



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

“Like the different parts of a machine, all are closely related to one another, and all dependent upon one great Center. There is to be unity in diversity. No member of the Lord's firm can work successfully in independence. Each is to work under the supervision of God; all are to use their entrusted capabilities in His service.” – *In Heavenly Places*, p. 287.

WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the 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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Going Home

Are you taking the kingdom of heaven by force? It is the taste of heaven here on this earth, for God is in the hearts of those who, with sufficient spiritual violence, take the kingdom by force. The second coming of Jesus Christ is the hope of believers that God is in control of all things, and is faithful to the promises and prophecies in His Word. In His first coming, Jesus Christ came to earth as a baby in a manger in Bethlehem, just as it was prophesied. Jesus fulfilled many of the prophecies of the Messiah during His birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection. However, there are some prophecies regarding the Messiah that Jesus has not yet fulfilled. The second coming of Christ will be the return of Christ to fulfill these remaining prophecies. In His first coming, Jesus was the suffering Servant. In His second coming, Jesus will be the conquering King. In His first coming, Jesus arrived in the most humble of circumstances. In His second coming, Jesus will arrive with the armies of heaven at His side.

The Lord's servant said the following:

"With the great truth we have been privileged to receive, we should, and under the Holy Spirit's power we could, become living channels of light. We could then approach the mercy-seat; and seeing the bow of promise, kneel with contrite hearts, and seek the kingdom of heaven with a spiritual violence that would bring its own reward. We would take it by force, as did Jacob." —*The Review and Herald*, February 14, 1899.

As Jacob was on his way back to his homeland, he

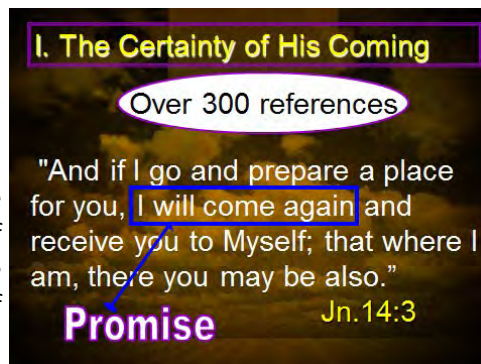
heard the news that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 armed men. He was virtually defenceless against such a force. He divided his family and flocks into two groups so that if one was destroyed, the other might survive. He then turned aside and went over the brook to wrestle alone in prayer with God. Ellen White tells us that we need to have this experience of wrestling with God. Comparing the experience of Jacob to ours, we

are told, "The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 621. We are looking at a mature faith that we must have to endure this time. "Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and de-

termined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded." —*Ibid*.

As Jacob was wrestling in prayer, a hand was suddenly laid on his shoulder—a strong hand. In the darkness he did not know who it was. He feared it might be a robber, or perhaps a member of Esau's band. He wrestled for hours as the night dragged on.

Usually the human body is exhausted in a matter of a very short time when it is putting out its full energy, wrestling for life; but Jacob was a very powerful man. As the light began to dawn in the east, he was aware of the divine character of his assailant. He then clung to



Christ and said, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me!” Genesis 32:26. This was not a presumptuous statement but one of supplication.

What is your prayer life like? Do you wrestle with God until you have the desired blessing? “Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it.” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 621

If we want the blessing of God and are willing to deny self, to agonize before God and to pray long and earnestly, then, as did Jacob, we can receive it. That blessing will sharpen our spiritual perception, allowing God to show us the things that we need to know; not only of the things taking place around us, but also what is taking place inside us. We can go from faith to faith, from grace to grace, reaching new spiritual heights in Christ. There is something that happens in the process of communing with God, something that takes place at no other time. We are changed in a way that we cannot fully understand. The divine superscription plays upon our hearts, and we come from that time refreshed. Rising above the petty problems that we confront in our daily lives—the harassments of Satan—we become a prince of God. In the hour in which we live with the crisis that is coming, unimaginable in its ferocity, we need an inner experience that is deeper, broader, and higher than that experience that we are going to have to face. “Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch.” –*ibid.* That is the way it is when we wrestle, is it not? Every power is put on the stretch.

We will either receive the seal of God or the mark of the beast. When we begin the day with a mountaintop experience with God, having wrestled with Him, not letting Him go until we have the blessing, then we make progress in the divine science of the gospel of Jesus Christ. “When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God. Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the decree to compel the conscience.” –*ibid.*, p. 621–622

It is in the exercise of faith, this wrestling with God, this experience of saying to God, “I will not let You go until You bless me,” that God reveals to us His character which is at the foundation of Christianity. It is through

the revelation of the Holy Spirit to our heart that we learn what the seal of God is really like. Then that gives us a richness of faith and a spiritual perception and power to cope with satanic spirits. For forty years Moses was in the wilderness guiding his flock, basically alone with God. When God finally came and spoke to him, he knew Whom it was that was speaking to him. This is going to be, increasingly, the challenge for God’s people: to properly discern the spirits—to discern when it is the Spirit of God speaking as opposed to another spirit. That perception can only be achieved by a deep, living experience with God through His Word—an experience of wrestling and communing with Him.

“When this experience is ours, we shall be lifted out of our poor, cheap selves, that we have cherished so tenderly. We shall empty our hearts of the corroding power of selfishness, and shall be filled with praise and gratitude to God. We shall magnify the Lord, the God of all grace, who has magnified Christ. And He will reveal His power through us, making us as sharp sickles in the harvest field.” –*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1089

I am reminded of the man in John Bunyan’s allegory, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, who had to enter through a gate that was barricaded by men with swords. A sword was placed in his hand, and with spiritual violence he had to charge at those men, successfully wielding the sword and gaining the gate, through which he was then able to access further heights in his Christian life.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:35–39 If you know what it means to wrestle with Christ and to not let Him go until you have His blessing, you have a treasure that is beyond anything in this world. You have a treasure that is eternal. There is nothing that can separate you from the love of God, which is Christ Jesus our Lord, as long as you maintain that relationship of faith and meet the conditions of faith. Heaven must begin here. There is a yearning in the human heart for

home that God has placed there. In Christ the heart finds its home. The hearts of all of those who are part of that true home have found their hearts anchored in the great heart of God—a heart that is so big and so deep that it is measureless. There is not only love in a true home, but there is rest. It is a place where there is trust and peace, where the heart has rest. Jesus said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Matthew 11:28–29. The world is restless; it can find no peace. It cannot even begin to understand what it is really longing for in its heart. But Jesus says, “Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest.” So that home is a place where there is rest, where you can be yourself and people are not looking at you with a jaundiced eye, but they understand you.

You know, it is amazing to me how the Lord brings us into oneness. Christ says, “That they may be one even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am [there is that home], that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” John 17:22–26. So here on earth we have a type of the heavenly home where there is love. There is rest, and the Prince of peace offers peace that the world cannot give or take away. There is also security, a sense of security and trust. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust.” Psalm 91:1–2. The secret place of union with God—the secret place of communion. I love how it says it in the Hebrew: “He that dwelled in the secret of God.” And I tell you; the secret of God is a very fascinating secret. It is there that He speaks His mysteries to us personally.

We each need an individual faith in these last days. We may be separated from friends and loved ones. We need an individual faith so that when everything else is stripped away, we have the most valuable thing that there is in the universe—that deep, living, and abiding

experience with God. Home is a place where there is shelter. During the great time of trouble, the faithful will be repeating Psalms 46 and 91. They will become living truth to them.

John the Baptist saw the necessity of dwelling in the secret of God, and from the time that he was a young man, he made the choice to go out into the wilderness and commune with God. There he read from the prophecies of Isaiah until his very soul was filled with the heavenly vision. Because he had bowed low before the King of kings, he was able to stand erect before earthly monarchs. He had things in their proper perspective. Is not that the perspective we need? But the fearful and unbelieving will not be in the kingdom. Revelation 21:8 says, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Those who have learned to wrestle with God, who have learned the reality of His power, who have learned to fear Him, and who have bowed low in His presence, are then prepared to stand erect before earthly kings and give an account of their faith. The hour is coming when the attention of all Christendom will be drawn to God’s faithful ones. It is very clear from the Spirit of Prophecy that the final issue, which will be the great focus of attention, is the issue of the Sabbath. This issue will be brought to their attention by the defence of the faithful, made in courts of law.

“There is treasure to be desired, and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.” Proverbs 21:20. In the spiritual sense, in the kingdom of God, the child of God has the richest treasure—a treasure far beyond gold and silver, which no earthly panics can affect; a treasure that is beyond the reach of thieves and robbers. So in the true home, there are riches. In the heavenly home there are mansions prepared, but the greatest riches of all are the riches of Christ—to learn of Him throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. To be able to personally go up to Christ, face to face, and speak to Him about the plan of salvation; about the cross of Calvary; about the science of salvation; about the mystery of redeeming love. There is treasure in the true home. “For the joy of the Lord is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10. There is also joy in a true home. There is joy in the heavenly home, and there is joy in the spiritual home of the kingdom of God. In the home there is shelter from the storm. “He that dwelleth in the secret

place of the most High shall abide under the protection or the shelter of the most High." And there is order in the home. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. There is also freedom in the true home. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32. There is fraternity, or fatherhood of God in the true home of the faithful. Through all of these features of the home, God speaks to our hearts and says, "I want you, and you, and you in My heavenly home. I want you in the earth made new. I have a title for you, to Abraham's farm."

"It rests with us to decide whether he [Satan] shall control our hearts and minds, or whether we shall have a place in the new earth, a title to Abraham's farm." – *Messages to Young People*, p. 105

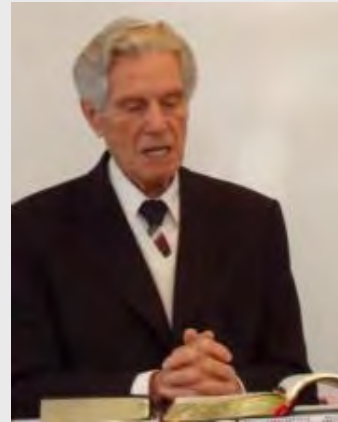
What a wondrous expression from the Spirit of Prophecy. We have a title to Abraham's farm. You may have the title deed taken away from your home here; but do not worry, you are only a pilgrim here. If you are justified by faith in Christ's righteousness, you have a title—a deed—to Abraham's farm. You have a spot waiting for you in the earth made new, which is more beautiful than Eden. A title has been given to you by virtue of justification by faith in Christ. I want to have an experience of being on Abraham's farm in the earth made new. We need to cherish the longings of our heart for home. Home is found in the great heart of God. The dimensions of His wonderful character are all features of what it means to be dwelling in a place called home, and those characteristics will be disclosed ever more fully as throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity we learn what it really means to be home—to be home with God forever and ever.

Jesus will return soon; don't miss out on this great day of salvation just because you were too caught up in this life. Start separating yourself from this world now and get ready for the second coming of your Creator, Lord, Saviour and KING, CHRIST JESUS!

Let us be there.
With brotherly love,

Nicholas Anca

Asleep in Jesus



The Lord saw in His mercy to lay our dear Brother Sigmund Gutknecht to rest on September 2, 2011, in Roetgen, Germany. This faithful warrior of the cross was born in Radomsko, Poland, on September 15, 1918.

Sigmund Gutknecht grew up in a Lutheran family, and at an early age, felt in his heart the desire to serve the Lord. When he was 18 years old he came into contact with the Seventh-Day Adventist church, and worked as a canvasser for several years. During the Second World War he went through many experiences which are recorded in the book, he narrated, "Never Alone".

After the Second World War, while he was living in his parent's country of origin (Germany), Brother Gutknecht came into contact with the Reform Movement. He accepted the message with great joy and immediately prepared himself to enter the Mission School in Baden, Wüttemberg.

He became a canvasser and continued this blessed work together with his wife, Sister Margareta, with whom he was happily married until the Lord laid her to rest in June 2001.

Brother Gutknecht and his wife worked actively to spread the message of salvation and many are the souls who accepted Christ as their personal Saviour from their labours. In 1966, Brother Gutknecht became president of the General Conference, in which office he served for 27 years. He also taught in the mission school in Hungary for many years.

Brother Sigmund Gutknecht will be missed by his biological and spiritual family. He was loved and respected very much as a great man of God, a man of great faith. Soon we will meet him once more on the resurrection morning.

BETHESDA TELLS US BE - THE - SDA

“A wise purpose underlay every act of Christ's life on earth. Everything He did was important in itself and in its teaching.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 206

When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Wilt thou be made whole?” John 5:6. “And He said unto him, Why callest thou Me good? there is none good but One, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:17.

These two verses are preaching us two different thoughts, but these two brought us to our loving Saviour Jesus Christ. The first one says that Jesus Christ is the only healer of sick people. The second says that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of sinful mankind, and that if we keep the commandments of God, we can enter into life and into the kingdom of heaven. My life is in Jesus, where is your life? Very simple answer: Jesus Christ is our life. So if you want to enter into eternal life, keep the commandments of Jesus. How can we explain this?



BETHESDA—A POOL AND THE CHURCH

“Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and

eight years.” John 5:2–5

A great multitude of sick people were gathered near the pool called Bethesda to get cured from their diseases. Only the one who stepped in first would be made well after the angel stirred the water. But when sick people come to our Saviour Jesus Christ, they can be made well. Likewise, in these last days, we have to come to our Saviour Jesus Christ for our salvation because we are also living as sick people; our sickness is sin. If we want redemption from sin, we have to gather in the church every Sabbath. The Church is like a pool; our names are entered in the church books, but that is not enough. If we are still sinful, how can we be freed

from sin? We must always look upon our Saviour Jesus Christ who hung on the cross for our sins. The Bible says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12. Our only source is the name of Jesus Christ. “Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is ‘dead in trespasses.’ Ephesians 2:1. He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 203

WHAT WAS HAPPENING THERE?

“At certain seasons the waters of this pool were agitat-

ed, and it was commonly believed that this was the result of supernatural power, and that whoever first after the troubling of the pool stepped into the waters, would be healed of whatever disease he had. Hundreds of sufferers visited the place; but so great was the crowd when the water was troubled that they rushed forward, trampling underfoot men, women, and children, weaker than themselves. . . . There were some who spent the night in these porches, creeping to the edge of the pool day after day, in the vain hope of relief.

“Jesus was again at Jerusalem. Walking alone, in apparent meditation and prayer, He came to the pool. He saw the wretched sufferers watching for that which they supposed to be their only chance of cure. He longed to exercise His healing power, and make every sufferer whole. But it was the Sabbath day. Multitudes were going to the temple for worship, and He knew that such an act of healing would so excite the prejudice of the Jews as to cut short His work.

“But the Saviour saw one case of supreme wretchedness. It was that of a man who had been a helpless cripple for thirty-eight years. His disease was in a great degree the result of his own sin, and was looked upon as a judgment from God. Alone and friendless, feeling that he was shut out from God’s mercy, the sufferer had passed long years of misery. . . .

“Jesus stated to them that the work of relieving the afflicted was in harmony with the Sabbath law. It was in harmony with the work of God’s angels, who are ever descending and ascending between heaven and earth to minister to suffering humanity. Jesus declared, ‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.’ All days are God’s, in which to carry out His plans for the human race. If the Jew’s interpretation of the law was correct, then Jehovah was at fault, whose work has quickened and upheld every living thing since first He laid the foundation of the earth; then He who pronounced His work good, and instituted the Sabbath to commemorate its completion, must put a period to His labor, and stop the never-ending routine of the universe.

“Should God forbid the sun to perform its office upon the Sabbath, cut off its genial rays from warming the earth and nourishing vegetation? Must the system of worlds stand still through that holy day? Should He command the brooks to stay from watering the fields and forests, and bid the waves of the sea still their

ceaseless ebbing and flowing? Must the wheat and corn stop growing, and the ripening cluster defer its purple bloom? Must the trees and flowers put forth no bud nor blossom on the Sabbath?” –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 201–202, 206–207

WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE?

“The sick man was lying on his mat, and occasionally lifting his head to gaze at the pool, when a tender, compassionate face bent over him, and the words, ‘wilt thou be made whole?’ arrested his attention. Hope came to his heart. He felt that in some way he was to have help. . . .

“Jesus does not ask this sufferer to exercise faith in Him. He simply says, ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.’ But the man’s faith takes hold upon that word. Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. Without question he sets his will to obey the command of Christ, and all his muscles respond to his will. Springing to his feet, he finds himself an active man.



“Jesus had given him no assurance of divine help. The man might have stopped to doubt, and lost his one chance of healing. But he believed Christ’s word, and in acting upon it he received strength.

“Through the same faith we may receive spiritual healing. By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are palsied. Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a holy life than was the impotent man capable of walking. There are many who realize their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; . . . The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, ‘Wilt thou be made whole?’ He bids you arise in health and peace. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe His word,

and it will be fulfilled. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength.” —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 202–203

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” Revelation 3:20

JESUS HEALS A MAN ON SABBATH

“And man also has a work to perform on this day. The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. God’s holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. God does not desire His creatures to suffer an hour’s pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207

Our Lord God gave His only begotten son Jesus Christ to save us from our sinful nature. Jesus Christ is not for Israel or Jews only, but also for the world. Without His care, help, and grace, sick people cannot be made whole. In the same way, without Sabbath observance we cannot receive everlasting life from our Saviour Jesus Christ. “And since the Sabbath is a memorial of the work of creation, it is a token of the love and power of Christ.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 281

“The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. It had been made known to man in Eden, and, like the other precepts of the Decalogue, it is of imperishable obligation. Of that law of which the fourth commandment forms a part, Christ declares, ‘Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law.’ So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. ‘From one Sabbath to another’ the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up ‘to worship before Me, saith the Lord.’ Matthew 5:18; Isaiah 66:23.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 283

IS IT LAWFUL TO HEAL ON THE SABBATH?

“In such a case, men would miss the fruits of the earth, and the blessings that make life desirable. Nature must continue her unvarying course. God could not for a moment stay His hand, or man would faint and die. And

man also has a work to perform on this day. The necessities of life must be attended to, the sick must be cared for, the wants of the needy must be supplied. He will not be held guiltless who neglects to relieve suffering on the Sabbath. God’s holy rest day was made for man, and acts of mercy are in perfect harmony with its intent. God does not desire His creatures to suffer an hour’s pain that may be relieved upon the Sabbath or any other day.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207

“Christ would teach His disciples and His enemies that the service of God is first of all. The object of God’s work in this world is the redemption of man; therefore that which is necessary to be done on the Sabbath in the accomplishment of this work is in accord with the Sabbath law. Jesus then crowned His argument by declaring Himself the ‘Lord of the Sabbath,’—One above all question and above all law.” The “infinite Judge. . .” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 285

THE ASSURANCE FOR SALVATION

“The sense of sin has poisoned the springs of life. But Christ says, ‘I will take your sins; I will give you peace. I have bought you with My blood. You are Mine. My grace shall strengthen your weakened will; your remorse for sin I will remove.’ When temptations assail you, when care and perplexity surround you, when, depressed and discouraged, you are ready to yield to despair, look to Jesus, and the darkness that encompasses you will be dispelled by the bright shining of His presence. When sin struggles for the mastery in your soul, and burdens the conscience, look to the Saviour. His grace is sufficient to subdue sin. Let your grateful heart, trembling with uncertainty, turn to Him. Lay hold on the hope set before you. Christ waits to adopt you into His family. His strength will help your weakness; He will lead you step by step. Place your hand in His, and let Him guide you.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 85

“In like manner you are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You *believe* that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You *will* to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise,—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed,—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. *It is so if you believe it.*” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 51

BE – THE – SDA!

Dear brethren and sisters, this is the time to make a good decision now. We don't have any other time to decide our future life. Our loving Saviour Jesus Christ stands in front of us, behind us, near us, and around us. If we are ready to hear His voice, we can be cured from our sickness and sinful nature. As a result, how can we live as a faithful Christian? Countless seventh-day Sabbath worshipers are living in this world, but most of the Adventist groups are living against the truth of our Saviour Jesus Christ and His commandments. We will analyze it as follows, whether we are eligible for the kingdom of heaven or not. How can an **SDA** be truly faithful?

“The Sabbath is a sign of creative and redeeming power; it points to God as the source of life and knowledge; it recalls man's primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God's purpose to re-create us in His own image. . . . Since the Sabbath is the memorial of creative power, it is the day above all others when we should acquaint ourselves with God through His works.” –*Education*, pp. 250–251

“The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with the Creator. . . . The Sabbath was not for Israel merely, but for the world. . . . No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. . . . The Sabbath . . . is the sign of the power of Christ. . . . ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,’ Jesus said. The institutions that God has established are for the benefit of mankind. ‘All things are for your sakes.’ . . . The law of Ten Commandments, of which the Sabbath forms a part, God gave to His people as a blessing. . . . ‘Wherefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.’ These words are full of instruction and comfort. Because the Sabbath was made for man, it is the Lord's day. It belongs to Christ. For ‘all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.’ John 1:3. Since He made all things, He made the Sabbath. By Him it was set apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him as both the Creator and the Sanctifier. . . . And the Lord says, ‘If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from

doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; . . . then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.’ Isaiah 58:13–14. To all who receive the Sabbath as a sign of Christ's creative and redeeming power, it will be a delight. Seeing Christ in it, they delight themselves in Him. The Sabbath points them to the works of creation as an evidence of His mighty power in redemption.” –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 281, 283–284, 288–289

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TRUE AND IN-NAME-ONLY SDA PEOPLE:

1. In-name-only SDA people: “Then I was shown a company who were howling in agony. On their garments was written in large characters, ‘Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.’ I asked who this company were. The angel said, ‘These are they who have once kept the Sabbath and have given it up.’ I heard them cry with a loud voice, ‘We have believed in Thy coming, and taught it with energy.’ And while they were speaking, their eyes would fall upon their garments and see the writing, and then they would wail aloud. I saw that they had drunk of the deep waters, and fouled the residue with their feet—trodden the Sabbath underfoot—and that was why they were weighed in the balance and found wanting. . . .

“Those who observe the Sabbath of the Bible are united in their views of Bible truth. But those who oppose the Sabbath among the Advent people are disunited and strangely divided. . . . I was pointed to those who claim to be Adventists, but who reject the present truth, and saw that they were crumbling and that the hand of the Lord was in their midst to divide and scatter them now in the gathering time, so that the precious jewels among them, who have formerly been deceived, may have their eyes opened to see their true state.” –*Early Writings*, pp. 37, 68–69

These kinds of people do not obey the word of God written in the book of Isaiah 58:13–14. They work on the Sabbath, cook food on the Sabbath, watch television on the Sabbath, participate in military service on the Sabbath. They want to live a luxury life, they do not help their fellow brothers, they always need the highest position, they are money-minded people, and lazy people.

2. The true SDA people: “The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with

the Creator. . . . 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,' Jesus said. The institutions that God has established are for the benefit of mankind. 'All things are for your sakes.' . . . The law of Ten Commandments, of which the Sabbath forms a part, God gave to His people as a blessing. . . . Then the Sabbath is a sign of Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God." – *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 281,288

"I was shown that the law of God would stand fast forever, and exist in the new earth to all eternity. At the creation, when the foundations of the earth were laid, the sons of God looked with admiration upon the work of the Creator, and all the heavenly host shouted for joy. It was then that the foundation of the Sabbath was laid. At the close of the six days of creation, God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made; and He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work. The

God rested on the seventh day, and blessed and hallowed it. I saw that the Sabbath never will be done away; but that the redeemed saints, and all the angelic host, will observe it in honor of the great Creator to all eternity." – *Early Writings*, p. 217

The identification of the Lord's Church and the Lord's people is this: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. They always love the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and keep His commandments. Worship the Lord faithfully on the Sabbath; help others always, especially on the Sabbath; preach the Gospel everywhere. So **dear brothers, BE THE SDA**, not in name only, but also faithfully according to the teachings of our Saviour Jesus Christ and according to the above testimonies. AMEN.

S. Raj Israel
India

The Prayer of Paul for the Believers

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Ephesians 3:14-21

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." Psalms 68:19

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations." Psalms 67:1-2

May our dear heavenly Father help us to have the same spirit of prayer as we see in the life of Paul and other faithful men and women in the Holy Scriptures. As we approach the end of time, unity and love should be our primary work and it can't happen unless we pray. May our Mighty God and our dear Saviour Jesus give us the Holy Spirit to fulfill our task on this earth.

To Him be the glory and honour now and forever. AMEN.

In Christ,
Alina Anca





Slighted Warnings

From its beginning to the end, the Holy Bible is full of warnings. We read in Genesis 2: 16–17 that “the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” So God gives us the right thing and warns us against the bad.

Reading further in the Spirit of Prophecy, when Satan and the evil host met together to plan to beguile to disobedience the holy pair in Eden, a task which he said only he could accomplish, and for a time sought retirement to bring his plan to maturation, this is what the heavens did:

“God assembled the angelic host to take measures to avert the threatened evil. It was decided in heaven’s council for angels to visit Eden and warn Adam that he was in danger from the foe. Two angels sped on their way to visit our first parents. The holy pair received them with joyful innocence, expressing their grateful thanks to their Creator for thus surrounding them with such a profusion of His bounty. . . . The angels graciously and lovingly gave them the information they desired. They also gave them the sad history of Satan’s rebellion and fall. They then distinctly informed them that the tree of knowledge was placed in the garden to be a pledge of their obedience and love to God; that the high and happy estate of the holy angels was to be retained upon condition of obedience; that they were similarly situated; that they could obey the law of God and be inexpressibly happy, or disobey and lose their high estate and be plunged into hopeless despair.” – *The Story of Redemption*, p. 29

Despite all such efforts of love by God to our first parents, the story goes as it has always been told. So “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12. So Adam and Eve slighted the warnings and thus faced death as forewarned. God’s word is sure.

Way before this the first to rebel in the courts of heav-

en had been given the same favor of being warned of the consequences of the course he had taken. “The Son of God presented before him the greatness, the goodness, and the justice of the Creator, and the sacred, unchanging nature of His law. God Himself had established the order of heaven; and in departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker and bring ruin upon himself. But the warning, given in infinite love and mercy, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed his jealousy of Christ to prevail, and became the more determined. As the dispute centered also on the supremacy of Christ, “the King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. . . . In great mercy, according to His divine character, God bore long with Lucifer. . . . A compassionate Creator, in yearning pity for Lucifer and his followers, was seeking to draw them back from the abyss of ruin into which they were about to plunge. But His mercy was misinterpreted. Lucifer pointed to the long-suffering of God as an evidence of his own superiority, an indication that the King of the universe would yet accede to his terms. If the angels would stand firmly with him, he declared, they could yet gain all that they desired.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 36, 39–40. Fellow angels pleaded with him but to no avail; they were denounced as deluded slaves.

The time had come when mercy could plead no more with Lucifer and his associates for he had passed its bounds. Warnings could plead no more; they had been slighted and resisted for too long, and divine mercies were misinterpreted. This is what inspiration has to say on this matter:

“Satan trembled as he viewed his work. He was alone in meditation upon the past, the present, and his future plans. His mighty frame shook as with a tempest. An angel from heaven was passing. He called him and entertained an interview with Christ. This was granted him. He then related to the Son of God that he repented of his rebellion and wished again the favor of God. He was willing to take the place God had previously assigned him, and be under His wise command. Christ wept at

Satan's woe but told him, as the mind of God, that he could never be received into heaven. Heaven must not be placed in jeopardy." –*The Story of Redemption*, p. 26 From the book of Revelation 12: 7–9, we are told that "there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not;" "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him;" "Neither was their place found any more in heaven." Forever lost!

The above are just a few examples of slighted warnings and the accompanying consequences. Talk of the time of Noah warning the world and his warnings slighted and ridiculed; Lot's wife looking back when told not to do so and turning to a pillar of salt; Ahab being killed in war when sufficiently warned by the Prophet Micaiah not to go; Pilate by his wife not to do any harm to our Lord Jesus; etc. Thus all who made light of the warnings were forever lost.

A REFORMATION MESSENGER FULL OF WARNINGS



One Sunday morning I rushed to the post office to check if the Messenger had arrived. When I got it I sat down at the post office steps and immediately started reading it. It is the reading of this Reformation Messenger of June 2011, Volume 18, Number 6, that motivated me to write this article. Please read and reread this Messenger

such that with the aid of the Spirit of God you will never be the same again.

In the last part of this article let us examine that Messenger issue concerning our topic and let God speak to us. One thing I found very touching is that the messages given therein were as if the contributors had agreed to write on a particular topic in advance—"break up your fallow ground." This topic was presented in different ways by the writers.

As reformers of the end time we are in danger of being satisfied by the name only and ignore character perfection until it is too late to adjust. This is the heart of the issue. Under the topic "Eden Restored," the writer remonstrates with the reformers to allow the great Gar-

dener to uproot the bad weeds in the heart. If there is something remaining, then we need to go to the garden of Gethsemane figuratively so that Jesus may rid us of the entire weeds, even one sliver that is left behind. Another article deals with secret sins and consequences; another exhorts us to live up to the light given; another presents the fearful fact that what we sow is what we shall reap as God is not mocked (Galatians 6:7). In the Children's Corner is the story of an apostle who, if it were not for God revealing the right way as he demanded, would have taken away his life. Do we ever have such a desire and challenge God to give us strength to obey Him? Since we are in God's vineyard, according to another writer in the same Messenger, God has done and is doing all He can to save us, but if we go on and on transgressing with the result that we bear no spiritual fruits required of us, then God will be left with no choice but to hew us down.

"He spake also this parable; A certain [man] had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung [it]: And if it bear fruit, [well]: and if not, [then] after that thou shalt cut it down." Luke 13:6–9

This Messenger may well contain a message of doom if we slight its warnings. It warns but also provides remedy to the stony heart in order that it may succumb to God's operation. So do not hesitate to seek Jesus closely now. I hope you will read it again if at first you simply browsed it.

In conclusion, let me quote the conclusion of the article, "The Lord's Vineyard," whose writer has written much about the need for us to be perfect, which no doubt is his burning desire each day that all of us in the Reformation may be saved thereby (in perfection).

"We do not know how many times the Lord has said about each one of us, 'Let it alone one more year.' Suddenly it may be the last year for us, and then the limit of mercy has been reached. May the Lord help us to produce good grapes, good works, and then the Lord will be pleased with us." AMEN

Joel Msiska, Malawi



LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

Jesus said that to love our neighbours is one of the conditions for eternal life. And this is a characteristic that we do not have naturally, but we must learn it in the school of Christ. Seven times this is mentioned in the New Testament and one time in the Old Testament.

As soon as sin entered the world, the love for fellow man died. The attitude that was already in the first human family has continued to our days. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” “Am I responsible for my brother’s welfare?”

Cain did not love God, therefore he did not love his brother either. These two loves always go together. Cain thought that God had dealt harshly with his parents by expelling them from Eden. And now when his younger brother’s offering was accepted and his own offering was rejected, this filled him with anger, insofar that he killed his brother.

Moses wrote, “Love thy neighbour as thyself.” Leviticus 19:18. And Jesus set up a standard as to how much we must love one another. “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:34–35. This is the standard that we must reach if we want to have eternal life.

Sister White writes, “Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully.” *—Early Writings*, p. 71

Proving to the people that we are the church of God is not done only through our teachings and practices, but the love that we have for one another is the proof. When the churches sent their young men to the army to kill their fellow man, this proved that they did not love their neighbours as themselves. Jesus said that we

are to even “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” Matthew 5:44

The Apostle Paul was a member of a church that was full of hatred towards the followers of Jesus. Therefore he went looking for Christians in order to imprison them and to put them to death, until he met Jesus on the way to Damascus and realized that there was a church of love that was completely different than the church in which he was a member. When Jesus asked him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” (Acts 9:4), Paul realized that Jesus did not hate him, even though he himself had hated Jesus so much. Paul then joined the church of love and started to bring others into it.

It was in 1951 when a group of members separated from the church of God. Before they could separate, their love towards the other members had to die. When there was no more love, it became easy to leave them and to start working against them. After walking out, the next day they started organizing their new church.

It was completely different when the separation happened in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. First of all, the group of members did not walk out from the church, but they were forced out—they were disfellowshipped—and even then they waited eleven years before they officially organized the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Reform Movement. Meanwhile they did everything possible to bring the existing church into faithfulness to God and obedience to His commandments.

There are millions of professing Christians who go to churches for selfish reasons. They do not love God, neither their fellow man. They only love themselves and they want to go to heaven and have eternal life, and to escape the hell fire. Such Christians will never

be in heaven. The Bible is clear on that. We read in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Also in 1 Corinthians 2:9 we read the same, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Now the important question is, "Who are our neighbours?" The best example of it is the story of the Good Samaritan. The wounded man and the Good Samaritan were total strangers to each other, but what united them? They were both human beings, and the one was in need of help, and the other was able to render this help. This principle that God has given to us opens a great field of labour to each one of us. While there is a great need of physical help to the people who are lacking the necessities of life, there is even greater need to help the people with spiritual needs. There are about seven billion people in the world, unsaved, who need to hear our message of God's love towards them. We do not have time for amusement and fun while there are multitudes of people around us perishing in their sins.

The Apostle Paul recognized his responsibility towards others. He says, "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." Romans 1:14

What placed this great debt upon him? He gives the answer clearly: "For the love of Christ constraineth us." 2 Corinthians 5:14

It was the love of Christ that sent Him out of heaven to this world of sin, to suffer and to die for us. Love is the greatest power that causes people to make sacrifices that nothing else could make them do.

But this love has an enemy which is out to destroy it, and it is selfishness. A selfish person only loves himself and those whom he can take advantage of.

A selfish Christian is satisfied with the expectation of heaven and eternal life, and has no burden for the salvation of others. They are not good Samaritans. They do not love God, neither their neighbour.

Paul gives us an admonition, "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For

even Christ pleased not Himself." Romans 15:2-3

Christian courtesy does not include the rules of etiquette only, but kindness, gentleness, and true love. We read in Leviticus 19:17-18, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; . . . Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD."

Sister White writes, "Again said the angel: 'Thou art thy brother's keeper. Thy profession, thy faith, requires thee to deny thyself and sacrifice to God, or thou wilt be unworthy of eternal life; for it was purchased for thee dearly, even by the agony, the sufferings, and blood of the beloved Son of God.'" -*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 114. Love and sacrifice always go hand in hand; they cannot be separated.

The only genuine fruit of Christianity is love for our neighbour, and this love is not in words only but also in actions. These actions of love are evidence of true conversion. Even the success in our missionary work depends on our love to our neighbour.

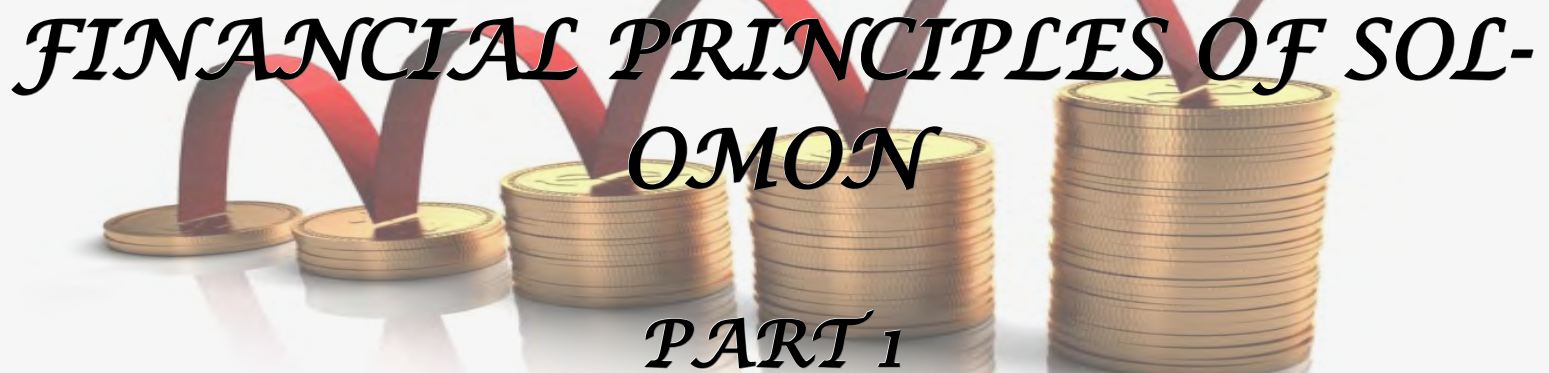
If we want perfect harmony and unity in our churches, we need love that will break down the dividing walls. "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us." Ephesians 2:14

How wonderful it is to come to a church where everyone loves one other. Then our church can be a living church. One dissatisfied member can break this unity, and then all can lose the blessing of God.

We all need to become peacemakers and bring unity into our church, even if it requires sacrifice. If someone does not like you, then put out every effort to make him your friend again, and by so doing restore the unity among the members. Show your greatest love to the one who has fallen into sin, then you will be a friend of sinners, just like Jesus was. AMEN.

Timo Martin





FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES OF SOL- OMON

PART 1

When I was a teenager, I thought that the Bible was a book for old people and that many people could be interested in it, but I was not interested at the time. I thought there was nothing in that book to attract me to take it in my hands and dedicate my time to read it.

I never thought during that brief time of my life that the Word could be as impressive as it was for me during my time as a student in mission school.

Every time a new subject started in the program of studies in the Colombian mission school, it opened the doors to a new world to discover. I was eager to learn something new about the world. And who wouldn't be if in every subject the "book" came to life and always had something interesting to tell us. I learned about every area of the human being regardless of how unimportant it seemed, and this gave me much happiness.

For God every area of the human being is important: spiritual, social, physical, financial, emotional, and intellectual. He desires our complete growth.

Through the Bible we realize that the Lord cares for the welfare of his children in each one of these areas. And we can see biblical examples of many people who were blessed in many areas because they applied the principles that the Lord had given to His people. An example of this is found in Deuteronomy 28 and 29.

Even though the Bible isn't a book of sociology, economic science, mathematics or any other of the sciences, it is a book that provides principles about all the areas of human knowledge.

The Scriptures say, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God,

and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33. But why is it that someone who is seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness may have so many shortages in his life? This may happen if he is ignoring some principles contained in the Holy Book.

In the first place, we make it clear that God desires man's prosperity. Then let the Lord speak to us through His Word:

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Psalm 1:3

In context, this text is talking about righteous people, and at the end of the verse 3 there is a beautiful promise: "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

About Joseph it is said in Genesis 39:2:

"And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian."

Joseph was a prosperous man because the Lord was with Joseph. God desires to prosper everything our hands touch if we allow Him to lead our lives.

Another text is in the book of Joshua:

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Joshua

God desires our way to be prosperous and whatever we undertake to work well:

“We hope you may be prospered of God. If we have His care and His approval, we shall make a success wherever we are and in whatever we may engage. Without the blessing of God, any amount of prosperity will fail to be a success. Our first anxiety should be to secure God as our friend. ‘Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me’ (Isaiah 27: 5).” —*This Day with God*, p. 367

But this prosperity is achieved through submission of our will to the Lord in the observance of His commandments:

“Temporal and spiritual prosperity are made conditional upon obedience to the law of God. . . . Obedience to God’s Word is our life, our happiness.” —*Child Guidance*, p. 80

However, we also need to be aware that many who are obedient to the law of God are not always blessed with temporal prosperity. Christ was one of the poorest on earth. He had no place to lay His head. He had no temporal goods.

“There are many who urge with great enthusiasm that all men should have an equal share in the temporal blessings of God. But this was not the purpose of the Creator. A diversity of condition is one of the means by which God designs to prove and develop character. Yet He intends that those who have worldly possessions shall regard themselves merely as stewards of His goods, as entrusted with means to be employed for the benefit of the suffering and the needy. Christ has said that we shall have the poor always with us, and He unites His interest with that of His suffering people. The heart of our Redeemer sympathizes with the poorest and lowliest of His earthly children. He tells us that they are His representatives on earth. He has placed them among us to awaken in our hearts the love that He feels toward the suffering and oppressed.” —*Patriarchs*



This principle applies in all the biblical situations where the servants of the Lord are mentioned.

Here are more texts about this aspect of prosperity:

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 2

“And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.” 2 Chronicles 20:20

“Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.” Nehemiah 2:20

God has a plan for you and it is prosperity. I don’t mean a life of selfish luxury that comes from the world, but the Lord really wants to bless you with richness that comes from heaven. You are made to reach prosperity under the parameters of God.

“The marked prosperity which attended everything placed under Joseph’s care was not the result of a direct miracle; but his industry, care, and energy were crowned with the divine blessing. Joseph attributed his success to the favor of God and even his idolatrous master accepted this as the secret of his unparalleled prosperity. Without steadfast, well-directed effort, however, success could never have been attained. God was glorified by the faithfulness of His servant. It was His purpose that in purity and uprightness the believer in God should appear in marked contrast to the worshipers of idols—that thus the light of heavenly grace might shine forth amid the darkness of heathenism.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 74

It should be emphasized that Joseph applied the principles such as “industry, care, and energy” for his suc-

cess. It is mentioned in the text that was quoted before that his prosperity and success wasn't the "result of a direct miracle."

The balanced approach of this issue is found in what the Lord says through the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The text ends by saying "whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" Every purpose that is started with this principle in mind is marked with the seal of divine approval.

Now, let's walk through the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 11, to discover some principles of economic health.

1. Principle of Investment

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." Ecclesiastes 11:1



This was literally done by Solomon. He cast his bread upon the waters. Isn't it curious?

"For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom." 1 Kings 10:22-23

Doesn't it seem curious that Solomon did this? Remember that there wasn't a man after the Lord Jesus wiser than Solomon. He was an investor and knew how to make the most of the resources, and he multiplied them.

The text mentions that he had ships in Tharshish. The ships of Tharshish were ships of great size, able to

make long trips and transport plenty of merchandise.

During three years these ships were doing business and multiplying the possessions of King Solomon; at the end of the three years the ships came back full of wealth, making the kingdom of Solomon the greatest known in that time.

I am not a businessman or an accountant, much less a stockbroker. I am only a student of the Bible, and my task is to show these kinds of principles hidden in the words of the Bible; but the principle practiced by Solomon applies in our days as much as it applied in the days of his kingdom.

Invest! Search for advice on how to do this; go to the people who apply this principle and get advice. Remember what the parable of the talents says; God won't only ask for what you get but also for how you used it to help in God's work. Don't forget that the Lord has done everything for you and has given His own Son in propitiation for our redemption (1 John 4:10); and because of Him, we now have everything, and grace for grace (John 1:16). Once more surrender your life to the Saviour and consecrate yourself for His glory.

The next article will expand on this principle.

*Elder Hernandez
Canada*

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“Here Am I; Send me.”

Isaiah 6:8

American Union Conference, August 24-27, 2011

At the beautiful setting of the Cohutta Springs Camp Ground in Crandall, Georgia, the American Union conference convened on the evening of August 24. Surrounded by the scenes of nature, this setting provided a peaceful respite for God’s people to come and rest from the weary duties of life. It was a time to fellowship; a time to rest; a time to renew spiritual energy to return to each prospective home to continue the work of God afresh.

The theme of the conference focused on Isaiah’s answer to God’s call for assistance. God is making the same call today and looking for willing volunteers. Missionary work – the spreading of the good news that Jesus is coming soon – was presented in workshops and sermons. There are a variety of means and methods to work for the Lord, and each person is called to do his part, whether large or small. Missionary work can be from your own home, or from your neighbourhood.

To begin the conference, Brother Henry Dering encouraged everyone to “arise, shine; for thy light is come.” Isaiah 60:1. In this time of earth’s history there is much darkness, and the last message of mercy that is to be given to the world is a revelation of the character of God, His love. In order to grow spiritually, we need a perfect understanding of the truth, a solid prayer life and we need to share the faith. Everyone has been given at least one gift that can be used as a witnessing tool. If we truly have the love of God in our hearts it will be seen as light in the midst of darkness. Witnessing will be an exciting endeavour. Religion will be proactive.

On Thursday morning a question and answer period was conducted for the members to ask questions from a select ministerial panel. Interesting and well-thought-

out questions were asked, which the ministers gave insightful answers to.

Following this panel, a series of eight workshops were conducted over the next two days. These workshops focused on many important areas of missionary work, beginning with this: “A Matter of the Heart.” This is where it all begins – in the heart, for out of the heart are the issues of life. Jesus said, “Give Me thy heart.” Two questions were asked, “What do you live for?” and, “What would you die for?” If God truly has first place in your heart, your goal will be to build up God’s kingdom, no matter what the personal cost to yourself. Do you love the cause of God enough to die also for Him? The most amazing thing you can do for this person you love is to lead souls to Christ. This is what He is asking you to live for.

In order for God’s church to grow and be successful in missionary work, harmony must exist in its ranks. Just like a musical piece, each note is different, but when they are played together, they make a beautiful sound. If all the notes played were identical, no harmony would be provided, but when each plays a different note, and it is pleasing to the ear, this is harmony. In the church we do not all do the same duty, but we do different duties but it is in harmony.

How can the gospel be advanced effectively? How can we get people’s attention? We need energy. We need to smile. We need to lift up our heads, walk confidently, believe that the gospel of Jesus changes lives and it has changed ours. We must not be timid and hide our light, but let it shine. Go forward confidently.

If we do not have many talents, we all have a testimony to share. Our personal testimony is the most effective

witness of what the gospel can do. Each person is unique and has made a unique experience with Christ. This experience we need to share.

Again in another workshop the idea was brought out that in order to be effective in witnessing, the first step is to get people's attention. Various methods were presented that would make people stop and listen. The second step is to get their interest. You have something that is beautiful and you present it so wonderfully that he wants it also. This takes much prayer and a close connection with God.

The publishing work is a very important work. The literature is to go out as "the leaves of autumn," and in order for it to succeed, it also needs financial support. Various means were presented to the members as to how they can get out of debt so that the cause of God can be blessed by having members place their means (where it will be more useful) into the bank of heaven.

We are all called to be watchmen on the walls of Zion. A watchman needs to be awake in order to detect danger and to give the alarm. If the watchman falls asleep or is blind how can this be done? The blind watchman needs "eyesalve" in order to be able to see clearly again. There are many methods that Satan has invented to put watchmen to sleep, and it is important to recognize the enemy so as to not lose sight of the dangers surrounding God's people. As watchmen we must be awake to our duty.

Jesus is looking for missionaries today. When a person discovers the love of Jesus, he cannot remain silent. It bubbles over. People's lives have been changed through Jesus. We may lead people to church, but we need to lead people to Jesus first and foremost. Being in the church is a natural consequence of following Jesus. Those who are not involved with leading people to Jesus become critical of the leaders of the church. If you see someone who is being critical, ask them if they are leading people to Jesus. Not sharing Jesus is not preparing for Jesus' second coming. Jesus is coming soon.

Sabbath morning dawned bright and beautiful. After a lively Sabbath school, Brother Idel Suarez presented the Divine Service. After the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, sadness filled heaven. All music stopped. The Father and Son held a counsel together, at which time the Son willingly decided to go and pay the penalty for man's

sin. He was the first to stand up and say, "Here am I; send Me." He would risk His life to enter enemy territory and suffer for mankind to break the curse of sin and death. Here was one, equal with the Father, willing to become equal with man. The book of Isaiah summarizes the whole Bible (66 books). He was a type of Christ. He was a descendant of David, and he saw the glory of God in vision, which prompted him to say, "Here am I; send me." The glory of God will soon be revealed in the entire world, and we, personally, need to have the glory of God revealed through us. When this happens, we will feel the need to serve; to warm and comfort those that mourn; to heal the broken hearted. When the glory of God fills the soul, religion is no longer a cold ceremony, but it is filled with energy, spirit, and life.

The afternoon was filled with beautiful music in praise to the Lord from people of all ages, and heart-touching testimonies of how lives have changed when individuals come in contact with Jesus.

All too soon the Sabbath came to a close, which brought the ending of the conference. In the final meeting, Brother Tzvetan Petkov gave encouragement for each individual to take up the burden of the work. He related the story of King Saul when faced with an enemy with soldiers as the "sands of the sea" (1 Samuel 13). Many of the soldiers of King Saul fled and hid in caves. We also have an enemy with a large innumerable army. Are we hiding in caves also? We need to come out of the caves. How do we come out of the caves? By meeting the enemy as did Jonathan – with boldness and courage. He made himself known. Do we make ourselves known? The congregation was challenged to come out of the caves. If each member in the American Union gave out one pamphlet a day, how many would be handed out in one year? The publishing house could not keep up. We all need to come out of our caves and do something for Jesus every day.

The conference closed with an encouragement for each member to be steadfast and immovable in their walk with the Lord. You can gain the victory through Christ. Let the glory of God be revealed in you so that you may have the humility of Isaiah and be willing to say, "Here am I; send me," when the call is made by the Lord.

AMEN

Wendy Eaton



SPECIAL MUSIC



JOHN AND MARIA THEODOROU



SISTERS LOUISE HAZELHOFF AND ILSE DERING (LEFT)



DAVID, RUTH AND HADASSAH MORENO (RIGHT)

SISTER LEILA AND BROTHER ESCOBAR (LEFT)



“Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink that putteth thy bottle to him and maketh him drunken.” Habakkuk 2:15

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” Proverbs 20:1

“Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

BELSHAZZAR’S FEAST

To understand a man, you must know his environment and ancestry. So, before discussing Belshazzar himself, we must consider his country, his city, and the great king, Nebuchadnezzar, who was his grandfather (Prophets and Kings, p. 522).

The city of Babylon was queen of the ancient world. Sitting beside the mighty Euphrates, she took toll of its traffic in fruit and grain, livestock and manufactured goods. Her artisans turned out brick and furniture, clothing, tapestry, and vases. Smiths made jewelry. They worked in copper, iron, and lead.

Surprisingly modern was Babylon in other respects. Practically all her freemen could read and write. For more than forty years, Nebuchadnezzar was king. During the early half of his reign, he conquered all the great nations of his time. Yet his real interest was in the things of peace. So, when wars were ended, he came back to Babylon to dig irrigation ditches, build roads, pave city streets, plant orchards, lay out and beautify parks, and erect temples. He constructed fortifications, and even cities. Nebuchadnezzar was one of the greatest builders of all history.

Babylon’s walls were unbelievably high, and so wide



that a four-horse chariot could safely turn on its top. Every little way, there were sentry towers with watchmen on guard. Outside, a moat, wide and deep, was filled with water. Drawbridges crossed it; but when they were lifted and the gates shut, no foe could enter. Babylon was impregnable. (for extra study see *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 96, city description; vol. 4, pp. 533, 535, 757, 772, 794-799)

Nebuchadnezzar had a large family. One of his daughters married an army officer named Nabonidus. Belshazzar was their son.

As King Nebuchadnezzar looked at the glories of mighty Babylon, pride filled his heart, and he forgot his Maker.

In mercy, God gave the king another dream, to warn him of his peril and the snare that had been laid for his ruin (see Daniel 4:1–27).

“A year from the time he had received the warning, Nebuchadnezzar, walking in his palace and thinking with pride of his power as a ruler and of his success as a builder, exclaimed, ‘Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?’ While the proud boast was yet on the king’s lips, a voice from heaven announced that God’s appointed time of judgment had come. Upon his ears fell the mandate of Jehovah: ‘O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.’

“The messages of warning had been unheeded; now, stripped of the power his Creator had given him, and driven from men, Nebuchadnezzar ‘did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws.’

“For seven years Nebuchadnezzar was an astonishment to all his subjects; for seven years he was humbled before all the world. Then his reason was restored and, looking up in humility to the God of heaven, he recognized the divine hand in his chastisement. In a public proclamation he acknowledged his guilt and the great mercy of God in his restoration. . . .

“The once proud monarch had become a humble child of God; the tyrannical, overbearing ruler, a wise and compassionate king. He who had defied and blasphemed the God of heaven, now acknowledged the power of the Most High and earnestly sought to promote the fear of Jehovah and the happiness of his subjects. Under the rebuke of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, Nebuchadnezzar had learned at last the lesson which all rulers need to learn--that true greatness consists in true goodness. He acknowledged Jehovah as the living God, saying, ‘I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.’

“God’s purpose that the greatest kingdom in the world should show forth His praise was now fulfilled. This public proclamation, in which Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the mercy and goodness and authority of God, was the last act of his life recorded in sacred history.

“Toward the close of Daniel’s life great changes were taking place in the land to which, over threescore years before, he and his Hebrew companions had been carried captive. Nebuchadnezzar, ‘the terrible of the nations’ (Ezekiel 28:7), had died.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 519–522

After Nebuchadnezzar’s death, Belshazzar was now crown prince after a short revolution. “Through the folly and weakness of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, proud Babylon was soon to fall. Admitted in his youth to a share in kingly authority, Belshazzar gloried in his power and lifted up his heart against the God of heaven. Many had been his opportunities to

know the divine will and to understand his responsibility of rendering obedience thereto. He had known of his grandfather’s banishment, by the decree of God, from the society of men; and he was familiar with Nebuchadnezzar’s conversion and miraculous restoration. But Belshazzar allowed the love of pleasure and self-glorification to efface the lessons that he should never have forgotten. He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, and neglected to use the means within his reach for becoming more fully acquainted with truth. That which Nebuchadnezzar had finally gained at the cost of untold suffering and humiliation, Belshazzar passed by with indifference.” —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 522–523

One of the great holidays was in honour of the god of spring. It was called the Feast of Tammuz. It was held about the time of Easter; but was celebrated like New Year’s Eve. It was at the Feast of Tammuz that Babylon fell.

“Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord’s house which was toward the north, and behold there sat women weeping for Tammuz.” Ezekiel 8:14 (see *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 448–449)

THE UNSEEN WATCHER

When Nebuchadnezzar died, subject nations revolted; and no great effort was made to reconquer them. Eventually, an alliance between two neighbouring states made Medo-Persia the great world power.

These changes took time. It was something like twenty-three years after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, before Cyrus, nephew of Darius the Mede, and commanding general of the combined armies of the Median and Persians troops, laid siege to Babylon.

The feast of Tammuz was coming soon; Cyrus knew it. He knew that nearly everyone in Babylon would be drunk, therefore he planned accordingly. Leaving only a small detachment before the city wall, Cyrus went up the Euphrates. At just the right moment, he cut its dikes. The river flowed out over fertile bottom lands. The water in its channel at Babylon fell. Under cover of darkness, on the night of the great feast, Medo-Persian troops marched stealthily down the river’s dry bed. Up they came into the city, through gates unguarded while sentries slept, or loafed in neighbouring saloons.

Past housing celebrating the feast with drunken carous-

al, the invaders marched. On they went to the palace. There the scenes in modest homes were being duplicated in splendour. It is recorded that, "In his pride and arrogancy, with a reckless feeling of security, Belshazzar 'made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.' All the attractions that wealth and power could command, added splendour to the scene. Beautiful women with their enchantments were among the guests in attendance at the royal banquet. Men of genius and education were there. Princes and statesmen drank wine like water and reveled under its maddening influence." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 523

As the feast progressed, after Belshazzar tasted the wine, he "commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which . . . [his grandfather] Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.' The king would prove that nothing was too sacred for his hands to handle. — *Prophets and Kings*, pp.523–524

"Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem, and the king, and his princes, his wives and his concubines drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." Daniel 5:3–4

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." Romans 13:1

"God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever He will." Daniel 5:21 (last part)
 "Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels. . . that the king and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein." Daniel 5:2

"David's power had been given him by God, but to be exercised only in harmony with the divine law. When he commanded that which was contrary to God's law, it became sin to obey. 'The powers that be are ordained of God' (Romans 13:1), but we are not to obey them contrary to God's law." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 719

"Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart." Hosea 4:11

"At the very moment when the feasting was at its height, a bloodless hand came forth, and traced on the wall of the banqueting room the doom of the king and his kingdom. 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,' were the words written, and they were interpreted by Daniel to mean, 'Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. . . Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.' And the record tells us, 'In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom.'" — *Temperance*, p. 49; Daniel 5:24–31; Isaiah 13:1–22



"Little did Belshazzar think that an unseen Watcher beheld his idolatrous revelry. But there is nothing said or done that is not recorded on the books of heaven. The mystic characters traced by the bloodless hand testify that God is a witness to all we do, and that He is dishonored by feasting and reveling. We cannot hide anything from God. We cannot escape from our accountability to Him. Wherever we are and whatever we do, we are responsible to Him whose we are by creation and by redemption. —Manuscript 50, 1893." — *Temperance*, p. 49

End of part 1. Part 2 will be in the next issue of the Messenger

**Golden Kayawa Hingabantu
Zambia**



KATHERINE VON BORA: CALLED TO BE DIFFERENT

Tiny Katherine von Bora was only five years old when her father left her at the gates of the Benedictine convent school near Brehna, Germany. Katherine's mother had died that same year, and her father soon remarried. A small daughter was too much of a burden, and her father felt that in the convent she would at least receive a good education. Once there, her options were few. So, although Katherine never aspired to the secluded life of a nun, five years later she was transferred to a convent in nearby Nimbschen and made her vows when she was only sixteen years old.

Even though she hadn't planned for a life of seclusion, poverty, and chastity, Katherine submitted herself to the rigorous routine of sixteenth-century life in the convent. She received the education of a teacher, learning some Latin at a time when many women could not even read in their native tongue. She learned to cook and garden and sew. She said her prayers and attended church services each day.

When Katherine was in her early twenties, the preaching of a man named Martin Luther began to penetrate the convent walls. Luther was a former monk himself and had left the monastery when he came to believe through his personal study of God's Word that men were saved by faith through grace alone, and not by works of penance or good deeds or service to the church. His preaching in sixteenth-century Germany was causing quite a stir. The German church was still under the authority of the Roman Catholic pope, and Luther's words stirred not only those within the church, but the common men and women of Germany as well.

When Katherine and her friends began to consider his words, they appealed to Luther for help in leaving the convent. Many had not come to the service of the

church under their own free will and felt it was holding them prisoner. Luther even wrote a letter to several nuns about their plight: "Dear sisters . . . You are correct that there are two reasons for which life at the convent and vows may be forsaken: the one is where men's laws and life within the order are being forced, where there is no free choice, where it is put upon the conscience as a burden. In such cases it is time to run away, leaving the convent and all it entails behind."

So, on Easter eve in 1523, Katherine and eleven other nuns escaped from the convent at Nimbschen, hidden in the wagon of a merchant named Leonard Koppe. Three of the nuns were returned to the homes of their families. The other nine were taken to Wittenburg, where Luther himself hoped to find them all homes, husbands, or positions of some sort. In the end, all were provided for except one. Her name was Katherine von Bora.



Two years after her escape, Katherine was living still with a family in Wittenburg as a domestic servant. She had fallen in love with a young man who promised to marry her, but his parents objected to her status as a

former nun. She was brokenhearted. Luther proposed another arranged marriage for her, but she refused the man he suggested. She wasn't trying to be difficult, although Luther may have thought so. He found her somewhat arrogant when in fact she was embarrassed by her awkward position.

Still, when a friend of Luther's came to visit, she hinted to him that Luther might be an acceptable husband to her—partly because it seemed so unlikely, and Luther's age (almost sixteen years her senior) suggested he might never marry.

When Luther heard her words, he did not take Katherine's suggestion seriously but spoke of it to his parents when he went home to visit. Instead of laughing about it, his father seized upon the idea. His son was not getting any younger, and the elder Luther hinted that he might like to have some grandchildren!

What started as a kind of jest became more and more attractive to Luther. By marrying Katherine, he could give her the status she needed, give testimony to his own faith, spite the pope, and give his father comfort in his old age.

So the former monk, Luther, took as his wife the former nun, Katherine, on the thirteenth of June 1525. To Leonard Koppe, the man who smuggled his wife-to-be out of the convent, Luther wrote this letter of invitation: "I am going to get married. God likes to work miracles and to make a fool of the world. You must come to the wedding." He did.

Some serve God by remaining single for life. Others serve God by marrying. Martin and Katherine made a life together that impacted many lives for God. They moved into a rundown Augustinian cloister in Witten-

burg, which Katherine made into a home. Luther never cared for money and did not manage it well. Katherine did, and she kept their household supplied and her husband fortified. They had six children and took in several nieces and nephews. Students at the nearby university boarded with them, and there were often thirty or more people living together under their roof.

Katherine ably ran their home, and Luther preached, wrote, and taught the Bible at the university and in the church. Luther spoke of his wife often and with great affection; he called her "my rib" and just as often "my lord Katie." With Katherine, Luther saw marriage as a school for character, saying that he learned more about grace from it than from all his studies, books, and sermons. He paid her perhaps the highest tribute when he called Paul's letter to the Galatians about freedom "my Katherine von Bora."

Theirs may not have been a love match from the beginning, but their love grew. What began as

fondness and gratitude for companionship increased greatly through the years, and Martin and Katherine's marriage became the pattern for couples in the ministry together for hundreds of years hence. Without Katherine's love and strong support, Luther could not have served God as effectively as he did. And without Luther's belief in and love for his wife, Katherine's life would have been a shadow of what it was. "Katie," he told her, "you have married an honest man who loves you; you are an empress."

Both of them regarded their marriage as a vocation as serious and glorious and binding as their vows to the church had once been. Luther would change the church forever, but it was Katherine von Bora who



**LUANGWA FIELD HEADQUARTERS,
ZAMBIA**



Around the World

BROTHER JOEL MSISKA



SINGERS AT CAMP MEETING S.E. FIELD ZAMBIA 2010



BELIEVERS AT NDIRANDE LOCAL CHURCH IN MALAWI

AMERICAN UNION CONFERENCE AUGUST 2011

