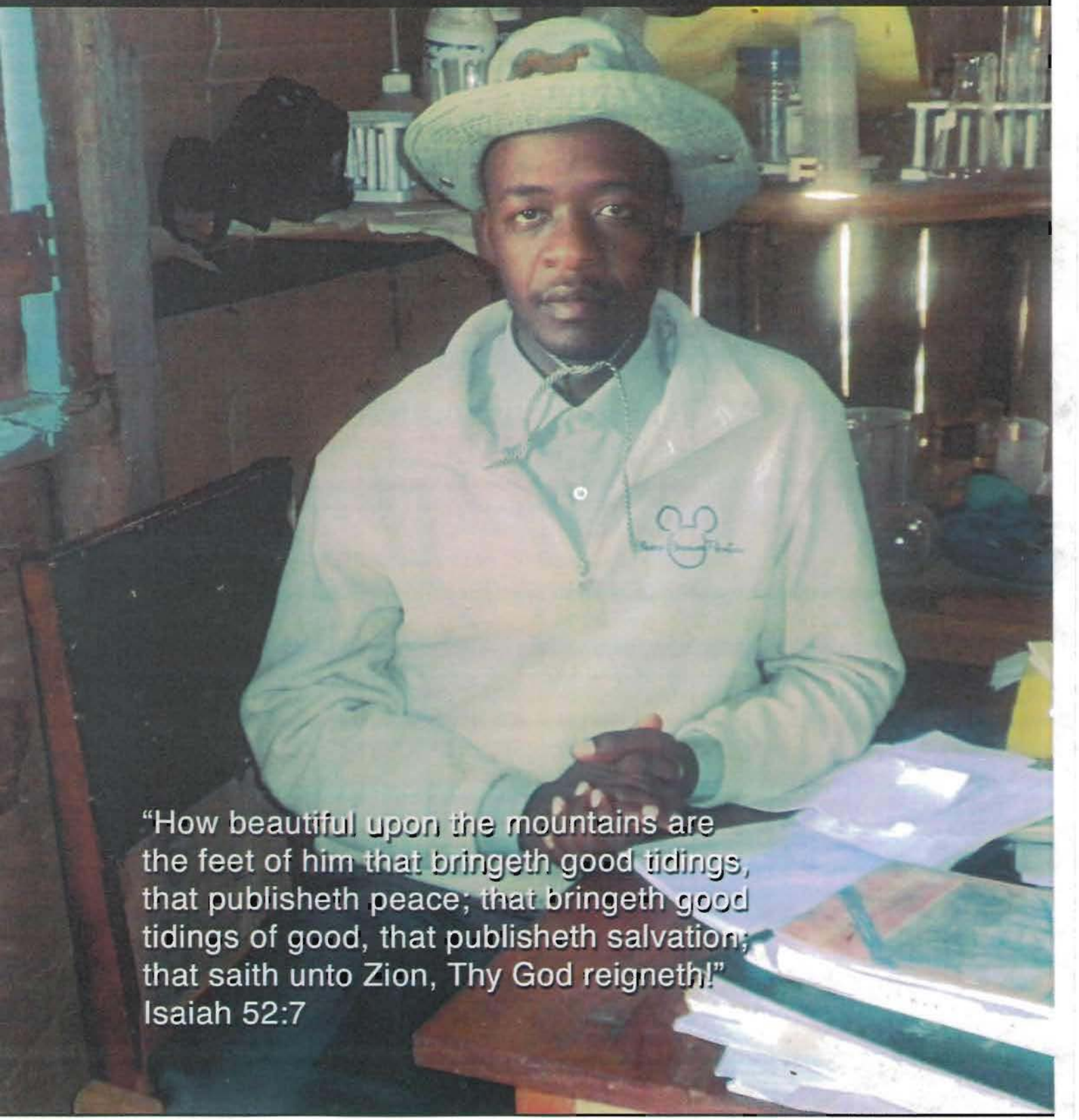


The Reformation Messenger

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 6, JUNE 2010

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



“How beautiful upon the mountains are
the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,
that publisheth peace; that bringeth good
tidings of good, that publisheth salvation;
that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!”
Isaiah 52:7

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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"The Flowers of Spring..."
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Never Alone

What a wonderful thought. Never alone... or is it?

Being alone... some people like being alone while others fear being alone. If you are a Monk in a monastery you like being alone. Some people become hermits because they dislike being around people and prefer a life of isolation. Although this is one extreme, most people like to have some "alone" time – away from the hustle and bustle of life... away from others... just to be alone. You can be alone at home... you can be alone out in nature...

Some fear being alone. Ask them to be at home alone and they need to have the TV or radio on all the time. The radio is constantly on when they drive also, to them silence is an eerie feeling. Ask them to go for a walk alone in the woods and they will hesitate at the idea. They always need to have people around them.

Some are sad and feel lonely when alone. But they don't need to be because the truth is that we are **never alone**. They do not realize that the Lord, who excels in strength, is always by their side. Remember, "God is your friend. You are never alone." {5T 507.3} We are encouraged that we should "**Never Feel Alone**."--You may never be lonesome, never feel that you are alone, if you will take Jesus as your Companion and your Everlasting Friend." {2MCP 632.3}

"Keep cheerful. Do not forget that you have a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which Christ has appointed. You are never alone. If you will listen to the voice that now speaks to you, if you will respond without delay to the knocking at the door of your heart, 'Come in, Lord Jesus, that I may sup with Thee, and Thee with me,' the heavenly Guest will enter. When this element, which is all divine, abides with you, there is peace and rest." {AH 350.3}

This is a very comforting, but also a very solemn thought... the fact that we are never alone. This is something we should ever keep in mind.

Read this next paragraph slowly and carefully:

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

Him." {3BC 1153.10}

We are counseled to keep this ever in mind; that we are never alone. Therefore, "Before you speak or act, always think of this. As a Christian, you are a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King. Say no word, do no act, that shall bring dishonor upon 'that worthy name by the which ye are called.' James 2:7" MH 490:1

Man may not see, but God sees all your actions, hears all your words and reads all your thoughts.

Ministers Can Never Work Alone

The church of Christ is compared to a body. Each body part has a value and one body part cannot do all the work. The eyes cannot do the hearing or the walking. The hands cannot do the seeing or the thinking. All are necessary. In the same manner, one man alone cannot perform all the functions in the church. God has given different talents to different people so that all need to work cooperatively together. Unfortunately in some churches the expectation is that the ministers/workers do all the missionary work. "But in every department of the cause of God there are plenty of openings for those who will work in the spirit of humility that characterized the Master. From every direction voices are calling to us for help. **Ministers alone can never do this work. There is an abundance of talent in the church that should be put to use.** There are men and women who have ability, and whom God would accept as laborers in His cause; but they are shirking responsibilities under the plea of unfitness for the work. Ladies who in the parlor can engage in conversation with wonderful tact and earnestness, shrink from pointing the sinner to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and then kneeling in prayer, pleading that light may shine into the mind and heart of this precious one for whom Christ died. Oh! there is so much work for God and souls that is left undone because it is a cross, and because each seeks his own amusement, and works for his own selfish interest."--RH Oct. 7, 1884.

"By a right use of their talents they may increase their efficiency in the cause of God. The church may be visited only occasionally by a minister, and yet be a growing church; for Jesus is our minister, and we are never to think that we are left alone. Jesus never forsakes the flock of His pasture." RH Jan. 17, 1893.

All members are to be workers for God and He will be with every worker. "The workers should keep the soul constantly uplifted to God in prayer. They are never alone. If they have faith in God, if they realize that to them is committed the work of giving to the people light on Bible subjects, they constantly enjoy the companionship of Christ." {CM 81.2}

Hoping No One Will See

This is true not only of wicked people. Often wicked people don't care if others see or know of their evil deeds, unless it is to the point when they may end up behind bars for their evil deeds... (although even this had not deterred the most vile criminals from their evil acts).

It can be as "innocent" as a child stealing a biscuit (after mother has stated that they are prohibited between meals), and then attempting to conceal the misdeed from mother. They want to hide and be alone and enjoy the fruit of their deception. But the small deceptions lead to larger deceptions.

Then it can be as severe as the hypocritical Christians who make the greatest attempt to hide their evil deeds. Jesus placed many of the Jewish leaders in this category. He called them "Whited Sepulchers." Mat 23:27. They look beautiful on the outside but inside are full of dead men's bones. They are lukewarm and Jesus said, "I will spue thee out of my mouth." Rev 3:16. They are distasteful to Him.

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Prov. 15:3. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal 6:7. No man is alone.

A classic example is that of Ananias and Sapphira (See Acts 5:1-11). It is a famous story with a tragic ending. Ananias and Sapphira could have saved themselves in the last minute by confessing that, "No, after all they really did not sell the property for that low price." But they held on to their lie until the end. Who were they hurting? Were they hurting the apostles and early church by withholding their means? No, God would provide for His own. They were only hurting themselves. Who were they trying to fool? The believers in the church, of course, but they neglected to consider one fact and that is that there is a God in heaven who sees everything. He sees what man cannot see. David knew that when he wrote, "O understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted [with] all my ways. For [there is] not a word in my tongue, [but], lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether...Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou [art] there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou [art there]." Psalm 139:1-4, 7, 8. It is one matter to lie to our fellow man, but quite another to lie to the Lord. "The Lord looketh down from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men." Ps. 33:13. We may be able to fool our fellow man for awhile but we cannot fool God. And, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, your sin will find you out in the Lord's good time. And the result could be tragic. "And it shall come to pass at that time, [that] I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: **that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.**" Zeph. 1:12. The Lord loves the sinner too much to leave him alone in his sin.

"From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works." Ps 33:14, 15.

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Hebrews 4:13

Again, I repeat this ever important concept... God not only sees everything we do... hears every word we speak... but also reads every thought in our heart. Nothing is hidden from God. We cannot ever be "alone in our thoughts." God is there.

No Man Is An Island

Joan Baez wrote a song with this title. The first verse goes like this:
No man is an island,
No man stands alone,
Each man's joy is joy to me, -
Each man's grief is my own.

"You are never alone. You are never in a place where you have no one to have interest in you. Our heavenly Father has given His Son to die for you. The cross of Calvary testified that He takes a deep interest in your welfare, for you are the purchase of the Son of God, and you are the subject of many prayers." (TDG 184.3)

Although some people may try to live for themselves and be alone, it is impossible to not have some sort of influence on those around you. "The influence of every man's thoughts and actions follow him like an invisible atmosphere, which is unconsciously breathed in by all who come in contact with him." 5T 111

You simply cannot avoid it. You will have an influence on others whether you try to or not. You may be waiting at the bus stop, or walking through the shopping mall, seemingly in a world of your own, ignoring others around you as you go about your way. But you are not alone. Whether you realize it or not, you have left behind a silent witness; a witness for the truth or against the truth. By the expression on your face; the words you speak; the manner in which you carry yourself and act... all bear a witness for or against the truth.

When Cain was confronted by God regarding the murder of his brother, Cain tried to get around the issue by stating "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen. 4:9. Often we may have entertained the same thoughts. The truth is we **are** our brother's keeper. We are **not** to live for ourselves or our own families only. Jesus said, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me." Ezek.33:17. We are **not** to live for ourselves, but rather to help and assist others along the way watching for opportunities to witness for Christ or help those in need. God has never left us

alone, and neither should we seek to live alone and become a hermit from society.

There are those who go to work, shopping and church, but the remainder of their week is spent as a hermit from society in the confines of their own homes. "No man can live for himself and enjoy the approbation of God." 5T 113

Break Out Of Our Comfort Zone

People want to be alone because then they can do what they want, when they want, and not be responsible for anyone else. They don't want to be disturbed by others' problems. It is comfortable being alone. We can be carefree, being alone. But this is not God's plan for mankind. Not if we ever wish to gain entrance into the heavenly kingdom. Jesus is our example. He left a comfortable life in heaven to come to this sin-polluted world to battle with the forces of darkness waiting to attack Him every step of His journey on this earth. "We can never be saved in indolence and inactivity. There is no such thing as a truly converted person living a helpless, useless life. It is not possible for us to drift into heaven. No sluggard can enter there. If we do not strive to gain an entrance into the kingdom, if we do not seek earnestly to learn what constitutes its laws, we are not fitted for a part in it. Those who refuse to co-operate with God on earth would not co-operate with Him in heaven. It would not be safe to take them to heaven." COL 280

"Those who study how to give as little as possible of their physical, mental, and moral power are not the workers upon whom He can pour out abundant blessings. Their example is contagious. Self-interest is the ruling motive. Those who need to be watched and who work only as every duty is specified to them are not the ones who will be pronounced good and faithful. Workers are needed who manifest energy, integrity, diligence, those who are willing to do anything that needs to be done." MH 499. All members are workers for God.

We need to give our all for the service of God, or then we will be counted as nothing on the day of Reckoning. Giving all to Jesus is yoking up with Him and He said, "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Mat. 11:30. There is joy in the service of the Master. Much greater joy than there is in being alone in one's home... living a life solely for self.

Angels That Excel In Strength To Uplift

When we sin:

When a person sins, God does not leave them alone. He sends the Holy Spirit to bring conviction to the soul. He orchestrates circumstances to assist the person to recognize his sin and

hopefully make confession, and puts in man a desire to change his life. This is comforting to some, but disturbing to others.

"If in our ignorance we make missteps, the Saviour does not forsake us. We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy." {MH 249.1}

To the Jewish leaders it was an annoyance when their sins were pointed out. To the penitent soul who wishes to follow Jesus all the way, it is a joy to have sins pointed out because we have the promise of forgiveness and reconciliation. We serve a very patient and loving God.

When going through trials:

"Will the Saviour ever turn away to leave you to struggle alone? No, never. But He never told His disciples that they should have no trials, no self-denial to endure, no sacrifices to make. The Master was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.' We thank God that in your poverty you can call God your Father." {Ev 240.3}

"Through all our trials we have a never-failing Helper. He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Though now He is hidden from mortal sight, the ear of faith can hear His voice saying, Fear not; I am with you. 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore.' (Revelation 1:18)." {OFC 203.5}

"The Holy Spirit is to be continually present with the believer. We have need more carefully to consider the fact that the Comforter is to abide with us. If we individually comprehended this truth, we should never feel alone. When assailed by the enemy, when overwhelmed by temptation, we are to repose our faith in God; for we have His pledged word that we are never to be left to battle alone. Every soul, pardoned of sin, is precious in His sight--more precious than the whole world. It has been purchased at infinite cost, and Christ will never abandon the soul for whom He has died." {FLB 57.6}

We can never fully understand the struggles of another person and therefore cannot judge them according to our own experience. Some may even reject the counsels we bring, however, we still need to show them the love of Christ.

"And when some were disposed to reject their counsel and separate from them, they would say: 'Well, if they want to go off, let them go.' While such a lack of the compassion, and long-suffering, and tenderness of Jesus was manifested by His professed followers,

these poor, erring, inexperienced souls, buffeted by Satan, were certain to make shipwreck of faith. However great may be the wrongs and sins of the erring, our brethren must learn to manifest not only the tenderness of the Great Shepherd, but also His undying care and love for the poor, straying sheep. Our ministers toil and lecture week after week, and rejoice that a few souls embrace the truth; and yet brethren of a prompt, decided turn of mind may, in five minutes, destroy their work by indulging the feelings which prompt words like these: 'Well, if they want to leave us, let them go.'" {2T 18.2}

Therefore we also should never just leave alone those who see making missteps along the way. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Rom 15:1

We are never alone. Praise the Lord. Let us keep this thought in mind when we go through trials and difficulties. Many martyrs languished in prison cells; were burned at the stake or fed to the hungry lions, but they had no fear because they had the faith to believe in God's promise when He said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Mat 28:20. They knew they were not alone.

"Thank God we are not left alone. This is our safety. Satan can never touch with eternal disaster one whom Christ has prepared for temptation by His previous intercession; for grace is provided in Christ for every soul, and a way of escape has been made, so that no one need fall under the power of the enemy." {OHC 311.5} May God help us to appreciate this reality. This will be our comfort and strength through all our trials and temptations we will face in the future. **AMEN**

Wendy Eaton, Canada

LOOKING FOR YOU!!

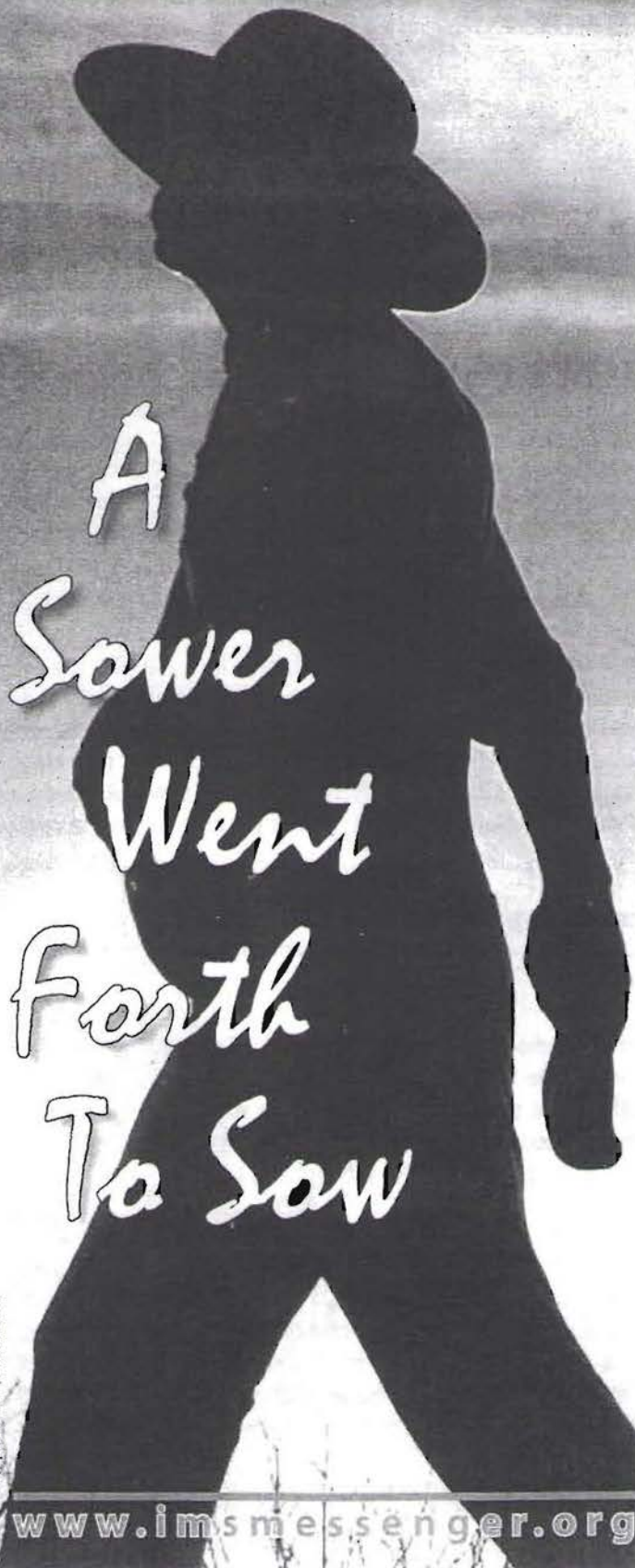
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A Sower Went Forth To Sow

"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow." Matthew 13:3

A Sower Went Forth To Sow...

For there to be joy in the harvest, for there to even be a harvest, a sower must go forth to sow. For the harvest festival, the singing, dancing and music, a sower must go forth to sow. To realise that every time you wake up to put toast in the toaster and enjoy warm bread, a sower went forth to sow. Every time you need some food to give you energy for your activities of the day, every time you need food, a sower went forth to sow. A soldier cannot go forth to fight unless a sower went forth to sow. A doctor cannot heal unless a sower sowed. If no one sowed we'd all be dead. If we could understand this, what a package of truth, Jesus said.

It is of vital importance that the preaching of the gospel is done on this planet. It is imperative that God's word is preached for fallen man. The physical life on the planet depends on the sower going forth to sow. We don't appreciate the effort of the sower and we probably don't think about the sower much at all. Jesus said, behold as the sower went forth to sow. Consider what was done. Consider the physical and apply it to the spiritual.

It is important to note that not every sower goes forth to sow and that all his sowing brings forth the harvest. Not every hearer of the word of God brings forth meat for the Master's use. We are here today sitting in our pews and we have come to hear again the seed which is the Word of God.

We have come to sit down and let this seed be scattered on our own acreage. We are waiting for this to happen. But mark this, not all that hear the word become fruitful. Not every person that hears the word allows it to grow. This parable is too big to be understood. There is too much to unwrap in this present.

The Seed

The seed that is spread everywhere is the word of God. That Word which was in the beginning which was with and was God, that seed was cast over the acreage. In this seed was enfolded the life of the plant in the embryo. Not just the plant but the nutrients of the life. In the word is enfolded the life of God. Not just the Word but all the nutrients, the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The seed is the nature of God. It is the divine nature. It is the substance of the matter of what we are hoping for. This seed is the evidence of things not seen.

This seed is faith, the faith of Jesus Christ. It is the seed of Christ, the Word. This Word must be allowed to grow. It must not be hindered in its growth. The religion of "let," where you "let" God produce in you. Let your ears hear. Do not let your heart be troubled, believe in God. This seed is the nature of God. It is the

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faith of Jesus Christ; it overcomes the world, even our faith. It is God. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

We must unwrap this parable more as a gift, as no gift is a gift unless you unwrap it. How many of you get a present and leave it unwrapped? We have been given this present, the word of God and we should unwrap it to see what it is in it. God gets a huge tree and wraps it in a seed. It is a little speck; the Word of God is just a speck of nothing if you don't look at it. It is just a black book, but if you unwrap this present the dimensions are huge. We can unwrap the seed in our personal lives but it is the privilege and duty of everyone who unwraps the Word of God in theory, but you must unwrap it in practice.

The sower went forth and sowed in three different places. There is discrimination between different characters because the ground represents the hearts of men. It is not discrimination between fruitful and unfruitful people. To be unfruitful you can have a different reality as to why you are unfruitful. There can be a reason why the seed doesn't grow in your heart. Jesus gives a parable as to why the seed doesn't grow. When he gets to the fourth place, it was what sort of soil? A soil that was ploughed up. Before it was ploughed what sort of soil was it? It was just as hard as the wayside and rocky as the rocky place and thorny as the thorny place. The difference between the fourth condition was that there was a plougher that went forth to sow.

The fourth condition is not by virtue given to anyone by birth. No one is born with a ploughed field or good and honest heart. It is something that the divine word must do for you.

Then Cometh the Devil

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." Luke 8:11, 12.

The word fell, and then what? And then came the devil. I've never known anyone so punctual as the devil. If you read the gospel of Mark he says, IMMEDIATELY came the devil. Jesus is telling us something here. He is saying that when the Word of God is being preached, then comes the devil.

No sooner does the seed fall that the devil is there. Do not be ignorant of Satan's devices because if you listen to the word of God the devil will come. He doesn't worry about his captive prisoners but he worries about those who are about to escape.

The devil is so focused that when the seed drops he is there. If only we were half as focused and punctual as he. When the word of God is being preached, are we there? The devil is there. Perhaps we stay away from church or prayer meeting and the seed is going

out but we are not there, but the devil is there. If we would be where the seed is falling, then we would have a chance to receive it.

The farmer puts three seeds in. One for the worm, one for the bird, and one to grow. One may not germinate, one may not have enough moisture, and you have to put multiple seed in. You may say, when I was young I heard the word of God, the seed was put in my heart, why must I keep going? When the seed falls the devil is there. He still has some wisdom and if we are there then we can be blessed.

When the good seed falls upon the ground, when you have a good thought or desire for something, when you have a good will to do God's will, when you really want to follow God, who is there? The devil is there. Many a Christian want to do what is good, they have this good idea, this good noble purpose but then the devil comes and snatches it away. In other words, you have a good thought and a bad thought, and it is gone.

By The Birds

Satan doesn't just take the seed away, but he puts his own seed in there as well. Satan is also a sower. He knows that if he wants the world for his kingdom, he must go forth to sow. We have this condition where we might have some thoughts come up and Satan will snatch these thoughts away from us by all sorts of means.

There is no excuse for the seed to be taken from you. There is no excuse. We are to hide God's word where? Hide it in my heart that I may not sin against Thee. When the seed penetrates and goes in the heart the devil can't get it. But when it sits on top of the heart, he takes it away. Satan is not just punctual he is powerful. He can take the word out of your heart. Unless you hide the word in your heart it will be taken.

The devil comes and takes the word from the heart, and he has a reason for it. What is the reason why the devil wants to take away the seed out of your heart?

Lest they should believe and be saved. This seed is faith; he snatches the faith from you unless you believe and are saved. Satan has a punctual, powerful purpose in coming. He doesn't want the seed for himself; he is not coming to put it in his own heart. He is coming to take it out of yours when it falls.

The reason why the seed doesn't go into the ground is why? Because it is by the way side where the traffic of the world runs up and down. Perhaps you think, I have heard this sermon and concepts before and, hmmm... how boring. Or maybe that is the reason why you don't even come. It is just another prayer meeting and sermon, another discourse, another one. This is the condition of the hard heart; the sensitivity of God's word is gone and you sit there and sleep away.

The highway makes the path hard. It is all the travelling and traffic of the world. When you are away from God you are just thinking about the world and it travels through your brain all the time and what does it do? It makes it hard. The worldly thinking, planning and desires are frequently in your head and when the Word of God comes it is boring and then the devil snatches it away. Matthew gives a different aspect of the hard hearted condition.

"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [it] not, then cometh the wicked [one], and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side." Matthew 13:19

Matthew gives different dimensions. The person who doesn't understand is like the person who has a hard heart.

Understanding

Perhaps you have been hardened by the deceitfulness of sin or perhaps your spiritual faculties have been paralysed. Perhaps your understanding has been darkened. Jesus is addressing a character, a class of people who have such hearts whose spiritual and mental faculties are gone. The word of God is profitable for correction and reproof and Jesus is reproofing and saying, "sinner you have paralysed your brain, what are you going to do?" Perhaps you paralysed your brain through drugs, and the understanding of the gospel is not there anymore, because when the word of God comes there comes all sorts of things – opium, speed, marijuana and they make you lose your ability to understand the gospel.

Perhaps the sinner is engrossed in exciting novels which dull the brain and when the gospel comes they don't understand, as their mind has been dulled by novels and fiction. Or the poor sinner has been trapped into watching movies and video games and vegging out on the couch and relaxing and allowing his brain to be hypnotised by the media; and when the word of God comes he can't hear and he puts his Bible on the shelf and the devil snatches the seed away. They understood not as their brain was dull.

It is easier to watch TV than to read the word of God. Is it easier to press the remote than study the Bible? The mind is stimulated by exercise. If you don't use your brain you will lose it, because he that buried his talent in the soil lost it.

If we bury our head in the world we will lose it. Perhaps we have been brain damaged by perverted desires. There is another pitfall which is when you hear God's word and you are distracted; where you put yourself as judge and you look at everyone and not listen to what is going on. Perhaps you make judgments and you look at the preacher and say, he has a stain on his coat, or he didn't shave properly, and while you are doing that, what is happening? The seed is being snatched. Or if you look at others and criticize, and in the sermon you are not thinking about the message but all the

problems someone else has. If that is the case the seed is being snatched. Satan really wants to snatch it away lest you believe. Satan doesn't want you to believe lest you have faith. If you don't have the seed your garden will be weeds.

No Root

"And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture." Luke 8:6

"They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." Luke 8:13

What is Jesus really saying here? Here is another class of people. Maybe they do understand God's word. Maybe they don't engage in the media of the world. Maybe they don't engage in secret vice or criticizing others, so they understand, as their brain has some faculties here. The word of God comes in and with joy they receive it. They are happy about it. But there is a twofold reason why it doesn't last:

1. No moisture
2. No root

This is a danger that faces every Christian. Are you a Christian that has no moisture in your life? Are you dry? Or perhaps you are just too shallow. Here are two different extremes, the left wing and the right wing.

To have a form with no moisture is like having correctness with no forgiveness. To be correct with no forgiveness is to lack moisture in your life and you will only last a little while.

It is dry and hot in my life, there is no moisture anymore. My life is a drag. Perhaps you have dry doctrine with no grace. Perhaps you understand all the mysteries of God but you are not kind. We are to be humble when people fail and they don't understand. To have an experience without humiliation is to be dry; or to have practice without love, or belief without repentance--to believe the truth but to never repent for what you have done. Or to have action but no spirituality, or to have zeal without communion with God. This is all the danger of the right side of the bridge. Whether you fall of the right side or left side of the bridge you end up in the same place. Either is just as dangerous as the other. Whichever you fear you move to the left or right and fall in the same position. You fear to become too correct so you become liberal and fall off.

Dryness

To have dryness, do you have dryness? Do you have one without the other? Or perhaps you have no depth. Perhaps you are a

cliché Christian who can say all the good things like, "Jesus is to come in our heart," and other things, but they are all clichés as you don't even know what they mean and you don't understand the depth of God's word. You read the stories but they are just stories, like David killing Goliath or the coat of many colours; you know the stories but there is no depth.

This type of religion is superficial. It is sentimentalism, romance and a pie in the sky; an imaginary religion. What made the plant wither in the parable? When the sun and heat came, then the plant languished.

Many people that come to Christ receive the gospel to escape suffering, but His gospel is a way to escape sin, not suffering. I want to be a Christian to escape the sufferings of life. To be a Christian is lovely as everyone hugs us, but when persecution comes they wither away as they haven't counted the cost.

Jesus died on the cross to take away my sins, but you must suffer with Him if you will be raised with Him. People rejoice for a while. "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." Luke 8:13

Perhaps you have been in this church for a while and then what happens? Perhaps you have been the organist, teacher or leader for a while. A while doesn't mean much. I've been in this church for a while now, are you saved? They believe for a while. I was kind for a while. I was long suffering for a while. I was patient for a while. I cared for people for a while. I had some friends for a while. I had a marriage for a while. A while doesn't mean anything. You can be kind for a while until it's too much and then you say, I've had enough. I've been kind for a while and that is too much.

There is a class of people that for a while do what is right and in that while they think to themselves, now I have everlasting life. I understand and receive the word and it has come into my life.

Perhaps you are only halfway through that while. What will that future bring? Have you counted the cost to be a Christian? Do you realize to be a Christian is to go without the camp, bearing His reproach? To be cast out of the world? The world hated Jesus, therefore it will hate you. The servant is not greater than the Master. Look at Jesus life and ask, can I do the same? To follow Jesus for a while is to not bring you to the celestial city. Formalism and hypocrisy walked the path for a while and then they withered and died.

Peaks Of Another Class

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of [this] life, and bring no fruit to perfection." Luke 8:14

Go Forth

When people hear these words they seem to go forth with it. They tend to be leaders and gifted and talented, having monetary success with the ability to go forth. They are not pew warmers. They hear God's word and they go forth. They become workers and talented for God. That words, "go forth" says a lot. There are people who can't be bothered using their brain and have wrecked their brain. The seed is snatched away as they understand not. There is a class who seem to have mental faculties that are above others.

They seem to be able to go forth and conquer, but these people who go forth pile too much on their plate and make their business too big. They do all sorts of things to have recognition. They want to be respected as they believe money is power. In their pursuit of going forth, the cares come up and choke them. It is too much. There is many a rich man who has so many riches that they are like bags of lead around him and he will sink because of his riches. It is harder for a rich man to go into the kingdom of heaven than it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

The lilies are more beautiful than Solomon's glory. He that goes forth into His vineyard, Jesus says, take not purse or script.

Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send out labourers into His harvest. I go out, I send you as sheep among wolves, and then He says, take no purse, script, or shoes. Jesus is saying, don't take your credit card or cheque book as you are then relying on your cheque book. You may think, I need a big business to support me in the ministry as there comes the idea to depend upon yourself. You may have a platinum credit card but Jesus says, don't take it. In another verse it says, don't take your script. Don't ask for donations so that you can go there.

When people have riches or a desire for riches they need help to get there. Jesus says, don't take your cheque book or credit card. If you go into a house take what is given you but don't take your beggar's bag. Travel light and don't take an extra pair of shoes. Don't take the burdens of your kitchen sink with you. Don't take all your possessions.

What Jesus is teaching is a radical dependence upon Him, but the cares of this life eat up people. Jesus covers all the characteristics of the whole planet. Every single person is covered, whether they are dull of hearing or those who like to listen or the "go and get them" type of people. All are manifested in this parable. As we unpack it we find we are poor sinners. We are in need of something. We are in need of the plougher. We have need of the heart to be broken up, but this work of heart breaking is up to you and me. It is not up to us to break it but to let it be broken.

The reason why the seed doesn't grow is because of your own heart, not the seed. It is because of you and me that the seed

of the kingdom of heaven doesn't flourish. It is because of our carnal heart. No one is born with a ploughed field, no one does it naturally. All of us are in one class or another. We must let it happen in our heart.

Palastine

We think of the field where there is the machine that goes out and breaks the ground, then the spreader comes and spreads the seed and then the sprayer and the harvester. If we go back to the time of Christ everyone had their own plot of land. Jesus is teaching the parable, and what can they see? A field. They didn't have fences back then but they used rocks around their land. There were lots of rocks but they had to make a gap so people could walk through.

There were rocks put by man, and their section of field needed to be sowed. But some fell on the rocks. Who put the rocks there? Man. Why was the road so hard? Man trod on it. Why were there thorns? Because of the curse of man's sin. But where did the good field come from? It came from the hand of the farmer.

We must allow God to deal with our heart, as the problem is in our heart. The spirit of God is seeking to break up your heart today. The spirit of God is trying to get you to break your heart, to stop having formalism, and to walk in the narrow way. God is seeking to break up fallow ground.

"For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns." Jeremiah 4:3

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for [it is] time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hosea 10:12

This work He desires to accomplish for us. He asks us to cooperate with Him. That is what He is asking today. Come to Jesus to make a stand. Jesus Christ has borne the thorns of your field into His brow. He knows the thorns that choke people. He knows the wayside as He fell upon the wayside. Jesus Christ had people throw stones at him. Jesus is wanting to break your heart as He broke His upon the ground, on earth, the outer court. He wants people to make a stand for Him, to say, "I will let God do everything, just don't take the Holy Spirit from me.

I will allow Him to take the media out of my lounge, the books off my shelf, I will allow Him to take away my secret vices and I will allow Him to take judging. I will count the cost and I will give everything to Jesus Christ. I will lose my life for His sake because then I will find it. I will go deeper than superficial clichés. I will study my Bible and allow the seed to go into my heart. That is what He is calling us to do. He wants us to let go of our beggar's bag. He wants us to let it go. Do your duty and let it go.

To be wealthy, let it go. Jesus wants us to make a stand for Him, make a decision. Allow God to do it. As we give our heart to Jesus He will be faithful with that heart.

He is the exchanger and He will change it into ten talents. He will give you the wealth of eternal life and the joy of heaven and the ease of the Eden to come.

Let us remember that unless you go out to sow, you shall not reap. A sower went forth to sow...

Amen.

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Do I Have A Personal Excuse?

In our human nature there is a tendency to want to obtain the most while giving the least. When buying something, we would like the best quality item at the cheapest price. When we need the advice or assistance of a professional, we expect the most accurate and efficient service with the least compensation. Regarding the fulfillment of our duties, we tend to procrastinate; we are more inclined to concentrate on our rights and minimize our obligations and the reason for this is mainly that we do not see our duties as a privilege. In spiritual matters the same thing happens. It is an indisputable fact that we are saved by grace, but the more we understand this grace the greater the sense of our responsibility toward God and humanity is. Nevertheless, there is a tendency to believe that grace exempts us from duty. Someone may conclude that if grace involves a duty it is not grace. If we understand grace as love then it is also a fact that love awakens love and love is duty, responsibility, joy in service, energy, action, a constant forgetting of self and attentiveness to the needs of others.

Many excuses are given by our human nature to avoid heavy responsibilities. Let us analyze some of the excuses given by some men who were chosen by God for a very important mission: *"And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I [am] not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I [am] slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."* Exodus 4:10.

"Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I [am] a child." Jeremiah 1:6.

We do not know whether Jonah presented any verbal excuse, but we do know that he just walked away. *"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."* Jonah 1:1-3.

Have we also been called to fulfill a very special mission? Can we add any personal excuse to this list?

The Lord has a commission and an invitation. The commission is to those for whom the world has lost its attraction, for those who have understood that the joy, peace and hope of this world are like soap bubbles, ephemeral and fragile, that man's righteousness has originated many quarrels in the family and many wars in the world. This commission is for the one's who seek the kingdom of God, because they believe that the Lord has prepared something much better for them. It is a commission for those who have experienced God's love in a superlative way. To these the Lord has given the possibility to grow in faith, to know the Scriptures, to feel His presence and He wants that they may be testimonies of His love and mercy in this world full of misery and darkness and to invite others to turn to God, to accept Jesus as their Redeemer before

it is too late.

Moses was chosen by God to fulfill such a commission. He had to make a great decision in his life before he could serve the Lord. He was the heir of the throne of Egypt, the future Pharaoh, who could be worshiped as a god, but he refused that privilege because he understood that the whole system was based on false principles, on a false religion, on man's power and the cult of the dead, in other words: Spiritualism. Not only did Moses renounce the richness of the land of the Nile, but he spent forty years in the wilderness learning humility and meekness from the Lord.

Only then, when he had finished the education process in the principles of heaven in a practical school of experiences could he fulfill God's mission.

The Lord called him personally and gave him the commission to go to Egypt to set His people free. The Lord would prepare the way and be with him.

Moses answered, "*But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.*" Exodus 4:1. The Lord very patiently explained to him what he should do and gave him the power to work miracles. But Moses' reaction was, "*O my Lord, I [am] not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I [am] slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.*" Exodus 4:10. The Lord answered, "*Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.*" Exodus 4:11, 12.

Moses had no other excuse, but in spite of all the promises of God and the assurance that He would be with him and support him, he said, "*O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand [of him whom] thou wilt send.*" Exodus 4:13. Could Moses escape the responsibility that God had placed upon him? By no means. God does not invest in a person for nothing. He fulfilled His plan with Moses and Moses became the liberator of Israel, or better said, God through Moses set His people free from bondage.

We have been called to call a people to be set free from the bondage of sin and the world and to show them the way of freedom, to save them from what will come upon the world. Are we ready, like Isaiah to answer to the Lord's call; "*Here am I; send me*"? Or do we present excuses, like Moses did, because we look at our weaknesses instead of at God's power?

Jeremiah was chosen from his mother's womb to be a prophet of the almighty God. When the time came in which he had to fulfill his mission, he said, "*Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I [am] a child.*" Jeremiah 1:6. Are you also a child? Are you very young? That is wonderful! The Lord wants to make use of your energy, of your talents to fulfill a sacred commission, to save many

people and to be a messenger of His peace. The great prophet Isaiah writes, "*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*" Isaiah 52:7. What a privilege! What a joy to be a messenger of peace in this world full of hatred and misery! And the Lord gives us a promise, "*Be not afraid for I [am] with thee to deliver thee.*" Jeremiah 1:8. The mountains are not only to go skiing, but to climb with a message of salvation directly from heaven.

The Lord told Jeremiah and tells you, young man and woman, "*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 1:7. Paul writes to Timothy, "*Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*" 1 Timothy 4:12. In other words, be a Joseph, be a Daniel, be a Samuel, be an Esther, be a Timothy of our times. The Spirit of the Lord will be with you, guide you, protect you and strengthen you when you have to face trials, like He did with all these young people. Do not look for an excuse, but when you hear the word of the Lord calling you to service, answer as Samuel did, "*Speak, for thy servant heareth.*"

Jonah was chosen by God to deliver a very serious message to the people in the city of Nineveh, a real call to repentance. It is not at all easy to go somewhere where iniquity has the upper hand and to warn the people that their ways are evil; and if they continue in their evil ways God's judgment will fall upon them. Such a message is the one we should give our world today. The three angels' messages in Revelation 14 are a call to repentance, to worship the true God, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth and a warning against the submission to human power and worship of man. "*Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*" Revelation 14:7. Such was the message that Jonah had to give the people in Nineveh, but he was afraid so he caught a ship and traveled in the opposite direction. What are we who know the prophecies and recognize the signs of Jesus' soon coming doing? Do we flee our duty and preach "peace, peace" and there is no peace, "love, love" although we know that love has grown cold due to the fact that unrighteousness rules?

The consequences of a warning message can be hard, but we have a promise, "*I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world*" Matthew 28:10. The God of love and mercy has a wonderful invitation to the world, to the whole of humanity, and He sends His messengers as ambassadors of His kingdom to invite all the people who live upon this planet, "*Come to supper, come; for all things are now ready.*" Luke 14:17.

Are we ready to give this message? Are we so much in love with the Bridegroom that our sole longing is to be joined with Him for life and eternity? Has the following verse already been fulfilled in us as a church, as individuals? "*Let us be glad and rejoice, and give*

honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Revelation 19:7.

May the Lord help us to be prepared to receive the latter rain and give the message in the power of His Spirit.

While there are surely many people who are longing for the knowledge of the truth and the hope of a better world, there are also many who present and will present excuses for their rejection of the gospel invitation. *"And they all with one [consent] began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused."* Luke 14:18.

"And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused." Luke 14:19.

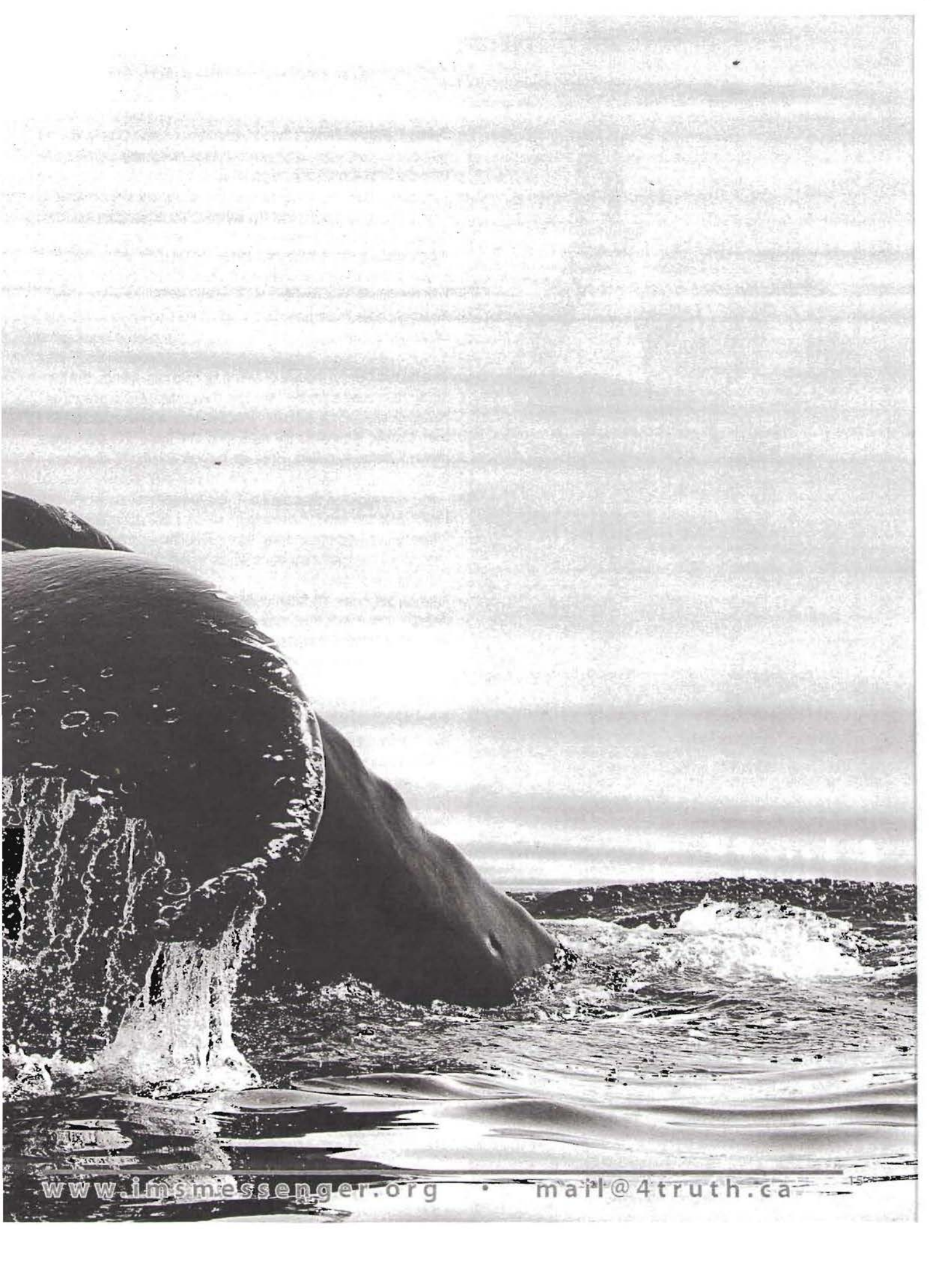
"And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Luke 14:20.

Possessions, materialism, the glorification of self and even human relations keep people in bondage and quite unaware of the fact that they have a heaven to win or a soul to lose.

These excuses and many others should not discourage us but, on the contrary, motivate us to be more fervent in prayer, more eager students of the Scriptures, more zealous in keeping God's commandments and precepts so that the Lord's love may be poured into our hearts and have a converting effect upon everything and everyone we come in touch with. **Amen.**

Teresa Corti





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15



*I Will Arise
And Go To
My Father*

Harold L. Zinsler, ifdc.com

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want." Luke 15:14

Before I take you through the scripture above, I would like to share with you a short experience which comes to my memory when I read the story about the prodigal son.

After completing undergraduate studies in the university, I thought it wise to remain in the city for some time while searching for meaningful employment opportunities. I rented a single cubicle, bought a mattress and cooking gear. Life in the city became tough. I did not get any jobs despite having posted dozens of applications. You might have heard how life is tough in the cities if you are not a city resident.

As a human being, I thought of asking for help from friends. But the fears within overcame me. I thought it was shameful. I remember having skipped some suppers for some days. My thoughts ran all over. Luckily, it came to my realization that there was man who owed me some 40 dollars. However, he was working 10 kilometers away.

I walked for one and half hours to his office. I did not find him. The following day I did not find him again. The next option left was to think about my upcountry home which was 500 kilometers away. Trekking was impossible. It could take me 25 days of hunger and thirst to trek home if I trekked 20 hours a day. The road passes through forests and parks, valleys and plains. At home, I recalled, I had caring parents, though poor. I too remembered, at home we do not buy water neither do we pay house rent.

Then I thought and compared myself with a certain son mentioned in the New Testament. The son had spent all that he had taken with him in a far country. When hunger, thirst, heat of the day and the chilling cold of the night gnawed him, what did he do?

"And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And when he came to himself, he said how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!" Luke 15:15, 17

Allow me to imagine that this son trekked home. The journey homeward must have taken many days. This is because he was in a "far country." (v. 13) His father too describes him as "dead and lost." (v. 14) It is likely he wore rags and walked on bare feet or had worn, very old shoes.

While I was studying the verses mentioned, I was struck by a new understanding of the father's love for his child. I mentioned in my experience that by then I was newly married. By now I can find a new meaning of the love of God. I am a father of one. Wherever I go, the love for my child reaches her.

One day she fell sick. I could not bear the sight of her suffering. I

was in great pain indeed. At times she ignorantly and dangerously plays with pets like dogs and cats which can hurt her.

I am also a son to my parents to whom I owe respect and honor. I believe that they also keep watch over me wherever I am. I can't blame them for their extended concern though I am old enough to take care of myself.

Little do we think of the shadow that falls at our homes while we dance and feast with wild companions. We, who had a privilege of sharing our father's possessions.

We belong to our Heavenly Father. He who created heaven and the earth said, *"let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, And over all the earth..."* Gen. 1:26

We were destined to rule or dominate the earth. On the contrary, we fell into captivity and became the servants of the Devil. Contrary to our thoughts, our Almighty loving Father's love followed us far to our lost state. Even now, *"Gōd still yearns over one who separate from Him, and he sets in operation influences to bring him back to the father's house."* COL 150. I have realized that it is the love of God which draws us toward Home.

At times we suffer in our trespasses. We feel ashamed to repent. Every so often we do not consider meeting our former brethren because we are of the opinion that we have gone too far from God's love. From time to time, we confess that we have overstepped the boundaries of no return.

As was that son, we have travelled a long way away from home. And we see in our mind's eye that we have cut off a spiritual and physical contact from our Heavenly father.

Let none of these thoughts keep us alienated from God. Geographical and spiritual separation is unknown to Him. He says *"I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."* Jer. 31:3

The young man made a decision. *"I will arise and go to my father."* Luke 15:18

"We see the young man turning from the swine herds and the husks, and set his face toward home. Trembling with weakness and faint from hunger, he presses eagerly on his way. He has no covering to conceal his rags; but his misery has conquered pride, and he hurries on to beg a servant's place where he was once a child.

"Little did he know of that one who is watching his return. But while he is yet 'a great way off' the father discerns his form. Love is of quick sight. Not even the degradation of the years of sin can conceal the son from the father's eyes. He 'had compassion, and

ran, and fell on his neck.' The youth sobs his repentance.

"The father holds him close to his side, and brings him home. No opportunity is given him to ask a servant's place. He is a son, who shall be honored with the best the house affords, and whom the waiting men and women shall respect and serve." COL 151

Arise and go to your Father. He will meet you a great way off. Take even one step toward him in repentance. His ear is open to the cry of the contrite soul.

Never a prayer is offered, however faltering, never a tear is shed, however secret, never sincere desire after God is cherished, however feeble, but the spirit of God goes forth to meet it.

Even before the prayer is uttered or the yearning of the heart made known, grace from Christ goes forth to meet the grace that is working upon the human soul.

As the bridegroom rejoiced over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." Isa. 62:5

In our study, we have examined the most difficult moments which the lost son went through. We have seen how he came to himself and made a resolution to return home and repent. Contrary to his expectations, he was given a hearty welcome. We then compared the love of the earthly father to that of Heavenly Father. There shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repents more than over 99 just persons who do not need repentance.

It is my sincere prayer that we repent of our transgressions. Repentance is a very valuable ingredient to our health. A guilty conscious is detrimental to our health. Forgiving and repentance relieves us from the bondage of guilt and death.

May the Heavenly Father bless the reader of this letter. **Amen.**

Charles Mogunde, Kenya
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Come Out Of Her My People

Part 11
(Revelation 18:1-4)

The Condition Of The Church And A Call For Revival And Reformation. Continued

1906

The Condition Of The Church

"The Lord has preserved my life for some wise purpose, and has given me instruction upon many points regarding the past, present and future history of Seventh-day Adventists." (RH May 31, 1906)

"The end is very near, much nearer than many suppose, and I feel burdened to urge upon our people the necessity of seeking the Lord earnestly. Many are asleep, and what can be said to arouse them from their carnal slumber? The Lord would have His church purified, before His judgments shall fall more signally upon the world." (RH, Nov 8, 1906)

The Call

"Brethren and sisters, we need the reformation that all who are redeemed must have, through the cleansing of mind and heart from every taint of sin. In the lives of those who are ransomed by the blood of Christ, self-sacrifice will constantly appear. Goodness and righteousness will be seen. The quiet, inward experience will make the life full of godliness, faith, meekness, patience. This is to be our daily experience." (RH MAY 31, 1906)

"To my ministering brethren I would say, Unite in a work of humbling your souls before God... Seek to arouse the churches by your own zeal...

"If these warnings are not heeded, if diligent work is not made to overcome and put away defects of character, God will soon have finished the work of judgment, and many will be found wanting. Shall we now, at once, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God?" (RH NOV 8, 1906) (2 Cor. 7:1)

1907

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"The True Witness declares, 'I know thy works.' 'Repent and do the first works.' This is the true test, the evidence that the Spirit of God is working in the heart to imbue you with His love. 'I will come unto you quickly, and I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.' The Church is like the unproductive tree which, receiving the dew and the rain and the sunshine, should have produced an abundance of fruit, but on which the divine searcher discovers nothing but leaves. Solemn thought for our Churches! Solemn indeed for every individual! Marvelous is

the patience and forbearance of God; but "except thou repent," it will be exhausted; the churches and our institutions will go from weakness to weakness, from cold formality to deadness, while they are saying, 'I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.' The True Witness says, 'And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' Will they ever see clearly their condition?" (RH, Dec. 23, 1890)

The Call

"A wealth of moral influence has been brought to us in the last half century. Through His Holy Spirit, the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction, to confirm the faith of the believers in the spirit of prophecy. Repeatedly the word has come, Write the things that I have given you to confirm the faith of my people in the position they have taken. Time and trial have not made void the instruction given, but through years of suffering and self-sacrifice have established the truth of the testimony given. The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days. Those who are indifferent to this light and instruction must not expect to escape the snares which we have been plainly told will cause the rejecters of light to stumble, and fall, and be snared and taken." (RH, July 18, 1907) (Isa. 8:15)

1908

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"Our sinful condition of lukewarmness has been coming on for years." (RH, July 23, 1908)

"There is danger of our brethren entering into commercialism, and becoming so engrossed in worldly business, that the truths of the Word of God in their purity and power are not brought into the life. The love of trade and gain is becoming more and more prevalent." (RH, July 30, 1908)

The Call

"The Lord has instructed me to say to His people that He demands a deeper consecration on their part, in every conference, in every church, in every household. Said the messenger: Speak to the leading men, saying; YOU SHOULD GIVE TO THE PEOPLE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT MAY BE DONE BY THE HUMAN AGENT IN HOLY LIVING BY COMING INTO CLOSE RELATION TO GOD. Do all in your power to send home the messages of warning that have been given. Wake up the watchmen; for their unbelief has paralyzed the efforts of many who would become workers.

"Let there be an awakening.... O that our brethren would awake to the situation! Every presentation possible may be made to them, but unless the plowshare of truth shall plow up the fallow ground of

the heart, there will be no thorough work done. Hearts that are hard will not be broken until there is a deep and sincere repentance. Unless there is a thorough reconversion, some will fall back into the same ways that have been followed for the past eight years." (RH, July 23, 1908)

1909

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"During the General Conference of 1909 a work should have been done in the hearts of those in attendance that was not done. Hours should have been given up to heart searching, that would have led to the breaking up of the fallow ground of the hearts of those that were at the meeting. This would have given them insight to understand the work so essential to be done by them in repentance and confession. But, though opportunities were given for confession of sin, for heartfelt repentance, and for a decide reformation, thorough work was not done. Some felt the influence of the Holy Spirit, and responded; but all did not yield to this influence. The minds of some were running in forbidden channels. Had there been on the part of all in the assembly a humbling of heart, there would have been manifested a wonderful blessing." (2SM 400-401)

The Call

"I am instructed to arouse our churches in every place from their sleeping condition. Those who hear the word of life, but do not practice it, cannot hope to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. In the great work that is before us, we shall meet with constant temptation. Though many of us are sleeping at our post, Satan does not sleep; and he will put forth untiring efforts to bring in heresies, that will turn us from a whole-hearted worship of God." (RH July 15, 1909)

"We need in all our churches the evidences of the meekness of Christ. In order to do intelligently the solemn work committed to us, we must hide self in Christ. We have a short time in which to accomplish the work that is essential. Let us earnestly prepare for the conflict that is before us. I am instructed to say to all our people, Let your light so shine in words and deeds, that you will reveal that truth is cherished in the heart." (RH, July 15, 1909)

1910

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"Will those who in the past have felt no responsibility resting upon them now realize that they are working either for or against Christ? Will you not let your light so shine before men that they, seeing your good works, may be led to glorify the One who gave His life in order that you might not perish, but have everlasting life?" (RH, Dec. 22, 1910)

The Call

"We must do nothing to lower the standard of our religious principles. Let there be a decided reformation. Let nothing be done to weaken the faith or mar the soul. Let our reward be the clean hands, the pure heart, the noble purpose." (RH, March 10, 1910)

1911

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"There is an earnest work of preparation to be done by Seventh-day Adventists, if they would stand firm in the trying experiences just before them. If they remain true to God in the confusion and temptation of the last days, they must seek the Lord in humility of heart for wisdom to resist the deceptions of the enemy. At this time every believer in present truth should stand identified as a laborer together with God." (RH, Sept. 28, 1911)

The Call

"What can I say to you, my brethren and sisters, that will arouse you to the importance of the times in which we live, and lead you to a faithful examination of heart and life? Are your lives in harmony with the life of sacrifice that Christ lived on the earth?" (RH, Sept. 28, 1911).

1912

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"For years, there has been creeping into the church an element that is educating many professed believers to resist the teachings of the Holy Spirit." (RH, Jan. 11, 1912)

The Call

"The great Head of the church, who has chosen His people out of the world, requires them to be separate from the world. He designs that the spirit of His commandments, by drawing His followers to Himself, shall separate them from worldly elements. To love God and keep His commandments is far away from loving the world's pleasures, and its friendship. There is no concord between Christ and Belial." (RH, Aug. 29, 1912).

1913

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH

"God requires that the church arouse from her lethargy, and see

what is the manner of service demanded of her at this time of peril. The lambs of the flock must be fed. The Lord of heaven is looking on to see who is doing the work He would have done for the children and youth. The eyes of our brethren and sisters should be anointed with heavenly eye-salve, that they may discern the necessities of the time. We must be aroused to see what needs to be done in Christ's spiritual vineyard, and go to work." (RH, Feb. 13, 1913)

"It will be well for us to consider what is soon to come upon the earth. This is no time for trifling or self-seeking. If the times in which we are living fail to impress our minds seriously, what can reach us? Do not the Scriptures call for a more pure and holy work, than we have yet seen?" (TM 514)

The Call

"We are to raise the banner on which is inscribed THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD AND THE FAITH OF JESUS. Obedience to God's law is the great issue. Let it not be put out of sight. We must strive to arouse church members, and those who make no profession, to see and obey the claims of the Law of Heaven. We are to magnify this Law and make it honorable." (2SM 403) (Isa. 42:21)

"Men of clear understanding are needed now. God calls upon those who are willing to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, to lead out in a work of thorough reformation. I see a crisis before us, and the Lord calls for His laborers to come into line. Every soul should now stand in a position of deeper, truer consecration to God, than during the years that have passed." (TM 514)

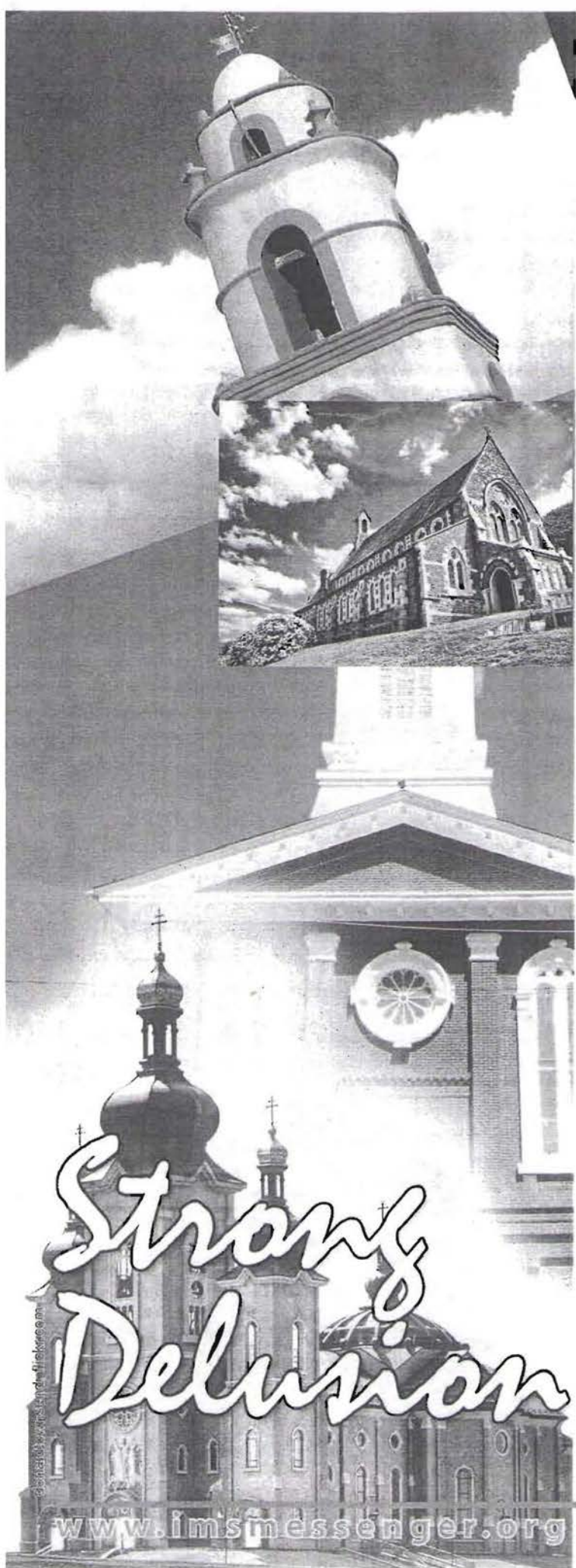
The crisis referred to in Testimonies to Ministers, page 514 above, was the time of real peril (TM 400), which would test the faithfulness of the people regarding the Law of God. This crisis, or test, came upon the Advent people during World War 1.

The above statement was the last call by the servant of the Lord for a thorough reformation. Although the other previous calls remained unheeded, this last one was answered, as Sister White declares: "I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. THERE SEEMED TO BE A GREAT MOVEMENT--a work of revival--going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God's call." (TM 515)

The work of revival and reformation seen by Sister White in the above statement was not undertaken by the leadership of the church, nor by the church as a whole. A small minority responded to God's call, and as usual, they were forced to separate from the church. In fact, they were cast out because of the defense of the Law of God.

Next month we will see how prophecy was fulfilled concerning a separation in the Seventh-day Adventist church.

John Warncken, Australia



We live in a time of great knowledge and enlightenment. But at the same time we read in the Bible that, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thess. 2:11.

Satan has been deceiving angels and men for 6,000 years, and now God shall give Satan a free hand to deceive, mislead, to confuse and to blind people.

Never have Satan's deceptions been so strong as today.

God allows Satan's deceptions to enter even to His own church. "God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat." Test. Vol. 5, p. 707.

Isaiah writes, "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." Isa. 60:2.

At the same time, light is shining, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." Rev. 18:1.

Therefore, now a terrible struggle is going on between light and darkness.

When Jesus spoke of the signs of the last days in Matthew 24, once He mentioned earthquakes, pestilences, and wars, but three times He spoke of deceptions in the religious world. In the beginning, He said, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." Matt. 24:4, 5.

Then later on He repeated it again, "Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." Matt. 24:11. Then once more He said, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24:24.

How many will be deceived? "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Rev. 12:9.

This happened in the time of Noah, that the whole world was deceived, except one family.

Jesus said also, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37.

Satan deceived the Pharisees and the leaders of the Jewish people, who were the church of God that time, to reject Jesus and put Him to death. In the Middle Ages, more than 50 million were put to death by a religious organization.

But never has the deceptions been so great as today during the

time of strong delusion, because the devils have entered the churches to deceive them.

"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Rev. 18:2.

What are the deceptions that have entered into the fallen churches?

One of the greatest deceptions we find in the words, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev. 3:17.

Sister White writes, "I was shown the startling fact that but a small portion of those who now profess the truth will be sanctified by it and be saved... I was pointed back to ancient Israel. But two of the adults of the vast army that left Egypt entered the land of Canaan... Modern Israel are in greater danger of forgetting God and being led into idolatry than were His ancient people. Many idols are worshipped, even by professed Sabbathkeepers." Test. Vol. 1, p. 608, 609.

The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on until every careless, unfaithful member will be shaken out.

"We do not understand as we should the great conflict going on between invisible agencies, the controversy between loyal and disloyal angels. Over every man, good and evil angels strive. This is no make-believe conflict. It is not mimic battle in which we are engaged." Ev, p. 704.

What is the strongest delusion that deceives people?

"No stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes them believe that they are right, and that God accepts their works, when they are sinning against Him." Test. Vol. 1, p. 407.

"Because of neglected opportunities and abuse of privilege, the members of these churches are not growing 'in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' 2 Peter 3:18. Therefore they are weak in faith, deficient in knowledge, and children in experience. They are not rooted and grounded in the truth. If they remain thus, the many delusions of the last days will surely deceive them, for they have no spiritual eyesight to distinguish truth from error." Test. Vol. 6, p. 424.

Which opportunities are often neglected? Are they not opportunities to do missionary work, to give a witness of our truth when ever possible?

Now an important question comes to us. Are we deceived by the delusions of the last days, or are we progressing in sanctification?

We need to check the waymarks to show us in which direction we are going.

If we lose interest in daily Bible reading, we are getting spiritually weak. The same thing if we neglect prayer meetings and other church programs. Also if we neglect reading the Testimonies of Sister White we will eventually lose our faith.

Satan's deceptions are in the beginning, as fine as a spider web, hardly noticeable, but they grow stronger and finally hold us in his deceptions like a steel cable, which we are not able to break.

We may be honest and sincere like Apostle Paul was in persecuting the Christians. If we do not carefully watch the waymarks we can end up on the way of wrong direction.

Often people use their own wisdom to decide their religion and service to God. But it is not a reliable guide for us. The Bible tells us, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." Isa. 53:6.

God's way is higher than the heaven is from the earth compared to our way. We cannot be careful enough if we do not follow the waymarks that are given to us in the Bible.

"There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth." Test. Vol. 5, p. 293.

Satan is constantly at work planning to deceive the children of God. Therefore our only safety is personal preparation. Putting away every sin, every idol, and pray to God without ceasing. Humanly we are not a match for Satan. We need divine wisdom and power to escape the delusions of the last days. May the Lord help us in this battle, to be victorious. **AMEN.**

Timo Martin, Canada

Your Wilderness State

"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." Psalm 63:1, 2.

The Sweetest

As the Apostle Paul's sweetest epistles were those that were written in prison, so some of the sweetest of David's psalms were those that were penned, as this one, in a wilderness; in the wilderness of Judah; that is, in the forest of Hareth, (1 Sam. 22:5) or in the wilderness of Ziph, (1 Sam. 23:15). Even in Canaan, though a fruitful land and the people numerous, yet there were wildernesses, places less fruitful and less inhabited than other places; obscure and barren. It will be so, or is in the weary world today, in the church, but not in heaven; there it is all a city, all paradise, no tears, no pain, streets of gold, and no desert ground; "but the wilderness shall blossom there as a rose."

The best and dearest of God's treasured saints and servants may sometimes have themselves cast in a pathless, remote wilderness, which leaves them lonely and solitary, desolate and afflicted, wanting, wandering, and unsettled, and frankly at a loss of what to do with themselves! Truly a quandary – a paradox! Worse yet, in a state of denial!

Ah! But, all the straits and difficulties of a wilderness must not put us out of tune for sacred songs, places, and peoples; but even then, it is our duty and interest to keep up a cheerful communion with God. There are wildernesses properly strewn in the Bible, but we have good reason to thank God that it is the wilderness of Judah that we are in, and not the wilderness of sin.

Getting Stirred Up!

We need to get stirred up as David did, to take a good hold on God; to awaken from a life of doldrums and failures, not living in the Book of Lamentations! "There are many who through striving to obey God's commandments, have little peace or joy. This lack in their experience is the result of a failure to exercise faith. They walk as it were in a salty land, a parched wilderness. They claim little, when they might claim much." (AA 563). **Therefore, get stirred up:**

I. By a lively active faith: "O God! Thou art my God! Now, in all our approaches to God we must carefully eye Him as God, and our God; this will be our comfort in a wilderness state. Furthermore, we must acknowledge that God is, that we speak to one that really exists, and is in fact present with us when we say, "O God!" Which, however, is a very serious phrase; pity it should ever be used as a by-word, which is often spoken; "O God!" Woe unto us for such carelessness as guardians of the Truth.

And we own His authority over us, and propriety or correct conduct in us, and in our daily relation to Him: "Thou art my God, mine by creation and therefore my rightful owner and ruler, mine by covenant and my own consent." Well, we must, therefore, speak it with the greatest pleasure to ourselves and give thankfulness to God, as part of those that are resolved to abide by it: "O God! Thou art my God!" **Moreover stirred up:**

II. By pious and devout affections: being in agreement or conformity to the choice made of God, and **the covenant made with Him to:**

1.) Solemnly seek God; His favour and grace. "Thou art my God," and therefore "I will seek thee, for should not a people seek unto their God?" (Isa 8:19). You see, we must seek Him; we must covet His favour as our chief good and consult His glory as our highest end; we must seek acquaintance with Him by His word (John 1:1), and seek mercy from Him by fervent prayer. Furthermore, we must seek Him: **1. Early:** with the utmost care, as those that are afraid of missing Him; we must begin our days with Him; "Early will I seek thee." Moreover, we must seek Him: **(2.) Earnestly:** "My soul thirsteth for thee and my flesh longeth for thee (that is, my whole man is affected with this pursuit) "here in a dry and thirsty land." Seeking is the beloved occupation of the mind; seeking, seeking, seeking! Never ceasing!!

David complained, however, in spite of this, but rightfully so. His complaint was in the want of God's favourable presence. He was in a dry and thirsty land; so he reckoned it, not so much because it was a wilderness as because it was at a distance from the ark, from the word and sacraments, the sanctuary! He was driven from the sanctuary and cut off from the privilege upon waiting upon God in public ordinances; a forced absence from that place of his delight; driven from the sanctuary either by Saul's persecution or Absalom's rebellion.

This world is a weary land (so the word is); it is so to the worldly that have their portion in it – it will yield them no true satisfaction, peace, happiness. The world, thereby, is slowly languishing. It is so to the godly that have their passage through it as pilgrims on a heavenly journey – it is a valley of Baca; they can promise themselves little from it.

David's persistence, however, grew for the presence of God: "My soul thirsteth, longeth, for thee." His persistence quickened his desires even more so. He thirsted as the hunted hart (male deer). He would take up with nothing short of it. He compares it to the panting of a deer, which is naturally hot and dry, especially of a hunted buck, "after the water brooks." (Psalm 42:1)

Holy love, thirsting, panting for God, for nothing more than God, but still more and more of Him! It denotes not only David's sincerity but the strength of his desires. His desires were almost impatient; he panted and thirsted, he longed, he languished, until he would be

restored to the liberty of God's ordinances, and the Law; not after the ordinances and the Law, but **the Author and God of them!** Isn't it true that gracious souls look down upon the world with a holy disdain and look up to God with a holy desire?

Furthermore:

2.) Long to enjoy God. What was it that David so passionately wished for? What was his petition, his request? It is this, "To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." That is, "To see it here in this wilderness as I have seen it in the tabernacle, to see it in secret as I have seen it in the solemn assembly." David expressed his vehement desire towards God when he was debarred from his outward opportunities of waiting on God, when he was banished to the land of Jordan, a great way off from the courts of God's house.

When we are deprived or locked in the wilderness–state, either by choice, or by "wickedness in high places," (Eph. 6:12), deprived of the benefit of the public ordinances, the principles of faith, the Law, the Word, the assemblies, we should desire and endeavour to keep up the same devout communion with God in our retirements that we have had in the great congregation. A closet may be turned into a little sanctuary. Ezekiel had the visions of the almighty in Babylon; and John, that wise old sage, in the Greek isle of Patmos. When we are alone we have the Father with us, and that is enough! And, "to see it again in the sanctuary as I have formerly seen it there." Do not, however, if possible, forego the "assembling of the saints"(Heb. 10:25) while there is still time!

David longs to be brought out of the wilderness, not that he might see his friends again, and be restored to the pleasures and gaieties of the court, but that he might have access to the sanctuary, not to see the priests there, and the ceremony of the worship, but to "see the power and the glory" (that is thy "glorious power" or thy "powerful glory," which expresses all of God's attributes and perfections). Ah! "that I may increase in my acquaintance with them and have the agreeable impressions of them made upon my heart" – so to "behold the glory of the Lord as to be changed into the same image." (1 Cor. 3:18). "That I may see thy power and glory." Not as I have seen them, but "as I have seen Thee."

Sometimes God teaches us effectually to know the worth of mercies by the want of them, and whets our appetite for the means of grace by cutting us short in those means. We are apt to loathe that "manna", when we have plenty of it, which will be very precious to us if ever we come to know the scarcity of it, and when we are deprived, in great measure, of the inward comforts we used to have in God. How will you react when you are absent from the "ark" the token of God's presence, and when they will continually say to you, "Where is thy God?" as they teased David, because he was absent from the ark, the token of God's presence? For those who are deprived of the benefits of His public ordinances – congregations, and constantly miss them, they must, therefore, constantly mourn

for the want of them until they are restored to them again.

But note; those are mistaken who think that when they have robbed us of our Bibles, and our ministers, and our solemn assemblies and churches, that they have robbed us of our God; for though God has tied us to them when they are to be had, **He has not tied Himself to them.** We know where our God is, and where to find Him, when we know not where His ark is, nor where to find that. **Wherever we are there is a way open heavenward!!**

We may go on mourning and pining in similar circumstances as David. Now, if God by His grace has wrought in us sincere and earnest desires towards Him, we may take comfort from these when we want those delights we have sometimes had in God, because **lamenting after God is as sure an evidence that we love Him as rejoicing in God.**

We are to look upon the living God as our chief good, and set our heart upon Him accordingly, and resolve to live and die by Him; and by casting our anchor on Jesus, can ride out the storm in our wilderness lives!

We cannot see the essence of God, but we see Him in seeing by faith His attributes and perfections. These sights David prizes himself and rejoices with the remembrance of. Those were precious minutes which he spent in communion with God; he loved to think them over and over again, shedding a tear or two, and wept day and night; these he lamented the loss of, and longed to be restored to.

Remember, finally, that which has been the delight and is the desire of gracious souls, in their attendance on solemn ordinances, assemblies, and the Law, is to **see God and His power and glory in them.** May this be our delight and desire.

YOUR WILDERNESS - STATE can, in fact, by faith, bring you closer to God! **Amen!**

John Theodorou, USA

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Lucian and the Church in Syria



CHILDREN'S CORNER

As a crisis developed within the early Christian Church a defender of truth was needed. God found His hero in Lucian (CAD250 – 312) who was born in Antioch.

We are told in the Bible that most of the leadership of the early Christian church remained in Jerusalem to preach about Jesus. This was obeying what Jesus had told His disciples before He went back to heaven. He said that they should go and preach t

he gospel to the whole world, "beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47).

The early stories found in Acts took place in Jerusalem, but when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70 many of the Christians fled to Antioch, the capital of Syria. In Acts 11:26 we are told, "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

Antioch was a center of Greek life and culture. It was famous for its beautiful buildings, paintings and artwork. Young Lucian had to choose between the power, wealth, elegance and impurity of life in Antioch or the simple, quiet, and pious life found in the hundreds of Christian villages and cities in the surrounding areas. At that time they (these villages and cities) were the flourishing home of a learned, devoted Christianity, clinging closely to the early simplicity of the gospel, and refusing to adopt the unscriptural teachings and customs of heathenism which were gaining ground in some professed Christian bodies.

"The early years of Lucian were years of great contrast. He quickly discerned that there were two movements talking shape in Christendom, one loose in doctrine and affiliating itself with heathenism, the other based on the deep foundations of the Christian faith." Truth Triumphant 46.

If you were fortunate enough to visit this area of Syria today, you would find hundreds of ruins of what are called "the silent cities of Syria." These well laid-out cities are almost perfectly preserved, with architecturally beautiful houses which still have their balconies, chairs, basins, oil and wine presses and vats, water cisterns and family tombs.

On some stone doorposts there are carved inscriptions that tell us these families were followers of God. On a large house it says, "Lord, protect this house and all those living in it, Amen." And on another building you can read, "To Christ the Victory, Away Satan!" In one town some prominent buildings had inscriptions which read, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son, the Word of God, dwells here; let no evil enter" or "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in" and "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Because Antioch was on the border between Rome and Persia, news, decrees and culture steadily streamed into that city. Lucian soon saw that "the churches of Rome and Alexandria had entered into an alliance. Alexandria had, for more than two centuries before Christ, been the real capital of the Jews who were compromising with paganism." Truth Triumphant 47.

Reviewing the history of the Jewish nation Lucien could see the effect of accepting the Greek education taught in Alexandria. It was because of their acceptance of Greek culture - the sports, arts and education - that the Jews were unprepared to accept the Messiah when He came to earth. Lucien could see a similar crisis coming into Christianity and he knew that God's education would be the only safety against the Greek education from Alexandria.

"The church at Alexandria was in this atmosphere. The city of Rome had been for seven hundred years, and was still to be for some time, the world capital of paganism. This environment greatly influenced the church at Rome. Lucian grew up in the churches of Syria and of the Near East, which were modeled after the churches of Judea. Here was the divine pattern for further believers. Lucian founded a college at Antioch which strove to counteract the dangerous ecclesiastical alliance between Rome and Alexandria." Truth Triumphant 47.

There were four things which separated the two colleges. (1) Those that started the college at Alexandria exalted tradition. (2) Clement, the most famous teacher at Alexandria, boasted that he would not teach Christianity unless it were mixed with pagan philosophy. (3) Victor I, bishop of Rome, made an agreement with Clement, (about AD 190) for his help to make Sunday the prominent day of worship in the church. (4) Victor I said anyone who would not

cooperate with him in making Easter always come on Sunday would be excommunicated (thrown out of the church). The school at Alexandria was in full support of this ruling.

It was from this time that there began to be seen a real separation between the Church of the East and the Church of Rome. The school in Antioch trained many young people in theology, the arts, sciences, and architecture. Those defenders of the faith followed the counsel of Jude in his epistle: "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3.

Lucian's greatest gift to Protestant history was his editing of what we call today the Textus Receptus, or Received Text. Lucian took all the manuscripts that were known to the early Christians and compiled them together into one "New Testament." "The Protestant denominations are built upon that manuscript of the Greek New Testament, sometimes called the Textus Receptus, or Received Text. It is that Greek New Testament from which the writings of the apostles in Greek have been translated into English, German, Dutch, and other languages. During the Dark Ages, the Received Text was practically unknown outside the Greek Church. It was restored to Christendom by the labors of that great scholar, Erasmus. It is altogether too little known that the real editor of the Received Text was Lucian. None of Lucian's enemies fail to credit him with this work. Neither Lucian nor Erasmus, but rather the apostles wrote the Greek New Testament." Truth Triumphant 50.

Origen, the teacher at the Alexandrian college, also made translations and commentaries of the Bible. These were written in such a way that they allowed many kinds of errors to be introduced into Christianity. Satan knows that if he can change the Word of God he can lead people into believing his lies.

David Otis Fuller tells us in his book, *Which Bible?*, that the Textus Receptus was the Bible of the early Eastern Christians. From this manuscript came the Bibles for the great Syrian church, the Waldensian Church of northern Italy, the Gallic Church in southern France, the Celtic Church in Scotland, and Ireland, and the Greek Catholic Church.

The question could be asked – Why did the early churches and all the Protestant Reformers choose the Textus Receptus when translating their Bibles?

- Textus Receptus is based on the vast majority (90%) of the 5000+ Greek manuscripts in existence. That is why it is also called the Majority Text.
- Textus Receptus is not mutilated with deletions, additions and amendments, as is the Minority Text.
- Textus Receptus agrees with the earliest versions of the Bible: Peshitta (AD150), Old Latin Vulgate (AD157), the Italic Bible (AD157) etc. These Bibles were produced 200 years before the minority Egyptian codices favored by the Roman Church. Remember this vital point.

- Textus Receptus agrees with the vast majority of the 86,000+ citations from scripture by the early church fathers.
- Textus Receptus is untainted with Egyptian philosophy and unbelief.
- Textus Receptus strongly upholds the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith: the creation account in Genesis, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, the Saviour's miracles, His bodily resurrection, His literal return and the cleansing power of His blood!
- Textus Receptus was – and still is – the enemy of the Roman Church. This is an important fact to remember.

Today we have an explosion of new Bibles. However very few use the Textus Receptus as the basis for their translations as the King James Version did. With Satan doing everything that he can to lead people away from God, maybe he has found a very clever way to give us something that looks like scripture but actually contains some of his lies in place of God's truths. We should carefully study out this controversy between the Bibles of Protestantism and those of the Roman Church. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

Let's review Lucian's achievements.

- "The school at Antioch, founded by Lucian, developed a system of theology, so real that though all the power of the papacy was thrown against it, it finally prevailed..."
- "The Antioch system of theology extended from England to China and from Turkestan to Ethiopia..."
- "Lucian and his school produced and edited a definite and complete Bible..."
- "The text which Lucian gave to the world was to all intents pure and correct. Even his opponents declare that there are no Greek New Testaments older than Lucian's..."
- "The theology of Antioch stood for the binding obligation of the Ten Commandments..."
- "The theology of Antioch teaches salvation for sinful man through the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross..."
- "The majority of the churches of Syria and of the East continued to observe Saturday, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment from the days of the apostles and throughout the centuries..."
- "The church organization developed by the apostles and continued largely by Syrian theology was simple and evangelical. Fundamentally, it rejected the union of church and state..." Truth Triumphant 59-61.

As we have seen, it was only a short time after Jesus had been on earth that there were two parties with very different Biblical beliefs who claimed to be followers of Christ. Those same parties are still in the world today and each person will have to choose which group they will belong to.



Canadian Field Conference

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

JULY 23, 24, 25, 2010 IN

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

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