pursue?

“After the human agent has spent his life in following his own impulses, placing his talents on the shrine of Satan, choosing his own interests, what has he gained? Cheap worldly applause. And what has he lost? An eternity of blessedness.” HP 170

Intelligent worship wakes you up, doesn't it?

But how many times our emotions are tugging for some other love. And yet there is nothing that is sensible out there. The things of this world will pass away, but he who does the will of the Lord will abide forever. Isn't our human brain in a dreadful state?

“Many of our most promising young men and women have offered their best ability at the shrine of idols, and have given themselves as a sacrifice to the prince of evil.” FE 232

Oh, if our young people would only wake up ! Many are playing around on the edges while they have testified to the glory of God at other times. What a sad situation here. Wonderful young men and wonderful young woman who could use their talents to the glory of God. Their ability is placed on the shrine of idols. They have given themselves as a sacrifice to the prince of evil. How sad! So let us heed the words of James.

Because the adulterous behavior is there, does that mean that God will throw you off for good? He is still pleading, He is still indescribably yearning for us!

*“But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, **ye double minded...**” James 4:6-8*

“How long halt ye between two opinions?” 1 Kings 18:21

Don't say, “I love God” one moment, and the next moment you turn your back and enjoy something that God does not enjoy with you.

...Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. James 4:9, 10

Don't indulge in the light-hearted ways of the world any longer. Discover the true condition you are really in. Then as you do, because you see your adulterous behavior with God, you see your depravity, you destroy your pride, you break before that wonderful love of God. Grace is beyond all computation. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and what will He do? He shall lift you up. **God so loves us, He yearns for us as for His only begotten Son, because He gave Him for us, so we can by Him be lifted out of**

our degraded condition. He wants us with Him. He loves us. Isn't that the real life? He wants us. To be with Him, as much as He wants His only begotten Son to be with Him. Can you reject that? Will you? This is our challenge, this is our calling. May God grant us a willingness to yield in every aspect that He reveals to us as being of the world. AMEN.

John Thiel, Australia



Br. Jastiva and his late wife, Sis. Jing Jing



Jesus had twelve disciples who followed Him, but then He appointed another seventy whom He sent out to different cities to preach the message of salvation. When Jesus spoke to His disciples the truth about Himself, “many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.” John 6:66. Then Jesus comes to the twelve and asks, “Will ye also go away?” John 6:67.

Jesus could have said, “Please, please, stay with Me,” when the seventy left Him; but He did not. God will not use force or any special appeals to make us accept His salvation. We must decide to follow Him and be thankful that He accepts us as His children and disciples. Jesus could have spoken a less pointed message so that His disciples would not have been offended; but this He could not do, either.

Many churches in the world are using many different methods in order to draw people to their meetings. They show movies, they have dances, and different kinds of games to attract people, and also very watered down messages that do not offend anyone. The seventy did not like the message that Jesus was preaching.

Our obedience to God must be voluntary. Our love to Him must be the motive for serving Him. When Eve went to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God could have put an angel in the front of it to prevent her from getting close to it and stop her from eating of it, but He did not.

When Noah entered the ark, God could have left the door of the ark still open while it was raining, but again God did not. The door was shut eight days before it started to rain.

Before the seventy disciples stopped following Jesus they seemed very genuine believers, and eager to do missionary work. “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name.” Luke 10:17. But then all of them decided not to be with Jesus anymore.

This has been repeated millions of times. Many seemingly good Christians can lose their faith. What they once believed does not make any sense to them anymore. Therefore, they look for something else, and Satan takes control of them, and they may end up complete unbelievers, or in some foolish satanic religion.

If we decide to do sin wilfully the Lord will not stop us. He lets us continue in our own way. When Judas decided to betray Jesus to the Jews, Jesus did not try to stop him with even one word. But there is a terrible warning given in the Bible, “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” Heb. 10:26.

Wilful sin is a sin against the Holy Spirit, which will not be forgiven. The Jews who condemned Jesus to be crucified after they had listened to Him, and seen His miracles, committed an unpardonable sin, yet they did not realize it. They continued their religious services

and hated the newly established Christian church.

Ananias and Sapphira spoke a lie to the church, which was not forgiven. Earlier they had received the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, but they lost this gift by their sin.

In the time of Noah the whole world had committed an unpardonable sin by rejecting the message of Noah. To reject the message of God's delegated messengers is a sin that is not forgiven.

Jesus said, "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." Matt. 10: 14, 15.

What was their sin? They did not want to hear the message of God's people, and that called for greater punishment than the sins of Sodom and Gomorrha.

The Pharisees had listened to Jesus and rejected His message. Instead of telling His disciples to go after them again, and try to win them to the truth, Jesus said, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind." Matt. 15:14. By rejecting the message of Jesus, it was useless for the disciples to go to them again, because they had sinned against the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes we see a young person leave the church and later return like the prodigal son, but have we seen a minister or church leader coming back? Paul writes clearly, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame." Heb. 6: 4-6.

Members who have left the church of God, and joined another church or formed a new church organization are almost impossible to save. We can save their new converts who have not rejected the church of God.

Members who have committed sin against the Holy Spirit are no benefit to the church; they cause only trouble and difficulties, and therefore God will bring a shaking upon the church, that they may be separated from the ones who are guided by the Holy Spirit. God is careful in His work of shaking. "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like a corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Amos 9:9.

If those seventy disciples who left Jesus had been guided by the Holy Spirit, they would not have gone away from Him.

"God is sifting His people. He will have a clean and holy church. We cannot read the heart of man. But the Lord has provided means

to keep the church pure... As we near the judgment, all will manifest their true character, and it will be made plain to what company they belong. The sieve is moving. Let us not say: Stay Thy hand, O God. The church must be purged, and it will be." Test. Vol. 1, p. 99, 100.

God will not make a decision for us, neither Satan can do it; we must ourselves decide whom we will serve and with whom we will stay.

Peter made a right choice. He said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6:68.

We all must make the choice either to follow the seventy who went away or stay with the twelve and with Jesus.

The final separation is still in the future, but we are nearing it. When the foolish virgins and the wise separated, the choice was determined between the ones who had oil in the vessels and who did not. The oil, which represents the Holy Spirit we must gain now while it is still freely available. If this is neglected now, then we will be among the seventy who went away.

May the Lord help us to make a right choice now before it is too late. **AMEN. Timo Martin, Canada**





Come Out Of Her My People

Part 2

In part one, I mentioned in closing that Sister White made appeals year after year for a work of REVIVAL AND REFORMATION among the Advent people. Why was this so? What is a revival and what is a reformation? Is there a difference, or does it mean the same thing? As members of God's Remnant church the IMS SDARM, we believe emphatically in the prophesied reformation and revival, but ONLY A REMNANT WILL RECEIVE IT. And what do I mean when I say that?

Firstly Laodicea is a time period after Philadelphia. We must understand that God has given to every man's life a period known as spring, and for every church a time of development.

The word of God describes the character of the remnant in the following words: "Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters, behold they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doing... and they shall comfort you when ye shall see their ways and their doings." Eze. 14:22-23.

"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." Zeph. 3:12-13.

Next we learn that THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL will be an afflicted people---persecuted for Christ's sake, a poor people--poor in spirit; free from Laodicean pride, a trusting people, dependent alone upon the power of God, having no confidence in the arm of flesh.

They, we are told, shall do no iniquity, nor speak lies, neither will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth--a guileless, holy people, a people whose hearts have been washed and made white in the blood of Jesus, and KEPT PURE by HIS indwelling spirit.

This work will be accomplished by the straight testimony being given to The Laodicean Church and living in the hearts of the receivers.

Again THE WORD OF GOD tells us that, the remnant of her seed will be an obedient people, they will KEEP all of God's commandments and HAVE (possess) the testimonies of Jesus.

THESE PECULIAR TRAITS AND WONDERFUL CHARACTERISTICS RESIDE IN THE TRUE REMNANT CHURCH. Rev. 12:17, Rev 14:12 and Rev 19:10

Further, the remnant of God must be a converted people. (9T 154) God requires His people to be holy, to keep themselves separate from the works of darkness. (3T 239)

Secondly, God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the LORD, until HE will refuse to

acknowledge them as HIS children.

Revival and Reformation are two entirely separate things. However, one can never be with out the other, and vice –versa. Let us read in CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS PP, 154:155, AND SEE FOR OURSELVES WHAT THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS SAYS TO US. “A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and Reformation ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS.”

REVIVAL

Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death.

REFORMATION

Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit.

Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.

OK, having established the above understandings together with part one, let's move on. What a terrible thing to exclude Christ from HIS own temple, WHAT A LOSS TO THE CHURCH!!!

Our Redeemer sends HIS messengers to bear a testimony to HIS people. HE says, “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 sup with him, and he with Me. (Rev. 12:20)

But many refuse to receive Him. The Holy Spirit waits to soften and subdue hearts, but they are not willing to open the door and let the Saviour in, for fear that HE will require something of them. And so Jesus of Nazareth passes by. He longs to bestow on them the rich blessings of His grace, but they refuse to accept them. (6T 262)

Every warning, reproof and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit, if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow.

“The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the Judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is TRUTH.” (DA 489, 490)

I am meeting many sincere and zealous members of the Seventh-

day Adventist Church , who, like me are sighing and crying for the abominations that be done in the church (3T 267) ,and desire to see a work of revival and reformation accomplished. I sympathize with them, and confess that I too share this same desire and burden. This need was also felt by the servant of the Lord, Sister E. G. White, during the years of her ministry.

Reformation is only needed when a departure from the pure doctrines and principles of the Bible takes place. There is no need of a reformation in a church which remains loyal to the Truth and implicitly obeys the LAW OF GOD.

This is the foundation of every true and enduring reformation. (PK 576)

John Warncken, Australia

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A New Life

From Perth, Australia

You placed me in a fertile land
My first steps were upon pure earth
Clear skies filled my eyes
Yet Your name was never spoken
A seed laying on the ground
Unbroken

Some years pass by
Life shows me how to cry
I hear the words "Jesus saves"
The seed is dry
But is now enveloped
In the soft, warm earth beneath

A husband and children now
I have many reasons to pray
I teach my flock Your name and ways
In Christ Jesus I am trusting
The outer shell is softening
Giving way

My world begins to give way
I question "why"
I flee to You for aid
That only You can supply
The seed is crushed beneath the weight
Of inner decay

The consequences of my choices
Come fast upon me
Every day Your love gives voice
To my yearning heart and ear
The seed's crust is crumbling
Breaking

Now alone I stand
Life's empty promises like sand
Yet, Lord, Your love proves each day
That you are the potter, I am clay
The seed crumbles and becomes part
Of the common ground

Repentance comes, a gift, free
It is not for myself I sorrow
The pain I feel is knowing each wayward step
Has caused my loving Saviour grief
The seed is now destroyed
But is given life

I have given all things to Thee
I have let Your sweet Presence come deep within
Your love is so dear to me
All I can do is weep at Your feet
The life within the seed
Breaks forth in living green

My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my
fair one and come away
For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT



CHILDREN'S CORNER

One winter in 1958, a young country Christian preacher, was sitting in his living room, reading a magazine. He turned a page and saw a picture of seven boys. That picture was to change his life.

He was the pastor of a small church in Philipsburg, Pennsylvania. Life for him, his wife and three small children was comfortably routine, in the slow-paced rural community; and it probably would have remained that way except for one thing. He had turned over his life to God. He simply handed over his feet and his hands and his heart and asked the Holy Spirit to use them.

For this preacher, the Holy Spirit was no vague theological term; He was the Spirit of God, a living person to be listened to and obeyed. On that particular morning, looking at the picture in the magazine, caused him to weep.

It showed seven teenage defendants on trial in New York City for the death of a young victim of polio who was beaten by members of a teenage gang. But it wasn't the brutality of the murder itself that especially gripped the preacher - it was the faces of the defendants. In their eyes he saw an anger and loneliness he had never known existed. All that day he was drawn to the picture. And during the next week he felt the conviction growing that he himself should take a toothbrush, get into his car, drive to New York where he had never been in his life, and try to help these boys.

At last he told his wife. "I don't understand why," he said, "but I must go."

It was the boldest step of obedience to the Holy Spirit that he had yet taken. Almost before he knew how it happened, this young preacher and the youth director of his small church, were driving across George Washington Bridge.

In New York he parked in front of a drugstore and telephoned the office of the district attorney named in the article.

"If you want to see the defendants," he was told, "the judge himself will have to give you permission." The preacher tried to telephone the judge. He was unsuccessful but not discouraged.

The next day the two men went to the trial. All morning they sat quietly, watching the seven young defendants. Toward the end of the court session, the preacher hopped to his feet, ran down the aisle and stood before the bench. He knew that if he were going to see the judge at all he would have to do it then and there.

"Your honour? Would you do me the courtesy of talking with me for a few se--?"

"Get him out of here," the judge interrupted brusquely.

Two guards swept down on him and picked him up by his elbows, rushing him toward the rear of the courtroom. Reporters and photographers jumped to their feet. Flashbulbs popped.

Later it was learned that the judge had been threatened by gang members and had thought the skinny preacher was one of them.

That evening the newspapers carried stories about the pastor being ejected bodily from the courtroom. As the two men drove home, they were both depressed and confused. What kind of guidance had this been? The preacher remembered biblical accounts of men who had been guided by the Holy Spirit. He'd started his own grand experiment assuming that Christ's Spirit would guide people today, just as He did in New Testament times. Why, then, was he in trouble?

At home, the young men faced a disgruntled congregation annoyed that their minister had made a public spectacle of himself. And as the days passed, the preacher's confusion increased. Not only was it difficult to explain why, as soon as possible, he was going back to New York.

But that's where he was, the next week. When he telephoned the district attorney's office a second time he was told that if he wanted to see the boys he needed written permission from each of the parents.

"Fine," he said. "Could you give me their names?"

The line went dead. He stepped out of the phone booth, smoothed

out the now crumpled page from Life and scanned the caption. The leader of the boys was named Luis Alvarez. He began to call all the Alvarez's in the telephone book.

In each case the answer was an indignant, "No, of course they didn't have a son Luis who was a defendant in the murder trial!"

The preacher was running out of dimes with more than 150 Alvarez's to go. He gave up and stepped outside, praying, "All right, Lord. I just don't know what to do next. If this is Your business I'm on, then Your Spirit will have to show me the way."

He got into his car and began to drive aimlessly through the strange streets. Eventually he found himself in the heart of Spanish Harlem.

Tired of driving, he parked in the first empty space he found. He got out and asked a boy if he knew where a Luis Alvarez lived.

"Luis Alvarez?" asked the boy. "You are parked in front of his house." He pointed to a brownstone building. "Fourth floor."

"Thank you, Lord," said the preacher.

"What you say?"

The preacher put his hand on the boy's shoulder. "Thank you. Thank you very much."

He climbed to the fourth floor, found the Alvarez apartment and knocked on the door.

"Come in."

He pushed the door open and saw a tired-looking man sitting on an overstuffed chair. Senor Alvarez barely looked up. "Ah, here you are, Preacher. I've been expecting you. I see your picture in the paper. I say my prayers that you will come." At last the preacher seemed to be getting his go-ahead sign.

Early the next morning he was back at the city jail with seven written permissions to visit the seven boys on trial.

Again he failed.

The jail chaplain, feeling that the boys were in his own spiritual care, refused to allow him entrance. The preacher was crushed. "What are you trying to say to me, Lord?" he asked. "Show me where my vision is too small." He had no way of knowing that this door had been closed in order for another - much larger - to be opened.

Suddenly a jolting idea occurred to him. Perhaps his vision was too small. Perhaps the Holy Spirit didn't intend him to work just for the seven defendants in the murder trail but for all the lonely, angry kids

on the New York streets.

Two weeks later the preacher was back in New York. On this trip he brought with him no preconceived ideas of whom he was to help or how. He simply walked the streets, and everywhere he walked he made the same discovery: The picture of him in a New York tabloid that had seemed to the preacher like a mockery of his guidance had become his entry to the street gangs of New York. Where he went he was recognized, "Hi ya, Preach!" from the cluster of kids on a street corner. "You're one of us, Preacher!" from a tenement stoop.

Soon the churches were asking questions about this man who was "in" where they'd never even had a foothold. They got together and asked him to conduct a two week youth revival. Five thousand teenagers flocked to hear him. A few months later the preacher had a weekly telephone show where teenage drug addicts, adolescent alcoholics, and fourteen-year old prostitutes told the stories of their conversion.

The preacher eventually moved his family to New York so he could minister full time to these young people.

As for the seven defendants in the murder trial, three were acquitted; four went to prison. The preacher went to visit them regularly in the prison.

He was just an unknown country preacher, but it is amazing what can happen when the average man - any average man or woman, lets the Holy Spirit be their guide.

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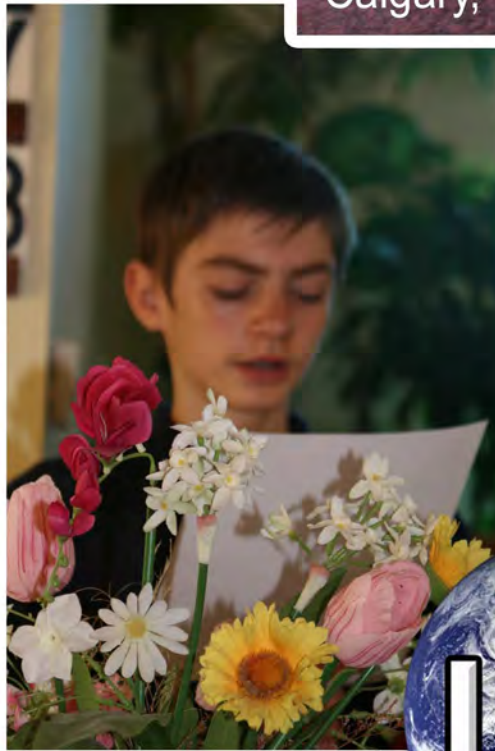
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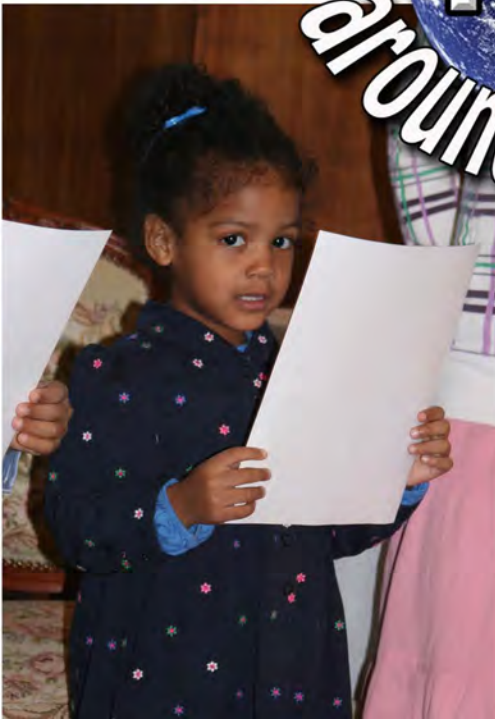
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Additional Information:

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