

ASLEEP IN JESUS

ALEXANDER BRANKO CHOLICH, (1918 – 2010)

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on: Yea, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them. Rev 14:13

Alexander Branko Cholich passed away peacefully on Wednesday July 7, 2010 at the age of 91.

Our dear Brother Cholich was born into the Reformation in the country of Yugoslavia on October 27, 1918.

He was a faithful soldier of the cross until the very end of his life. He outlived his wife by more than ten years and together they will rise to meet the Lord on the resurrection morning.

As a young man Brother Cholich learned the trade of printing. He then entered the service of the Lord as a Bible Worker. At the age of 25 he was ordained into the ministry.

In 1948 Brother Cholich served in the office of Secretary of the Yugoslavian Union, where he faithfully fulfilled his duties in the midst of the oppression of the communist government.

One story I heard him relate on numerous occasions was of the time he was brought before the communist authorities and was given a glass of alcohol to drink and they pointed a gun to his head ordering him to drink. He steadfastly refused and was later released.

This experience illustrates the character of Brother Cholich. He stood unflinchingly for the truth and nothing could detract him from his service to the Lord. He counted truth and righteousness of more value than his physical body.

In the years 1958 – 1960 he moved to Los Angeles and learned English. He continued to work for the church at that time.

In 1962 he temporarily left missionary work and went to school in Los Angeles to study Engineering, after which he worked a brief time for NATO. He was a part of the team that worked on and

launched Apollo 11. One sister, years later, asked him if he could repair her computer. He stated that he could build her a computer if she wanted.

In 1972 Brother Cholich continued in missionary work and served as a minister for the church in the United States of America.

Then in the late 1970's he went to work in Canada for 7 years, after which he moved back to California and served as a minister and in numerous positions in the American Union and as General Conference President from August 2002 through to June 2007.

Throughout his years in active missionary work, Brother Cholich traveled extensively and opened missionary posts in several countries, (South Korea and Pakistan to name a few). Until his last days he served as the regional representative of China and Taiwan.

One of the great accomplishments in his life was that of translating the entire 9 volumes of the Testimonies for the Church into the Yugoslavian language.

Brother Cholich has touched many lives over the years with his wisdom in the word of God and with his personal testimonies. He was a man of courage and fortitude and unwavering faith in the cause of truth that he believed in. He dedicated his life to the service of his Master. His life is an example of untiring labour for the advancement of the cause of God.

He continued to work for the cause that he loved, with every last ounce of his strength and never thought of retirement from the Lord's service, until the Lord finally retired this true and faithful soldier of the cross.

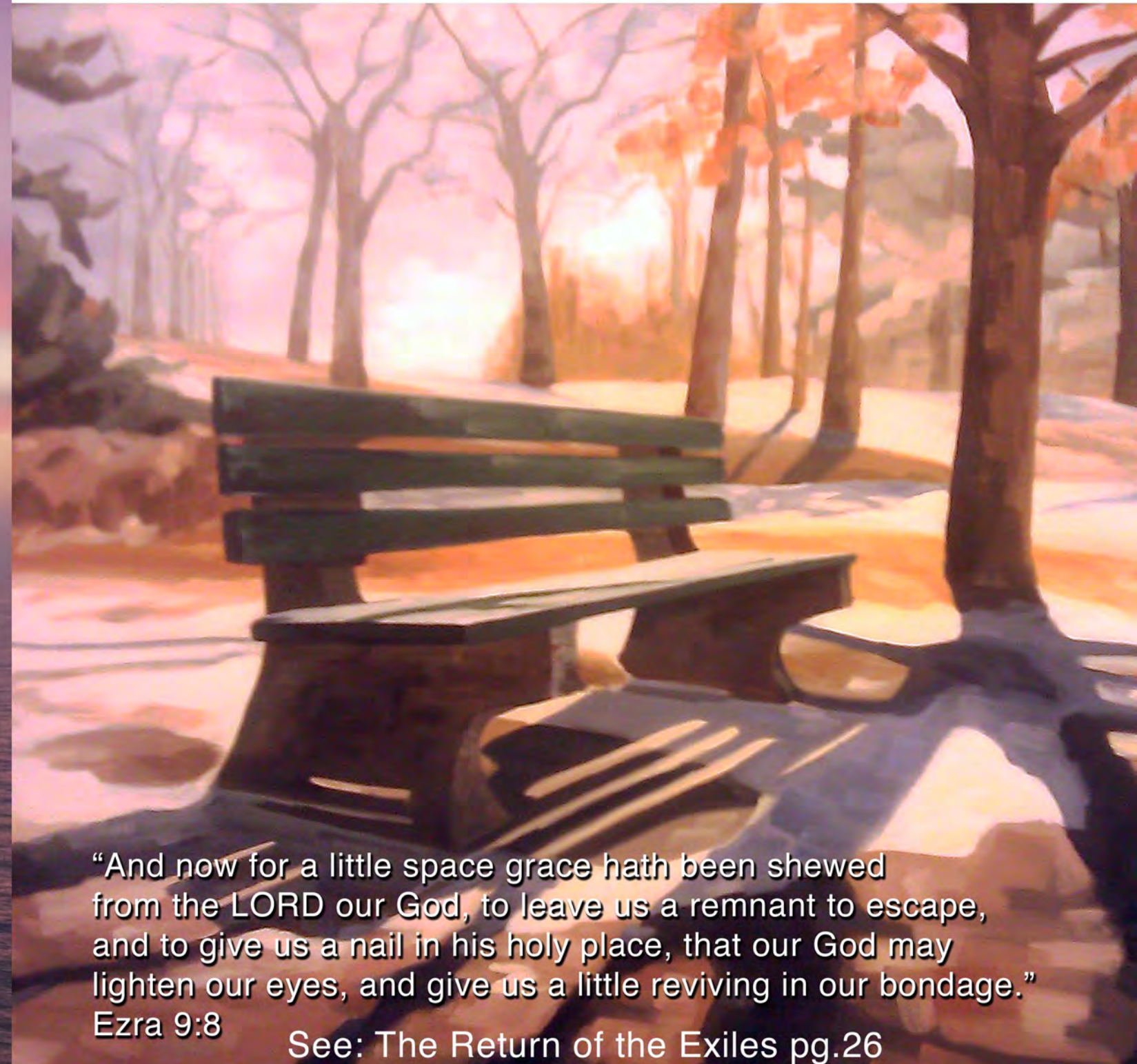
Brother Cholich will be missed by all, but we look forward to the resurrection day when we can meet him again in the clouds of glory. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." John 11:25 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psa 116:15



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



“And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.”

Ezra 9:8

See: The Return of the Exiles pg.26

THE RETURN OF THE EXILES
REVIVAL AND A REFORMATION
REVIEW & HERALD 1908, ELLEN G. WHITE

"Since the days of our fathers," the humble suppliant continued, "have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. And now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.

"And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets. . . . And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldst not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we can not stand before thee because of this."

Ezra's language in this petition is that of true humiliation of soul, the contrition that prevails with God in prayer. Only the prayer of the humble enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off." "To this man will I look," saith the Lord, "even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

The sorrow of Ezra and of his associates over the evils that had insidiously crept into the very heart of the Lord's work, wrought repentance. Many of those who had sinned, were deeply affected. "The people wept very sore." They had begun to realize, in a limited degree, the heinousness of sin, and the horror with which God regards it. The sacredness of the law spoken at Sinai was brought clearly before their minds, and many trembled at the thought of their transgressions.

One of the company, Shechaniah by name, acknowledged that all the words spoken by Ezra were true. "We have trespassed against our God," he confessed, "and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing." Shechaniah proposed that all who had transgressed, should make a covenant with God to forsake their lives of sin, and to be adjudged "according to the law." "Arise," he bade Ezra, "for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it."

"Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word."

This was the beginning of a wonderful reformation. With infinite patience and tact, and with careful consideration for the rights and welfare of every individual concerned, Ezra and his associates labored to lead the repentant of Israel into a right way of living. Above all things else, Ezra was a teacher of the law; and as he gave personal attention to the examination of every case, he sought to impress upon the mind of the sinner the holiness of the law of heaven, and the blessings to be gained through obedience to this law.

American Union Western Field Conference

August 18-22, 2010

**Leoni Meadows, Grizzly Flats,
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Simon, The Angel And The Bibbulmun Track Part 1



This story was relayed to me last year by a man called Simon who doesn't make claims he met an angel but I perceive it was.

Simon

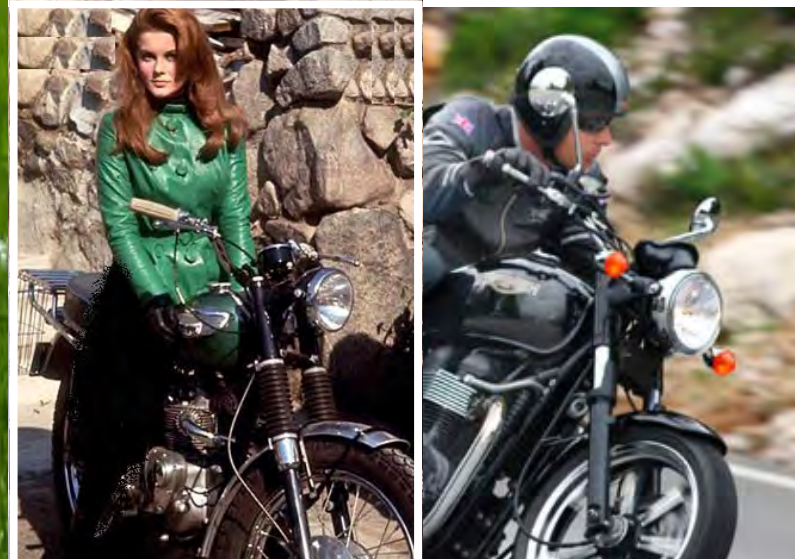
I was an atheist. I was married and had a couple of kids. The marriage ended in 2000. I bought a house and got the kids half the time. Life goes on.

I stayed single for a long time, four or five years, then I met someone. She was pretty exciting; she rode a Triumph motorcycle like I do, she was good looking, she loved to party and have fun. She was everything that I thought I wanted.

Funny thing though was all I seemed to get out of it was pain and misery. I found myself living beneath my own moral code. I found that I had adjusted down to her standards, and I didn't like it. I drove myself to the point of madness trying to understand her. I burned myself trying to hold on to her. As the years went on her need for drama manifested in bigger and bigger events, usually culminating in her leaving with all the money, furniture, etc. Then there would be a cooling off period and she would come back and I would welcome her back. Then the cycle would begin again.

In the end there was a great big bust up and when she came back she put it to me that it was her insecurity that was the problem and that if we were married she would have no reason to be insecure. I told her I would marry her for no other reason than that I loved her. So it was agreed and we eloped. Six months later she was gone again, this time I didn't take her back.

I received a phone call from her daughter a year later stating she was in hospital with brain cancer.



The Bibbulmun Track

I was on the Bibbulmun track (long 900km bush track) when she died.

Shortly before going off I read a scientific paper. It was a serious and well funded analysis into the likelihood of life on other planets. The scientist tackled the problem in this way: As the only means of life as we know it exists on Earth they decided to focus their attention on the likelihood on "Earthlike planets" existing within the universe. Their conclusions were quite remarkable. When they commenced they expected to find that there would be likelihood of an innumerable amount of Earthlike planets in the vastness of the universe, what they found was the opposite.

They discovered that for a planet like ours to exist, not only do you require it to be the correct distance from a star or sun, it also requires ALL of the other planets in our solar system to be replicated in the same configuration for it to work. Not only that, the system also needs to be placed in the correct position on a Galactic spiral arm to be viable. So, through mathematics they were able to conclude that the likelihood of another Earthlike planet able to sustain higher life, in the vastness of space, is so small as to be almost impossible. As a tangent of their research they discovered that within the Universe water is ubiquitous, and that there are innumerable "Oceanic Planets", but that they are "Dark and Lifeless places".

So... I'm on the Bibbulmun track.



I walked into a forest glade, there's a stream, white sand, grass trees, majestic Jarrah and splendid wrens all lit up by big beams of light breaking through the canopy.

The Angel

I'm standing there taking it all in when all of a sudden I notice there's someone standing next to me. I nearly jumped out of my skin. After all, this was the middle of nowhere. I jumped six feet into the air and went through my full repertoire of expletives. He just regarded me with calm interest.

He asked me where I was going. I told him, "the next hut." He asked if he could walk with me. I said "sure" and off we went.

We talked.

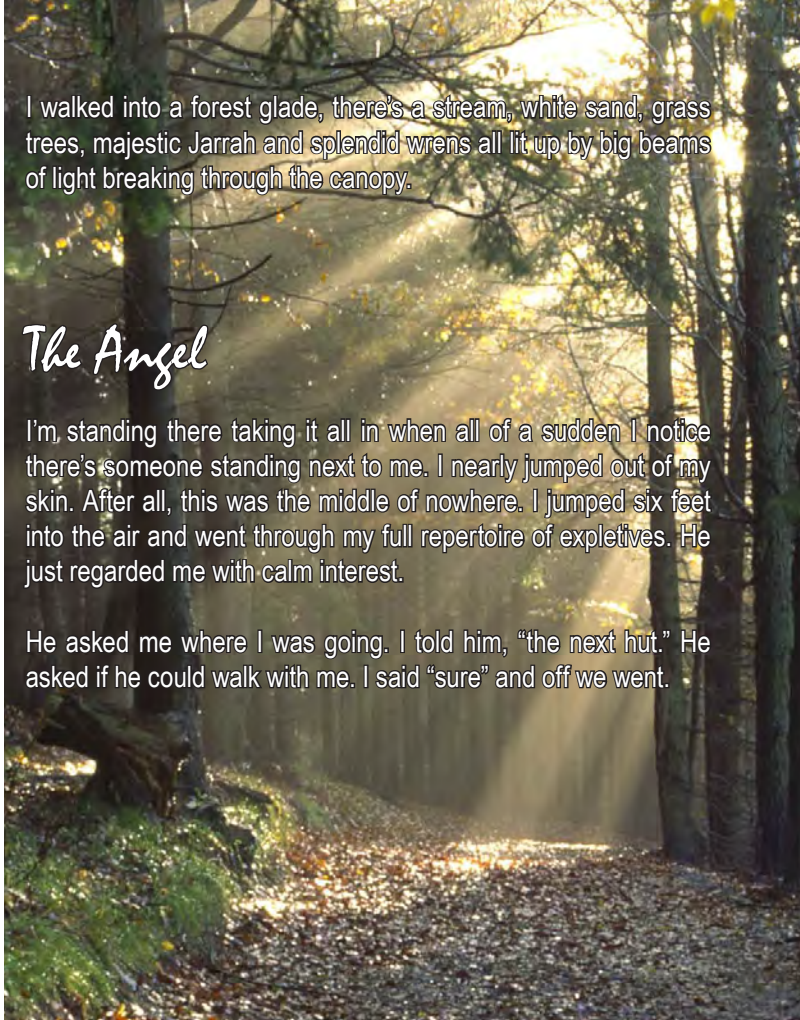
He told me his name was David and that he had sold all he had and that he was a carpenter but he didn't work anymore. He just went around the world "exploring" and that he "walked" the earth.

We talked about some deep stuff. I was lamenting that we seem to squander our precious lives selling ourselves into servitude to pay interest on money that doesn't exist that is backed by nothing and created out of thin air so that we can buy a miserable patch of land that we can never truly own. I ranted and raged and vented and occasionally he would drop in a quote from some great thinker or theologian, "A yes, Marx said "such and such" or "Mohammed said this and that" etc.

He was a very impressive guy, extremely knowledgeable with an aura of power and quiet strength, six feet tall, blond, with brilliant ice blue eyes.

We got where we were going and we talked a little more on philosophy and the meaning of life and he told me that "fear is the key" and that fear is the chain that binds us and not to be afraid of the world.

He then rattled off five or six quotes the whole time staring at the ground whilst drawing circles in the sand saying, "Buddha says this and Krishna says this" etc...



him shrunken from long fasts and mortifications (like sleeping on hard and cold floors, whipping his back and not dressing in warm enough clothes). Some church leaders were teaching that in order to serve the church best, men should not marry and instead live in secluded places (likes caves or deserts) away from normal homes. Vigilantius did some serious thinking. These man-made rules made him decide that he could have nothing to do with those that were following the teachings coming from the college at Alexandria. Their unscriptural theology and use of pagan ceremonies made it impossible for him to compromise with them to keep peace in the church. Like Jesus he said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." Matthew 10:34.

Vigilantius taught:

- That those who revered relics were idolaters. (Exodus 20:4, 5)
- That continence (self-restraint) and celibacy were wrong, as leading to the worst scandals. (1 Timothy 3:2-4)
- That lighting candles in churches, during the day, in honour of the martyrs was wrong, because that was a heathen rite.
- That Apostles and martyrs had no presence at their tombs. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6)
- That it was useless to pray for the dead. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6)
- That it was better to keep wealth and practice habitual charity than to give away all one's property and become poor and needy.
- That it was wrong to retire into the desert.

We see that many of these errors which are still practiced within Christianity today began very early in the church. This brought great sorrow to those that wanted to follow the Bible and yet have unity with those who also called themselves Christians. Each of the members of the Church in the Wilderness had to determine that obedience to God was more important than unity with those compromising with error. That will again be a great test at the end of time.

"Satan will arouse indignation against the minority who refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. . . . Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. . . . Not having a 'Thus saith the Scriptures' to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws. But those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error." The Faith I Live By 311.



Waldenses Church, 16th Century

Vigilantius Leader of the Waldenses



CHILDREN'S CORNER

AD 364 – 408

As we learned previously, errors began creeping into the beliefs and practices of the early church soon after the apostles died. If truth was going to be kept alive God would need brave defenders to protest against Satan's errors. One of the earliest "protest-ants" was Helvidius I (AD 300-360). He was from northern Italy and spoke out against a man named Jerome, who was writing a Bible for the Roman Church. Jerome's Vulgate, the Latin Bible of the papacy, used corrupted Greek manuscripts from Alexandria rather than the pure manuscripts that Lucian had edited.

Helvidius also spoke out against some of the new teachings of the church where Mary was called the "Blessed Virgin," and the new belief that she remained a virgin all her life. This was directly opposite to the teaching of the Bible in Matthew 1:24, 25. We read, "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus."

The second reformer was also from northern Italy. His name was Jovinian (AD 330-390). He also taught against Rome's new teachings. He said that it was as honorable for a woman to be a wife as for her to remain a virgin. The Roman Church was teaching that truly religious women should not marry and instead should give their life to work for the church. Jovinian said that fasting and eating with thanksgiving are equally pleasing to God, that a person baptized with the Spirit and water cannot sin (see: 1 John 3:9), that all sins are equal, and that all who are good will receive the same heavenly reward (See: Revelation 22:14).

It is likely that the followers of Jovinian took refuge in the northern valleys of Italy where their Bible-based teachings were to have a great impact on the reformation hundreds of years later.

After Jovinian, Vigilantius came forward in the battle for God's truths. "Vigilantius has been called 'The Forerunner of the Reformation,' and 'One of the earliest of our Protestant forefathers.'" Truth Triumphant 75. He was "the earliest leader of prominence among the noble Waldenses in northern Italy and southern France." Truth

Triumphant 63. This strong defender of truth was born in southern France, near the Pyrenees Mountains, where his father kept one of the inns where people could rest, eat, and change horses while traveling the well-kept road that connected the Roman Empire.

From an early age Vigilantius would have been exposed to important people traveling from countries which we know today as Great Britain, various European countries like France and Spain, Greece, Turkey, the Holy Land and Egypt. Many would have been merchants, ambassadors, couriers, and bishops along with ordinary travelers. Vigilantius was exposed to the various languages and customs of these visitors and he was very interested in learning about the world he was growing up in.

As a young man Vigilantius worked for one of the great historians of that time, Sulpicious Severus. "Vigilantius early learned to love his employer. He admired greatly the brilliant intellect of this man who could feed the hungry, clothe the poor, and visit the sick, while engaged in many literary labours." Truth Triumphant 64. It was through watching his employer that Vigilantius began to see some new and strange things being done under the name of Christianity.

Sulpicious went to visit Martin, bishop of Tours, and when he came back he told stories of that pious man sleeping on the cold ground with only ashes under him and sackcloth to cover him. Martin said "a Christian ought to die on ashes." He did not wear warm clothes, even in the winter or when sick, and ate only unwholesome food. All of these actions were looked at by Sulpicious as evidence that Martin of Tours had a very deep religious experience. He worried that if he did not follow this example of self-denial that maybe he wasn't spiritual enough to be saved.

Vigilantius was not so sure. He watched Sulpicious turn from obedience to the pure words of the Bible to instead follow after visions and miracles. He saw a well-respected gentleman, Paulinus of Nola, praying in front of images to his favourite saint, and Vigilantius felt that he must write and speak against these heathen practices which were being adopted into the church.

Vigilantius traveled to Bethlehem to see Jerome, the man who wrote the Latin Bible which was used by the papacy. He found



Then he looked up and fixed me with those steely blue eyes and said to me – "Ah... But do you know what JESUS said regarding the WORLD? He said "Be in it but not of it".

And with that he went off into the dark night.

The Bible

I immediately grabbed the Gideon's Bible from the Hut and began to read Genesis.

Genesis 1:1, 2 "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

I then opened the book randomly and read this:

Proverbs 21:19 "It is better for a man to wander alone in the wilderness than dwell with an angry and contentious woman."

Then this...

Proverbs 7:11 She was loud and rebellious and her feet would not stay at home

Proverbs 5:1-8 "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them. Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house."

And last but not least....

Proverbs 6:27 "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?"

I gave my life to the Lord.

I came to an understanding very quickly when I started reading the Bible.

The New and The Old Testaments make little sense when separated from one and other. Yet that is what the two great theologies do!

The Jews discard the New completely and fallen Christianity doffs its cap to the Old but shoves it under the tablecloth. We are reading two mirror images. The old predicting the New and the New fulfilling the Old and enhancing the prophecy of that yet to be. It is easy to see how Jewish lore gets so tied up as so much of the prophetic works deal with the second coming of the Messiah! Yet they are waiting for fulfillment in the first.

I understood that the Levitical sacrificial system was ritualized prophecy of the crucifixion. When I read Leviticus it jumped off the page and smacked me around the head. The sacrifice of the Lamb, the casting out into the wilderness of the goat so obviously a symbol of the ultimate sacrifice yet to come and the condemnation of Satan. The account of the resurrection in Ezekiel 37, mirrored in Job, confirmed in Thessalonians and Revelation. There can be no New without the Old and there can be no Old without the New.

The duality between heaven and earth and between the Sanctuaries even between our bodies and the temple are absolutely correct. It seems that this is the way God works. A small example in order for us to understand the big picture.

I was working at the Church one day, so I asked the Pastor what he thought about some of the things I had studied.. He rolled his eyes and said "Don't you ever stop thinking" and walked off!

I laughed.

He wants me to go to theology school. He thinks my calling is the Ministry. I think he might be right.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Update:

Simon comes to his senses and realizes a Theology course at Avondale would be a big mistake and decides to have bible studies with my preacher.



Remember Jesus Christ



"Remember Jesus Christ," writes Paul to his spiritual son Timothy and to all of us. When should we remember Jesus Christ? A couple of times a year, like most people do or once a week when we attend church service? Does Paul mean that we should remember Jesus when something goes wrong, or every day, every moment in our life? The apostle does not refer to any specific time, but he simply says, "Remember Jesus Christ."

We know that the author of this letter died to self daily, that his desires, his plans, his opinions did not count any longer since he had an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. He became a real follower of Christ and since he knew the way of self-denial very well he was a free man who did not lose his peace and joy even when in prison. In Philippus, bound to a cell, he could praise the Lord with hymns because he remembered Jesus Christ. Not only was Jesus in his memory, but He lived in his heart. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20. Paul's whole life, his thoughts, his words, his actions were inspired by a power from above, the power of the Holy Spirit. He always looked for what was in heaven; that is why he could write to the Colossians, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Colossians 3:2. What is above? Peter satisfies our curiosity in part by telling us that there is kept an "inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 4:1. Everything in this world is corruptible, defiled and fades away, after a while it is no more. But the Lord has for everyone who loves Him a completely different world, where righteousness and love rule. He wants us to set our goal over there, to get more information about what is expected of us, to prepare ourselves for His kingdom, to speak about it and to remember Jesus Christ who has made this possible through His death and resurrection.

"Remember Jesus Christ." Paul writes still something else very important to Timothy, "Shun profane [and] vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness." 2 Timothy 2:16. Watch your words, the subject of your conversation, do not lose sight of your goal, do not get involved in vain chatting. How did Jesus speak? How did He deal with people? How did He react? What did He endure? If we remember Jesus Christ at all times, we shall be guided by His spirit and talk, deal and live like He did. This is a very high goal that is only reachable through the grace that is available to us. "I do not frustrate the grace of God," wrote Paul to the Colossians, and he tells Timothy further on, "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus". Do we sometimes feel weak, tired or afraid? Is the battle of life at times too hard and takes away our peace and joy? It is then that we have to be strong in the grace and receive new power.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul mentions three kinds of people who struggle to reach a goal: a soldier, an athlete and a farmer. As soldiers of Christ, who do not fight against other people, nations or ideologies, but against the satanic traits of character in us and

- He is faithful
- He is eternally powerful
- He is merciful
- He is Jesus
- God's son and you can trust Him
- He is indescribable
- He is comprehensible
- He is irresistible
- The Pharisees could not understand Him, they found Him but they could not stop Him
- Finally death could not hold Him down and the grave vomited Him up
- My friends, He is alpha and omega, first and the last
- He is Jesus! He is Jesus
- He is for us and you can trust Him

Brethren, let us celebrate the Lord of love, lift up your voices for his mercies endureth forever. He satisfies our desires, so we should celebrate His name among the living; that Jesus is alive again and declare Him as the King of kings and Lord of lords. We should glorify our King who is mighty to rule over everything and there is none beside Him, for He is perfect in might and pure in character.

He spoke through the darkness and amazingly created light to cover the whole earth. Really, our God is a handsome God who reigns over the heavens and the earth. Our God is a handsome God and who can stand against us, though there are many problems that puzzle us? He is always on our side; He gave His Son to die for us, then who can be against us?

Perhaps it may not be easy for you right now. God is on your side and God wants to protect you. Listen! Though painful situations may have us questioning, it is true that God is with you. He has not forgotten you; sometimes you need to look far beyond circumstances and declare your faith.

God is on your side, believe Him that He is for you. He has not forgotten you--God is good, and all the time, God is good. Say in an audible voice "God is a handsome God, and he has not forgotten me." Twice.

Let me tell you numerous recorded sad events from people who have experience God's grace.

Our dear son, with seven other people traveled in a canoe to a remote Canadian island for a spiritual retreat. During the weeks of the retreat, they had been singing the mercies of the Lord. "God is good all the time," was the retreat motto. After the retreat, during the night they got back into their canoes and suddenly heavy storm clouds came and capsized the canoe. People were frantically struggling for survival. They committed their lives to the Creator and out of twelve people, only four survived. Our son Joseph did not survive, but I know he was able to face death; and death could not hold him in the midst of the ocean.

My friends, perhaps you may be in the midst of the storm that threatens to capsize your marriage, your family, your health or your financial blessings.

God has not forgotten you. God is for you and He wants you to trust Him today in the midst of whatever storm you are facing. Let His peace come to you and declare by faith that God is good, all the time.

For years I was very productive. For me, life brought happiness and good luck. I worked in a glamorous world, in the film industry. I traveled to foreign countries and two famous managers led me into a life of casual sex, without love and marriage. I was in love with someone, and my relationship with him brought two infant children, resulting in abortion and separation. At that time, my life became a searching for God. I tried to convince myself that I did not need Him. In hunger for reality, I went into the new world; I feared no one, I believed in demons and devils. I experienced no fear and went further into own my way. I became engrossed in the new world, and slowly I was mired in deep, worldly deceptions and had given all my power to the control of demons and spirits. I then heard a voice saying to me, "I am Lucifer and you belong to me." The demonic spirits were born in me at that moment. I screamed back and said "I belong to God." At that instance the king of darkness and the King of Glory engaged in a life and death battle for my soul and Jesus won the battle. He heard my cry, forgave my sin, redeemed my past, and victory overcame condemnation.

God's power and mercy are real--there is no one who has failed who can resist His greatness. I know, I have been there and I can tell you about my experience. God is for you and Jesus loves you. He loves you and leads you to life eternal as he did to me in the new world.

Dear friend, "In time of trouble he shall hide you in his pavilion in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide you and he shall set you upon a rock." Psalm 27:5 Amen!

Cornelius Ezra D'Almeida
Ghana(decornezra@yahoo.com)

Jesus Has Many Victory Crowns

“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.” Jeremiah 3:15

I want you to think about Jesus' love, think about His goodness, and think about His mercy. For He has brought us to the highest heaven's above.

- How could we forget His love
- How could we forget His goodness
- How could we forget His mercy
- My friends you can trust God
- He is good all the time
- You should focus upon His goodness
- Don't miss His greatness
- He is unquestionable
- He is supportive for all Excellency
- He is the son of human greatness
- He is the source of divine grace
- He is the only one able to save
- He is the blood able to cleanse
- His ears open to the sinner's call
- His hands are quick to lift the fallen soul
- He is the eternal lover of all
- Everyone, you can trust Him
- He supplies mercy to the struggle soul
- He sustains his pathway
- He sympathizes with the wounded and broken sinner
- He strengthens the weak
- He guards the wanderings
- He is for you and you can trust Him
- Jesus is the key to all knowledge
- He is the well spring of wisdom
- He is the door of deliverance
- He is the pathway of peace
- He is the roadway of righteousness
- He is the highway of holiness
- He is the gateway of glory
- Yes! You can trust Him
- Jesus is enough. He is enough
- He is the all-sufficient king
- He is the King of the Jews
- He is the King of Israel
- He is the King of righteousness and the King of all ages
- He is the King of heaven
- The King of glory
- He is the King of kings and Lord of lords and yes ! you can trust Him
- Rejoice in Him, my friends
- He is our suffering King
- There is no gate to limit His suffering love
- There is no barrier to block His mercy
- He is eternally supreme
- He is eternally steadfast

all around us, Paul advises us, “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of [this] life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” 2 Timothy 2:4. This does not mean that we should not assume the responsibilities of every day life, but rather that we should not be so absorbed by them that we lose sight of our goal. A soldier should know against whom he fights and if possible the weapons and strategies his enemy uses. The Holy Scriptures are very accurate on how this war has to be fought.

As athletes, we run in order to win and receive a crown. “And if a man also strive for masteries, [yet] is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.” 2 Timothy 2:5. There are certain rules to the game and we should know them well. To the Corinthians, the inhabitants of a city that was not very far from Olympia, where the Olympic games took place in antiquity, Paul writes that an athlete has to abstain from many things if he wants to be victorious, but he only receives a perishable crown in return for his good performance. For us, on the other hand, is reserved the crown of righteousness. When Paul was in prison expecting to be sacrificed due to the truth he preached, he wrote to Timothy, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” 2 Timothy 4:7, 8. Do we love His appearing or we do not give it even a thought?

If we remember Jesus Christ every day, if He has become the most important Being in our life, then we long for His appearing and run the race of faith patiently looking at the Author and Finisher of our faith.

The farmer has also a goal when he works his field. He wants to have a good harvest and in order to reach his goal he must work hard cleaning his field from tares, insects, snails that eat up the tender leaves, but what a joy when he can see and enjoy the fruit of his efforts! “The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits.” 2 Timothy 2:6. The field is our heart on which we have to work with the same zeal. The seed of the gospel must be deeply planted in it; it has to be watered with the Word so that the seed can grow in spite of all the efforts of the enemy to plant the tares of lie and self-deceit or something else that hinders our spiritual growth.

The Lord wants to see fruits in our field and He has the power to make them grow if we keep it clean. What kind of fruit? “Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance”--everything that we urgently need in order to really enjoy life.

“Consider what I say”- writes Paul further on – “and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.” “Remember Jesus Christ... for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy, 1:7. **Amen.**

Teresa Corti

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The Tongue Of The Learned

Part 2

In the previous issue, we learned the importance of communication. We saw that through communication, we establish relationships and nurture them. Everyone needs to communicate. The preacher, a teacher, a supervisor, a manager, the director, the politician, and the student--the list is too long to mention all.

For instance, if you are an employee, you can easily retain your job and secure promotion when you utilize your communication skills. Seeing that these skills are important for our daily life, we ought to identify obstacles that may hinder effective communication.

This article takes us through the problems we encounter during communication.

To begin with, let us read what the young preacher and teacher was advised to do: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer every man." Col. 4:6

At the outset, let us do an exercise. It is so simple. The task requires you to have five people. Make sure that they are far apart. Whisper the above verse to the first person and then let him/her whisper the same statement to the second person. The process should be repeated till the fifth person is reached. Lastly, move to the fifth person and request him to tell you what he/she was told by the fourth person.

When we tried it out, we came out with amazing results. The last person had a different version of the statement. Please try it out with ten people.

You will eventually admit that the last version is distorted and meaningless. This is probably because of many factors that we can list. Normally, information conveyed from one person to another gets distorted. That is why we need to understand why distortions occur and how to minimize them.

In communication one must share the meaning with others. Even though words can be transmitted from one person to another, at times meaning rarely gets shared. Meaning is shared with others both verbally and non-verbally. Nonverbal expressions like facial expressions, posture, eye contact and so forth communicate meaning to others.

The first obstacle in my list is **distortion**. It occurs when we do not select the right word to give meaning and precision to our ideas and interpretations. When we do not have sufficient vocabulary that can be used to transmit our emotions and thoughts in words, we end up distorting the information. As well people do not get to understand us in the way we would have wanted to be understood. We should by all means replace some words that are not consistent with the emotions we want to convey.

The second barrier to effective communication is **alteration** or twisting the message, either intentionally or unintentionally.

reform, participating in politics, (list not exhaustive) and more importantly raising characters to the righteousness of Christ.

The kingdom of God is a great subject. It was taught before Christ came, at the time He was on earth, as well as after. He came to restore the kingdom. Going back to Genesis 1:1, 27-28, God created heaven first where He dwells and, according to the Bible Commentary by E.G White [1BC 1081] the earth is an extension (enlargement) of heaven whereby God desired that the people living on earth should fully reflect Him in character and everything inside out. Man was to be part of the heavenly family. It was very interesting when Adam was given dominion over the earth, every animal came and passed by him to receive its name. This good Garden of Eden was his dwelling place. However, after the fall of man in chapter 3 of Genesis, there was a loss of that dominion to Satan. Chapter 3:15 tells us of the plan of salvation. Adam thought his firstborn son was the promised deliverer when we read Desire of Ages p. 31.

After many prophecies the Messiah came. At this point the Brother called upon everyone in a special way to meditate together with him as he continued. Mark 1:14, 15, Jesus took over the ministry of John and preached about the same message of the kingdom of God saying, "The kingdom of God is at hand." He sent His disciples and told them to preach the same message, "The kingdom of God is at hand." Matthew 10:1, 7. He later on appointed another group and again the same message was given them in Luke 10:1, 9. This, mind you is not a temporal kingdom as the Jews expected.

Let's now talk of the present message, he said, the three angel's messages of Revelation 14: 6-12. Why is this message everlasting? Because at the end of it the kingdom of God is established. Matt. 24:14. But why is the end not coming? Because many reformers just delight to be in God's Church, but do not work; and thus the message has not yet reached everyone. Also, time has been deliberately delayed because the people are not receiving the message as it was intended. According to Daniel 2: 44, 45, all the kingdoms have gone and we are just at the time before the establishment of the kingdom of God and His Christ! So, the interpretation thereof is Sure as the verse puts it. [This was greatly emphasized].

This kingdom will be given to the saints; this is the time to clear our ways before God. The judgment is on with Jesus as the mediator. 1 John 2:1. Names are accepted, names are rejected. Christ is interceding only for the humble who confess all their sins NOW. The Bible is clear that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

Sabbath Afternoon

We began with song service which was opened by Brother R Mtambo. Many Brethren and Sisters praised God in special songs.

A new convert, a popular singer in the SDA church, Brother Bob Zuman was with us and also praised God in songs.

The Bible study time was again taken by our same beloved visitor Brother Shirima. He began by encouraging young people to go to missionary school in Nairobi, Kenya. He said although other people come to know the present truth through their own reading and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is equally important for young people to be trained in missionary work as it was in the Old Testament times in the schools of the prophets. Then he asked if there were any young people who were interested in acquiring this precious education. A good number raised up their hands (including the writer). He then asked if there were any parents wishing to sponsor their children. Again hands were raised up but this time these hands were not proportional to the hands raised earlier. This means many young men and women are willing to go but lack the support in terms of funds. May those who are willing to assist come up to push God's work forward to provide funding for those who want to attend.

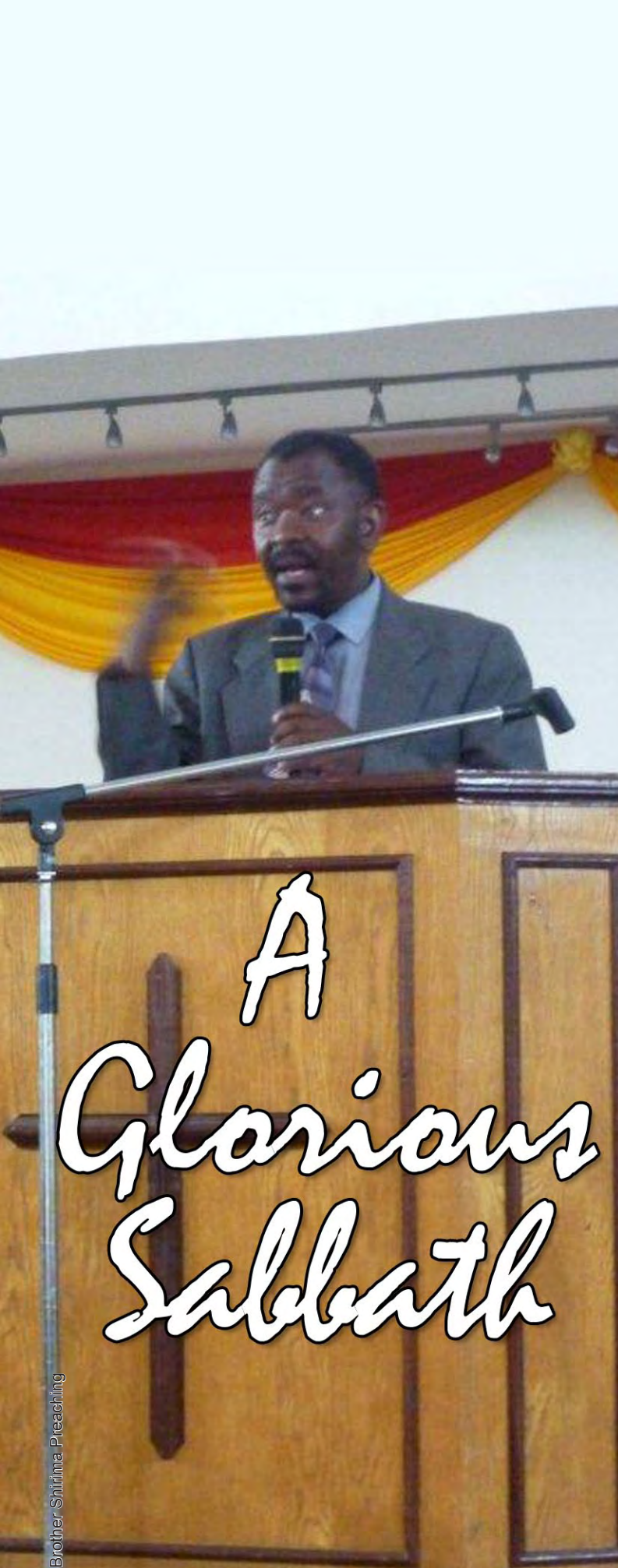
In his afternoon lesson, Brother Shirima talked on the history of the church and took time to educate us more on the '51 Movement. Starting by reading from the book of Revelation 12:17, he said that when the early Reformers protested the grave errors of the Roman Catholic Church, they were the woman, the church of God. But when they maintained the false doctrines from the former church, they ceased to be the church of God. Seventh day Adventists became the seed of the woman, but after its apostasy the devil has been and is focusing his efforts of destruction upon the remnant of her seed--the IMS SDA Reform Movement. Satan failed to finish the church by means of his poisonous drug--the wars--WWI and WWII, but succeeded in dividing the church from within. A narration of the whole thing that happened in the first General Conference after the Second World War in 1948 and the culmination of rebellion in 1951 which led to the Nicolici Movement was given.

He concluded by saying that the true church of God needs to be backed by prophecy and should have a historical base, which the Nicolici Moment does not have. Many other facts prove it to not be the true woman in which God is preparing His people for the heavenly garners. Then a song was sung, and with a prayer by Brother Shirima the Sabbath was closed. **AMEN.**

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At Zingwangwa Church

On Sabbath, June 12, 2010, we were blessed in a special way as we gathered at Zingwangwa Church in the city of Blantyre. The day was a little cloudy. We were blessed with the presence of Brother Pamernas N. Shirima, the second vice president of the General Conference. It was indescribable joy to the church to see him, after a long time without such a visit. More importantly was the encouragement and God's blessings that he carried with him. God visited us in a special way. I would like to give a detailed account of how the day went with the hope of having the reader feel as if he / she were personally there.

Words cannot express the gratitude we have for the Lord! In fact many (if not all) churches in Blantyre and surrounding areas came to attend this joyous moment in God's remnant Church.

The prayer meeting was opened by the Malawi union President Brother Mateme who thanked the Lord for His mercies in keeping everyone safe up until the meeting and more also, for being with His humble servant Pastor Shirima, protecting Him all the way from Tanzania to be with his fellow brethren.

The Sabbath School was led by Brother Sydney Byson with a song and happily welcoming all to the Sabbath School. The Sabbath school lesson was quite interesting in that it took us back to what was the focus of the early Church and their position regarding war. Brother Shirima in his comment called upon all Reformers to continue upholding the principle (non participation in war and anything associated with it) from the days of the early church where it was a fundamental doctrine, and still is to this day.

Then it was time for the Divine Service. We opened with the song "Heir of the Kingdom". A special song was sung by a group of Dorcas women. It was a wonderful experience. It was now time to hear the word of the Lord from His servant, our dear Brother Shirima. He began by recalling the time he introduced the Reform message to the northern part of Malawi, in Karonga district. Now he was more than glad to see the seeds he had sown which the Lord watered and made them germinate. He said that when he was sowing the message, he never anticipated that the results would be this overwhelming. This is the joy of the work. However, he said that two of his brothers whom he came together with have rested already without seeing these fruits of their work. Then he also conveyed greetings from the brethren in Tanzania.

Turning to his Bible, he called on everyone to be with him as he wanted to speak on what he entitled "The Kingdom of God". He said it is a special honor to be a Reformer but it is on the other hand, a challenge. Some Reformers do not know their calling; they just delight to be in the church and do not work for the salvation of others. They need to know that they are "The repairer(s) of the breach, the restorer(s) of paths to dwell in." (Isaiah 58:12). He cited areas of reform namely the Sabbath Reform, dress reform, health

One can overstate the good points so as to please another one. This suppresses the other side of the facts. Also, a person can understate ideas.

Lastly, **inadequacy of facilities.** Facilities like a telephone or conference and meeting facilities are essential when you want to address a large gathering. We don't want our audience straining their ears to hear us because of low tone or strain to filter out the too loud sound that irritate ears. Otherwise, we may end up losing the meaning of the information we want to deliver.

What should we guard against while we communicate?

One day I decided to quit the job I once had because I felt that the salary was too meager to sustain my basic needs. In trying to justify my claim of pay increase, I realized that the director lacked attention or interest in what I was trying to explain. I hastily judged that my effort was like squeezing a dry fruit for juice.

If we do not listen attentively to what we are told, we are bound to jump to hasty preconceived own opinions or beliefs. We must also guard against making hasty conclusions. Hasty conclusions, in most cases, are made by persons who are in a hurry.

We tend to doubt or treat the message with suspicion when the person communicating lacks confidence. Consequently, the purpose of communicating gets defeated.

Improper state of mind hampers the message reception. When we are not in the proper state of mind, or are mentally upset and emotionally not well-balanced, we should minimize communication if we cannot avoid it altogether. Remember--what you utter cannot be reversed.

What are the requirements of a good system of communication?

We should strive to **understand and be understood** by the receiver. This is achieved only through using simple and commonly understood words. This means we use **clear and unambiguous** language. Use specific action words to avoid misinterpretation by our audience.

Please, provide **all the information** that is required. If not, actions required will be delayed and relations will eventually be spoiled.

The usefulness of the information is lost when we do not adhere to **right timing.** Allow a suitable span for the message to be delivered.

As a good communicator, I should try to know how the receiver will, or has reacted on reception of the message. Where there is face to face communication, I can easily get the feedback either verbally or nonverbally. But in other forms like written form it takes time to get the reaction. Therefore, we should make a follow up to ensure understanding.

Our knowledge increases when we pay attention to what we learn or are taught. Being attentive and having an open mind are primary ingredients to effective communication.

Today I am giving the reader an assignment. After reading this article try to answer the following questions and e-mail your answers to the address below.

- Who are considered the best communicators in both the New and Old Testament? List any six.
- Which occasions mentioned in the Bible tells us about person(s) who altered or distorted the message given to deliver?
- Would you like to learn more about this? How will this article help you personally?

Thank you. Your comments are highly welcome. **Amen**

Charles Mogunde
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“When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion, We were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations. The Lord has done great things for them.” Psalm 126:1-3

Confused Pilgrims

The hope of a glorious restoration was too good to be true for the pilgrims of Israel, returning from captivity. They were amazed at it; it came so suddenly that at first they were in confusion, not knowing what to make of it, or what it was tending to. “We thought ourselves like men that dream.” Sometimes the people of God are thus presented with the blessings of His goodness before they are aware!

One writer said, “such a comfortable happy change it was to us, as like from the dead or sudden ease from exquisite pain; we thought ourselves in a new world.” (Hammond)

It will be easy to apply it in our lives, as in this Psalm, either to any particular deliverance wrought for the church or our own land or to the great work of our salvation by Christ. It is the repenting reforming people that are, and shall be, the rejoicing, happy people. It is good to observe how the church’s deliverances are for us, that we may rejoice and be happy in them.

What Is It?

There is a universal striving among men and women to experience this happiness. By asking anyone, of any culture, generation, or educational level, what they want to achieve in life, they will without doubt reply, “I just want to be happy!” Many seek happiness, however, in vain. Solomon searched for it in vain. Others sacrifice soul and body to obtain it. “Multitudes seek it in vain.” (PK 185). But, many are on the wrong track, the wrong path. God and the entire host of heaven wants us to be happy. God wants us to cultivate it; but it takes time. One cannot merely say, “tomorrow I will start to be happy.”

Furthermore, “wealth is not happiness.” (2T 305); “shutting yourself up to yourself is not happiness.” (MH 362); “what is around us is not happiness, but what is within us.” (ML 185). We are to be the happiest people in the world! But, many are not; happiness escapes them. An English philosopher said, “if you ask yourself if you are happy, you will cease being happy!” Happiness is contentment, gladness, cheerfulness, a meek and quiet spirit, and peace with God.

Happiness is much like a rainbow. Children looking for a pot of gold at the end, soon realize it cannot be grasped, captured, or created. A rainbow is God’s visible promise of security; as with Noah - a sign

Time is a precious element which scientists try to save and doctors try to lengthen.

In Lima, Peru we visited a cathedral, under which were catacombs lined up with about 25,000 human skulls. They lived their lives and now their time is over. What meaning has it now if they were rich or poor, educated or uneducated, famous or little known, or if they lived 50 years or 100 years. The only important thing is how many will come up in the first resurrection to eternal life. They all had their chance to be saved, but many thought it more important to provide for this temporal life and ignored the preparation for eternity.

For 120 years Noah warned the world, inviting them into the ark. How few used the time to go into it. People thought that when the rain starts falling then they will enter in, but then it was too late. The deception of Satan is purposely keeping people so busy and occupied that they have no time for God. No time to read the Bible, no time to go to prayer meetings, no time to do missionary work, even the Sabbath must be used for sleeping rather than for spiritual exercise.

Satan’s clock has two dials, one says, “still time” and then suddenly he turns it over and it says “too late.” God’s clock has only one dial and it says, “today.”

If you have lost money, you can earn it back, things lost can be found again. But time, if it is lost or wasted, it can never be recovered. For a Christian to waste time is a sin. For a time wasted we must answer to God one day. We are sent by God on a mission to save souls, ours and others, from eternal death to eternal life. Can we trifle the time away, be careless and enjoy comforts and entertainments while the souls are perishing? For a Christian to watch sports and other vanities of Satan is to play with fire. Every minute wasted makes Satan happy, because he knows that the time is short and soon it will be forever over.

Apostle Paul went out on missionary journeys. He could have stayed home making tents and had a peaceful, quiet life, but his love for perishing souls was so great that he had to go out to save them. He writes, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Gal. 6:10.

Today we have this opportunity, we can work as Apostle Paul and have stars in our crown or we lose this opportunity, and at the same time we may lose our own salvation.

“Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time. The value of time is beyond computation.” COL 342

“Parents cannot commit a greater sin than to allow their children to have nothing to do, The children soon learn to love idleness, and

grow up shiftless, useless men and women.” COL 345

Satan knows that the time is short, therefore he is desperately trying to keep us so busy with other things that the work of God and the preparation for eternity is neglected. The mediums that God has given for our salvation are neglected. Bible reading, missionary work, prayer meetings, testimonies by the Spirit of Prophecy and overcoming all vanity and faults in the character are mediums that help to save us, and Satan knows this, and therefore he makes our lives so busy with other things that eternity is put out of our reckoning.

When our names are called in the heavenly judgment, the amount of money we have in the bank will not save us, neither will our beautiful homes or our high education, yet these were often the reasons why we did not have time for the mediums that God had given for our character development and salvation.

We sing in our gospel hymn:

“Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with the Lord:
Abide in Him always,
And feed on His word;
Make friends of God’s children,
Help those who are weak,
Forgetting in nothing,
His blessing to seek.”

We must not only sing this hymn, but put it into our daily life, to practice it and give an example to others how to serve God. Neglect worldly things, earn less money, but secure eternity for yourself.

Give your time to Jesus and speak with Him, and work with Him. Ask Him every moment, “is this what you want me to do?” and in the end you will hear His words, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

Let us make this sacrifice of love to Him, He deserves it. **AMEN.**

Timo Martin, Canada

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Time

Time is a talent that God has given us. Without time all other talents are of no use. And God has given the same amount of time each day to everyone. The only problem is that people do not use the time right, often even wasting it. To waste time is the same as wasting money, when it could have been used for saving souls. Time is an opportunity; once wasted it will never come back.

It was necessary for Jesus to die in order to purchase us time, otherwise it would have ended at the time when sin entered into the world. Thus the cross of Jesus tells us the value of time.

People have the habit to leave things that they have to do to a later time. But this is not Bible teaching. Today is the time that God has given us. Tomorrow is not in our hands, we do not know if we even live tomorrow.

How many important things are there to do? How many important subjects to speak about? How many important books to read?

Meanwhile the time is passing on quietly. Many professed Christians will be unprepared for the judgment, which will suddenly take place. They could have been saved if they had used their time wisely. This is the only reason why God has given us the time. Enough time to prepare for eternity has been given us.

Elizabeth I, the queen of England cried on her death bed, "Millions of money for an inch of time." She had 10,000 dresses in her wardrobe and a kingdom on which the sun never set at her feet, but all these had no value to her, they were useless for the lack of time.

Without time our money is useless, also our talents and abilities. Without time our best intentions are of no use, even our knowledge does not help. Yet people use their time to gain these things and neglect the important things.

A friend of mine was often speaking of his plans for retirement. He would sell his business and enjoy his life to the fullest. But suddenly he passed away without a moment's notice, and all his plans were for nothing.

Often we see men and women coming to the end of their lives while in the best years of their lives. Even youth and children have their lives snuffed out at a very early age.

We do not know the length of our time in this world. We live today, but nobody knows what can happen tomorrow.

A common thing in our world is the lack of time. People have many things to do, and always the same excuse, "I do not have time." For this reason men are inventing faster ways to travel, and faster ways to communicate with each other. Machines are made to get things done faster.

of a covenant with God.

Happiness is a series of emotional and spiritual conditions acting in our lives. What are some of these necessary conditions, therefore, for happiness?

Three things are essential to happiness; or contentment, gladness, and well-being in this life. Not only to the health and happiness of a Christian believer, but as well as to the health of the church!

THEY ARE: 1.) ACCEPTANCE 2.) AFFECTION 3.) ACHIEVEMENT

1. ACCEPTANCE

Man innately wants to be accepted; in the family, with friends, a marriage, work, the church, school. But Adam and Eve in Eden divorced themselves from us; unaccepted furthermore. Yet, God created us to have an intimacy with one another; a social interaction. Yet, many feel unaccepted, rejected, alone in a crowd! They age, succumb to depression, and sickness; suicide for many is the destitute escape, especially teenagers.

There was a young couple searching for a church-home. Their search narrowed down to two churches; one had excellent facilities, provisions for child care, close to home, large choir, many musical specials, and they liked the pastor.

The second church did not have such facilities and benefits, smaller in size, further from home, but they decided on this one because of the friendliness, the family warmth, and congeniality of the members with them. They felt immediately accepted. Fellowshiping was abundantly evident, but it was a sense of fellowshiping with God and not merely with one another that mattered most! Jesus was not "masked." A "transparency" was evident among the brethren.

A meek, kind, gentle spirit; bearing Christ's yoke, perfect obedience to God's law; the spirit of Jesus; and a heart at peace with God are the **keys to acceptance and happiness.**

2. AFFECTION

Building on the first requirement of acceptance, affection is the visual or emotional demonstration of our acceptance to one another. There are, for example, many marriages and families where people know they are accepted. But, in these families or marriages, there's very little display of emotional, or verbal or physical affection (e.g. touch, kiss, embrace). It is a false presumption.

As a result, the feeling of acceptance, of being loved and appreciated is made weak and anemic by the lack of affection. Curt words, crude reactions, pride, indifference, silence, which often leads to violence, and separation results. Angels depart! How important, therefore, it is in our families, friendships, churches, work, and

schools, to show affection to each other.

Ah! But certain cultures are "touch" types; and others "frigid types," ultra reserved! Masked! Concealed! Nevertheless, affection can still be shown in various ways; a kind word, an abounding smile, a warm handshake, wholesome laughter, a slap on the back (gentle), embracing of friends, a tender kiss or embrace. These can be cultivated with prayer and the Holy Spirit's workings. These are contagious, but lovely! You will learn to **Breathe Happiness!**

How important it is to have affection in the life of a Christian church. One can measure the spiritual health of a church, too, or congregation by how warm and affectionate church members are with each other. Walk into a fellowship hall or pot luck after the worship service, and where smiles abound and affection prevails; then the Spirit of the Lord is present – and not the Book of Lamentations! You see, one cannot have acceptance adequately without affection. When the two are combined you have the mystical appearance of the rainbow happiness in your life. How does it go? "Taste and see!"

3. ACHIEVEMENT

We live in an achievement seeking society and age; many are striving and seeking to succeed and achieve in business, the professions, the arts, school, and the church. Fame, position, money, pleasure, comforts are often the goals. Moreover, many children are being pressed by over-zealous parents to be over-achievers. "Soccer" moms are burgeoning! Many "burn out" before adolescence. Happiness is frustrated, becomes elusive and escapes one's grasp!

But, finally, many people can experience happiness when they feel a sense of achievement flowing from their lives. We become happy when we know we are involved in something worthwhile; that the labor of our lives has ultimate meaning. For the soul to be happy there must be a sense of contribution and fulfillment. And so it is with the organized church. Happy churches are faith communities; Bible preaching, working churches, friendly churches, sharing, edifying the church and one another, where people do more than just sit quietly in worship, or attend Sabbath school class, or serve on a committee, or serve as a church officer. Or worse, sit idly and let others do all the work – spectators, pew polishers!

Rather, congregations filled with happiness are always engaged in various forms of ministry that are seen as worthwhile and important. When congregations begin to help the poor, widowed, orphaned, feed the hungry, visit the sick, lift up the downtrodden, give shelter to the homeless, volunteer and herald the good news of the Gospel in different and effective ways (Isa. 8:20; Ps. 19:7; Jam. 1:27; John 14:6; 17:7), then suddenly, **Christians, you**, are filled with happiness that comes from achievement and worthy contribution. A suggestion – Observe: Find out where the conditions are the worst – the places where others are not going (unromantic) – and

that's where you ought to be – or go! (i.e. Haiti).

What did we say now? God's will, the Spirit of God can fill us! Warm affection, and achieving great things for the Kingdom of God is the secret of happiness! Cultivate the spirit of happiness, starting today! Moreover, you can be the happiest when busy. Remember, also, that the heart can be at peace with Jesus Christ when one is concerned and is attentive to the "little things" of life; "neglect of trifles poisons happiness." (2T 700) Little courtesies, kind words, by doing good to others; "work for the happiness of others."(3T 381)

There is a story of an International Conference of the Salvation Army in which the featured speaker was the founder of the Salvation Army. Thousands anxiously awaited his presence and message. After a long delay, a telegram arrived and was read at the pulpit platform, as everyone tensely awaited the message. It was announced by an elder who read the message, regretfully, from the ailing founder who could not attend but his solemn message was one word... **OTHERS!**

Centuries ago the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Galatia. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." (Gal. 5:22-23).

I believe Paul is saying that God intends for us to be happy people (the happiest), and that when the spirit of God is filling us, then we are satisfied, contented, and glad... at peace! As such, it is God's will that we accept each other as brothers and sisters, that we show each other warm godly affection, and that we lead our lives to achieve great things for the Kingdom of God.

This is the secret of happiness, the rainbow of our fondest dreams.

**BREATHE HAPPINESS – BREATHE IN.... BREATHE OUT!
Amen.**

John Theodorou, USA



**Br. Gustavo and Sis.
Esther Arias from
Ecuador**

honored, and the answer will come at the very time and in the very way your heavenly Father sees is for your good; and then live out your prayers. Walk humbly and keep moving forward." {LHU 129.2}

Working Of The Holy Spirit

Without the work of the Holy Spirit it is impossible for this kingdom of grace to become a reality in the life of a person. He works quietly like leaven.

"The kingdom of heaven can be felt, but not seen. The inward working of the Spirit of God is compared to leaven. . . The leaven of truth, working inwardly will be revealed in the life. The heart must be cleansed from all impurity, man must be fitted with traits of character that will enable him to do service for God in any line. The process is invisible by which the leaven changes the mass of meal into which it has been introduced, but it works until the meal is converted into bread. **So must the Spirit of God work a radical change.** New faculties are not supplied, but a thorough change is made in the employment of those faculties. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives are implanted." {TDG 186.2}

"Christ works out the principles which He alone can work in. The world looks upon this class as a mystery which they cannot solve. The selfish, money-loving man lives to eat and drink and enjoy his worldly goods. But he does not keep eternity in view. He loses the eternal world from his reckoning. But those who receive and believe the truth have that faith which works by love and purifies the soul from everything sensual. The world cannot know them, for they are keeping in view eternal realities. A motive power is working within to transform the character. A constraining influence received from heaven is working like the leaven hid in the meal. The love of Jesus has come into the heart with its redeeming power to conquer the entire being, soul, body, and spirit." {TDG 186.4}

Conclusion

"How long is the extent of your life?... How many of you have any surety of your life? But if you had a life-time before you, if you knew that you should live your three-score years and ten, what is that little span of life? Is it too much for you to give to God? What do you give to Him? What does He require? Does He require you to give anything that is for your interest or happiness to retain? Oh no. What are the claims that God has upon you? It is, my son, or my daughter, give me Thine heart. It is to come out from among the world, and to be separate, 'and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you.' Who is the 'I'? 'It is the great 'I AM,' He who holds the worlds in His hands; He who gives you life, and gives you health. 'And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.' Oh what a relationship is this! How can any feel as though they were making a sacrifice, to be adopted into the family of

the King of kings; the Lord who reigns in the heavens; know you not that it is the highest exaltation to become children of God, 'sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty?'" {ST, January 31, 1878 par. 11}

It is my prayer that you will permit the working of the Holy Spirit in your life to establish the kingdom of grace in your heart so you will be ready to enter the kingdom of glory when it is finally established. "Thy Kingdom Come." **AMEN.**

Wendy Eaton, Canada

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Cooperation

In order for the kingdom of grace to be properly established in the human heart, our King is asking for help. Does He need our help? Can He not do the work on His own? Yes, He most certainly is able, but then we would be mere robots. He asks for assistance. He appeals to our intelligence to work with Him and cooperate in the process of the establishment of His kingdom. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18

"We repeat the prayer: 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' Matthew 6:10.... We profess to believe that the commission which Christ gave to His disciples is given also to us. Are we fulfilling it? May God forgive our terrible neglect in not doing the work that as yet we have scarcely touched with the tips of our fingers. When will this work be done? It makes my heart sick and sore to see such blindness on the part of the people of God." {8T 35.2}

"The work of gaining salvation is one of **copartnership**, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success. Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness." {AA 482.2}

"God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But **He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation**. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man. Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are 'willing to be made willing,' the Saviour will accomplish this for us, 'Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' 2 Corinthians 10:5." {AA 482.3}

"But **God will not work without the co-operation of man**. He must exercise his powers to the very utmost; he must place himself as an apt, willing student in the school of Christ; and as he accepts the grace that is freely offered to him, the presence of Christ in the thought and in the heart will give him decision of purpose to lay aside every weight of sin, that the heart may be filled with all the fullness of God, and of his love." {CE 111.1}. We can overcome sin. The kingdom of grace is a kingdom without sin. It is the spiritual preparation for entrance into the kingdom of glory.

Submit

Once we've decided to work in co-partnership with the King in the establishment of the kingdom of grace we need to, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7. The saying is, "Let go and let God." This King knows what is best for our happiness and our salvation. Let Him be the ruler of your life and let Him drive out any other rulers you may have.

"Man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change may be affected. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. He who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power". {HP 20.4} Once we submit, the overcoming of sin will be made possible through the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Yield

If you see a Yield sign on the road, this implies that if there is another car coming you have to give them the right-of-way. We need to come into close communion with God and give Him the right-of-way in our lives.

"Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Romans 6:19 "Religion must be made the great business of life. Everything else should be held subordinate to this. All our powers of soul, body, and spirit must be engaged in the Christian warfare. We must look to Christ for strength and grace, and we shall gain the victory as surely as Jesus did for us." RH, Nov. 15, 1887.

Ask - Seek - Knock

You may ask for help any time. Our King is ready to send His messengers (angels) to help us, but we need to ask; to seek; to knock.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Matthew 7:7, 8

"**Be earnest; be resolute**. Present the promise of God, and then believe without a doubt. Do not wait to feel special emotions before you think the Lord answers. Do not mark out some particular way that the Lord must work for you before you believe you receive the things you ask of Him; but trust His word, and leave the whole matter in the hands of the Lord, with full faith that your prayer will be

"Thy Kingdom Come"

'My son, give me thine heart'

"behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

'help us receive the kingdom of heaven into our hearts.'

'for they have heaven in their hearts.'

"receiving into the heart an abundance of grace from Christ Jesus day by day, hour by hour."

Matt. 6:10

This title is a portion of the Lord's prayer and has been prayed by millions of people throughout history. Many of us, I'm sure, have prayed it also, but have you ever taken time to contemplate the meaning of each portion?

This portion, just three words ("Thy Kingdom come"), has great meaning. Often the first thought that comes to mind is that we are praying for the literal return of Jesus for He promised He would come. The Pharisees and disciples in the time of Christ only understood it in this context. While this is true, these three words actually have a dual application.

"The disciples of Christ were looking for the immediate coming of **the kingdom of His glory**, but in giving them this prayer Jesus taught that the kingdom was not then to be established. They were to pray for its coming as an event yet future. But this petition was also an assurance to them. While they were not to behold the coming of the kingdom in their day, the fact that Jesus bade them pray for it is evidence that in God's own time it will surely come." {MB 107.3}

However...

"**The kingdom of God's grace** is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the sovereignty of His love. But the full establishment of the **kingdom of His glory** will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world." {MB 108.1}

Whether we pray this prayer or not ("Thy Kingdom come"), the literal kingdom (the kingdom of glory) will come. It has been prophesied. It will come in God's appointed time and nothing we say or do will prevent His coming. It is the other kingdom, (the kingdom of grace) that is less certain. We need to pray this prayer and make it certain for ourselves. What is the kingdom of grace? This kingdom of grace will be explored in more detail in this article.

The Kingdom Of Grace Vs The Kingdom Of Glory

Here is a description giving Biblical evidence of the difference between the two kingdoms.

"As used in the Bible, the expression 'kingdom of God' is employed to designate **both the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory**. The kingdom of grace is brought to view by Paul in the Epistle to the Hebrews. After pointing to Christ, the compassionate intercessor who is 'touched with the feeling of our infirmities,' the apostle says, 'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace.' [Hebrews 4:16.]

The throne of grace represents the **kingdom of grace**; for the existence of a throne implies the existence of a kingdom. In many of his parables, Christ uses the expression, “the kingdom of Heaven,” to designate the work of divine grace upon the hearts of men.

“So **the throne of glory** represents the kingdom of glory, and this kingdom is referred to in the Saviour’s words, ‘When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations.’ [Matthew 25:31, 32.] This kingdom is yet future. It is not to be set up until the second advent of Christ.

“**The kingdom of grace** was instituted immediately after the fall of man, when a plan was devised for the redemption of the guilty race. It then existed in the purpose and by the promise of God; and through faith, men could become its subjects. Yet it was not actually established until the death of Christ. {GC88 347.1}

Christ went through an enormous struggle to establish the kingdom of grace. “Even after entering upon His earthly mission, the Saviour... might have drawn back from the sacrifice of Calvary. In Gethsemane the cup of woe trembled in His hand. He might even then have wiped the blood-sweat from His brow, and have left the guilty race to perish in their iniquity.... But when the Saviour yielded up His life, and with His expiring breath cried out, ‘It is finished,’ then the fulfillment of the plan of redemption was assured. The promise of salvation made to the sinful pair in Eden was ratified. The kingdom of grace, which had before existed by the promise of God, was then established.” {AG 19.4}

God Is In Control

Now that we have established the fact that there exists two kingdoms (the kingdom of glory and the kingdom of grace), I’d like to ask who is the King in these two kingdoms? Is it not God?

Who is God? Is He not the Creator, Redeemer, the Omnipotent, all-powerful Person who is in control of all the affairs of the universe? Does He not own everything on this earth? “For every beast of the forest [is] mine, [and] the cattle upon a thousand hills.” Psalm 50:10 Yes, of course. “The cattle upon a thousand hills are His. The world and all that is therein are His. The inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before Him. Men and property are but as the small dust of the balance. He is no respecter of persons.” {1T 536.1} What is man in comparison? This is Job’s description of a man. “How much less man, [that is] a worm?” Job 25:6

Although Satan claims to be the god of this world, does our Heavenly Father not have ultimate control of the affairs on this earth?

Again yes, God, is in control of all the affairs on this earth. “Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power [at all] against me, except it were given thee from above.” John 19:10,11

If God, who is the King in the kingdom of glory, has so much power and control, what is the difficulty when it comes to setting up His kingdom of grace? While God is the King also in the kingdom of grace not everyone wishes to be a part of this kingdom. Like the Pharisees, many want to be a part of the kingdom of glory but not the kingdom of grace. You can’t have one without the other.

God created a perfect world, but sin came as a part of his permissive will. Satan is trying vainly to prove his point that God is unfair. But to no avail. His kingdom pales in comparison to the kingdoms Christ is offering. But many are blind to this fact.

“Now sin has marred God’s perfect work, yet that handwriting remains. Even now all created things declare the glory of His excellence. **There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself.** No bird that cleaves the air, no animal that moves upon the ground, but ministers to some other life. There is no leaf of the forest, or lowly blade of grass, but has its ministry. Every tree and shrub and leaf pours forth that element of life without which neither man nor animal could live; and man and animal, in turn, minister to the life of tree and shrub and leaf. The flowers breathe fragrance and unfold their beauty in blessing to the world. The sun sheds its light to gladden a thousand worlds. The ocean, itself the source of all our springs and fountains, receives the streams from every land, but takes to give. The mists ascending from its bosom fall in showers to water the earth, that it may bring forth and bud.” {DA 20.2}

The key point in the paragraph above is that, while all of nature serves others unselfishly, “**There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself.**” God was King in the lives of our first parents in Eden, but Adam and Eve chose another king for awhile. Many of their ancestors chose another king also. Their eyes are blinded and they perceive this “new” king as providing a more enjoyable state of living than the Great King of the universe. What is God doing about it? He could easily reclaim His rightful place in the heart of man and establish His kingdom of grace there any time. He has the power to do so, but...

God will not force. Although He owns the cattle on a 1000 hills, He does not own the human heart (by His own choice). He lets us have it and lets us choose who will be the ruler. It is our choice whether we serve God, or choose another master.

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Joshua 24:15

Jesus stands at the door and knocks (Rev 3:20). He will not come

in until we open the door for Him. He could knock the door down and break the lock, but He won’t.

Keeping the law to the finest detail will not save you if your heart is not right with God. The Pharisees claimed perfect obedience to the law, yet they crucified the Son of God. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Matthew 7:22, 23. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become [as] sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” 1 Cor. 13:1.

While God does have the ability to be King in the heart of man, He has given us a choice as to whom we will choose as our ruler. Will we accept His kingdom of grace? Or will we choose the kingdom of this world? Whichever kingdom we choose, we will have to accept the direction of that king. If we have been following the king of this world, it is time to change. “O LORD our God, [other] lords beside thee have had dominion over us: [but] by thee only will we make mention of thy name.” Isaiah 26:13

My Son Give Me Thine Heart

God wants to establish the kingdom of grace in mankind and He simply asks permission from man to do so. He is very polite.

“Jesus calls to every wanderer, ‘My son, give me thine heart;’ [Proverbs 23:26]: Return unto me, and I will return unto you, and will heal all your backslidings.... He is waiting with pitying tenderness to hear the confessions of the wayward, and to accept their penitence.” {ST, January 19, 1882 par. 12}

God is calling for you. The blessings will follow if we grant Him His request. Heaven can begin here and now.

“To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; **for they have heaven in their hearts.**” COL 421 Unfortunately many are hesitant to allow this kingdom to be established in their hearts. They don’t want to give up the kingdom of the world. You cannot serve both.

“Let us pray the Father to help us **receive the kingdom of heaven into our hearts.** Christ is to be enthroned within, as the source of all power and supremacy. Let us look to God in faith, saying, ‘Lead us, strengthen us, inspire us by Thy Holy Spirit to do Thy will on earth as it is done in heaven.’ This will necessitate our **receiving into the heart** an abundance of grace from Christ Jesus day by

day, hour by hour.” {18MR 102.5}

Kingdom Of God Is Within You

The kingdom of grace can be established right now. We do not need to wait long for it.

“Some of the Pharisees had come to Jesus demanding ‘when the kingdom of God should come.’ More than three years had passed since John the Baptist gave the message that like a trumpet call had sounded through the land, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Matthew 3:2. And as yet these Pharisees saw no indication of the establishment of the kingdom. Many of those who rejected John, and at every step had opposed Jesus, were insinuating that His mission had failed.

“Jesus answered, ‘The kingdom of God cometh not with outward show; [margin]: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, **the kingdom of God is within you.**’ [Luke 17:20:21].The kingdom of God begins in the heart. Look not here or there for manifestations of earthly power to mark its coming.” {DA 506.2}

Here we can read **how** our King establishes this kingdom of grace. His ways and means are often quite different from what we expect. However, we need to simply learn to trust Him. He knows what He is doing.

“God’s way is to give man something that he has not, to make him something that he is not. Man’s way is to get an easy place, and indulge appetite and selfish ambition. God’s plan is to set man at work in reformatory lines, then he will learn by experience how long he has tampered with fleshly appetites, and ministered to his own temperament, bringing weakness upon himself. God’s way is to work in power. He gives grace if the sick man realizes that he needs it. God proposes to purify and refine the defiled soul, then he will implant in the heart his own righteousness and peace and health, and man will become complete in him. **This is the kingdom of God within you.** Day by day men are revealing whether the kingdom of God is within them. If Christ rules in their hearts, they are gaining strength of principle, with power and ability to stand as faithful sentinels, true reformers. Then, like Daniel, they make impressions upon other hearts that will never be effaced, and their influence will be carried to all parts of the world.” {HL 43.5}

“I ask you, Is the kingdom of God within you? God’s people are to be minutemen, always ready, always composed in Jesus Christ. The question for us to consider is, Have we the attributes of Christ? Excuses are valueless. All circumstances, all appetites and passions, are to be servants to the God-fearing man, not rulers over him. The Christian is not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habits or tendency. He is to rule the animal passions, rather than to be held in the bondage of habit.” {TM 421.1} Ask yourself which king is the ruling power in your life?