



The Reformation
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“God is a lover of the beautiful; and in the world which He has fitted up for us He has not only given us everything necessary for our comfort, but He has filled the heavens and the earth with beauty. We see His love and care in the rich fields of autumn, and His smile in the glad sunshine.” –*Lift Him Up*, p. 67

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.

ABOUT THE COVER

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Maranatha—

Come Lord Jesus

If one does a Google search on End of the World 2012, you will find there are 1,560,000,000 websites with that reference. The whole world is talking about the year 2012 being the end of the world, with numerous signs mentioned as proof that this event will take place.

According to the Mayan Long Count Calendar, on December 21st, 2012, the earth will be destroyed by an asteroid. Recent movies depict the end of the world with earthquakes, mountains sinking, islands vanishing, tidal waves, and asteroids bombarding the earth.

There are many civilizations which have predicted the end of the world occurring in 2012. These include the Mayans, Aztecs, Chinese, Ancient Egyptians, Hindus, the Native American Hopi Indians, plus Islamic predictions in the Quran.

The Jehovah's Witnesses have set many dates for the end of the world: 1914, 1918, 1925, 1938, 1941, 1942, 1975 and 1984.

Harold Camping of California, a false prophet, originally predicted that the world would end in 1994. He then made a further prediction that the world would end on May 21, 2011. He raised \$100 million to finance 5,000 billboards across the United States and 30 other countries advertising the end of the world. Millions of copies of free books and pamphlets were also circulated. After the date passed, and Christ did not come, he admitted in a private interview that he no longer believed that anyone could set a date for Christ's return, and that his attempt to predict a date was "sinful."

If we look at the world around us, it appears that natural disasters are on the increase, with almost daily occurrences of deadly floods, life-shattering earthquakes

and killer hurricanes. The United States and the Caribbean countries are just recovering from Hurricane Sandy, which is reported to be the most destructive hurricane in history in terms of damage to property. There were a number of lives lost, with damage estimates well over \$10 billion dollars. And these are just early days. Costs are expected to mount exponentially, with severe impact on the United States economy. Many people lost everything in the hurricane.

The bad news is that these types of disasters will only become more frequent and increase in their intensity as we approach the end of time as we know it. Jesus very clearly taught us that earthquakes and famines are only the beginning of birth pains, as we read in Matthew 24:8, "All these are the beginning of sorrows." Coupled with natural disasters, we will see an acceleration of unbridled evil as we get closer to Christ's second coming.

President Obama of the United States promotes the new morality, marriage between two men or two women. In news from Mexico, the drug cartels killed and mutilated 49 people.

HOW WILL WE SURVIVE THE APOCALYPSE?

Will Jesus come again? "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3. This is a literal, personal and imminent promise to His people. This is good news for modern man, and hope for the future.

Why is Jesus coming back? He is coming to make things right in this old world. He is coming to put an end to strife and war. He is coming to close the hospitals, to

put doctors and nurses out of business. Jesus is also coming to put all the preachers out of work.

Our world will increasingly experience bad things, that will range from cataclysmic natural disasters to an outpouring of evil like we have never seen before.

The Bible gives us warnings about what to expect in the last days before Christ comes. There will be false teachings and a false sense of security. The Bible, however, tells us that Christ will come at a time when the world least expects Him. “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 1 Thessalonians 5:3. He comes as a thief in the night or as a surprise—but only to the wicked who have not looked for, nor prepared for His coming.

Satan will even try to impersonate Christ and many of the world will believe. We are warned to watch out for these deceptions. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” 2 Corinthians 11:14

No man knows the day and hour of Christ’s return. Jesus forbids setting dates for His return. We know that Jesus is coming, as He has promised, but we do not know the exact time.

There are over 2,000 references to Jesus’ Second Coming in the Bible. For every prophecy concerning the first coming of Christ, there are eight prophecies that look forward to His Second Coming.

Jesus will come at a time when the world is totally unprepared. “But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.” Matthew 24:37–41

Here, Jesus makes a very simple comparison to the days of Noah. What was it like in Noah’s day? It was “business as usual.” While Noah patiently built the ark

and warned people of the coming judgment, people laughed at him and said, “It will never happen.” Noah’s day was like our day—an age of skepticism and moral relativity. The more Noah preached, the more his contemporaries mocked him. They refused to believe that anything like a worldwide flood was possible.

For years and years, life continued without a change. With each passing day Noah looked like more of a fool than the day before. But finally the heavens opened and the rains came down. When Noah entered the ark, I’m sure his friends pounded on the door and said, “Noah, we’re sorry. You were right and we were wrong. Open up. Let us in.” But it was too late.

In the year A.D. 79, Mt. Vesuvius erupted violently, completely destroying the Italian city of Pompeii and its surrounding suburbs. The May 1984 edition of the *National Geographic* shows, through colour photos and drawings, the swift and terrible destruction that wiped out the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in A.D. 79. The explosion of Mt. Vesuvius was so sudden, the residents were killed while in their routine: men and women were at the market, the rich in their luxurious baths, slaves at toil. They died amid volcanic ash and superheated gases. Even family pets suffered the same quick and final fate. It takes little imagination to picture the panic of that terrible day. The saddest part is that these people did not have to die.



Scientists confirm what ancient Romans writers recorded—weeks of rumblings and shakings preceded the actual explosion. Even an ominous plume of smoke was clearly visible from the mountain, days before the eruption. If only they had been able to read and respond to Vesuvius’ warning!

There are similar “rumblings” in our world: warfare, earthquakes, the nuclear threat, economic woes, and a breakdown of the family and moral standards. While not exactly new, these things do point to a coming Day of Judgment (Matthew 24). People need not be caught unprepared. God warns and provides an escape to those who will heed the rumblings.

According to Matthew’s account of the Lord’s message, he summarized all of the above as merely “the begin-

ning of sorrows” (literally—birth pangs). Matthew 24:8. The distinction of labour pains is that as the time of the birth gets closer the pain increases; the intensity grows and the frequency grows. The point being that, although the characteristics that Jesus points out can be seen in every age, they will increase and intensify as the time of Jesus’ coming draws near.

Our work today is to preach the 3 angels’ messages to the world, to be repairers of the breach, to call the attention to the world to the truth of the gospel, including the imminent return of Christ. God wants everyone to be saved. He wants to give us and those who will receive this message an opportunity to respond. This is a moral message, not a message of doom, but hope, not a message that calls people to store such things as dried fruits, water purifiers, and of needing weapons, and hideouts, it is about getting ourselves right with God. It is about restoring God’s law and as God’s instrumentality; point out the decision of morality just before Christ’s second coming. It is in reality about preaching this last message of mercy, about being ready. We therefore are not to be fearful of the future, but this message is to fill us with hope and to call people out of darkness into His marvelous light.

God wants everyone to be saved. He wants to give everyone a chance to hear about His soon coming. He wants to give each of us an opportunity to respond.

We are to be ready today. “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 24:44

Throw sin as far as you can throw it and kneel at Jesus’ feet. We need to “Remember Lot’s wife.” Lot moved closer and closer to sinful Sodom. This was the wrong place to live. She moved into Sodom, and Sodom moved into her.

“And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.” Genesis 19:17.

Was it because she disbelieved the call of God to get out? No. She started to leave,

but with no eagerness. She was reluctant to leave her home, her material things. With death at her heels she lingered. She loved the world more than she loved God. She believed the truth; she knew what she ought to do; she wanted to be saved—yet she lingered. Millions have lingered until the best years of their lives have gone. Lot’s wife looked back, and she died. She disobeyed the commandment of the Lord. God means what He says. There is no excuse for worldliness, covetousness, or any sin.

Obeys, even if you don’t understand why. The story is told of a railroad worker who lived near the tracks. He was off duty that day. He looked up from his work in the yard to see his little boy, four and a half, playing on the tracks. And a train was thundering toward him!

There was no time to reach him and snatch him away. He called, but Johnny did not hear. Then he called out at the top of his voice, for there was time for nothing else, “Johnny, lie down and don’t move!”

Johnny obeyed instantly, without even turning to look his father’s way. The train rushed over the motionless boy. And after the caboose had passed, the father gathered him up, his little heart pounding—but safe!

There was nothing in Johnny’s short experience, his few years, to qualify him to understand his father’s strange command. But he didn’t question it. He didn’t ask why. He didn’t delay. His father had spoken. And that was enough for him!

The offense of looking back indicates a divided heart. Two voices were competing for the allegiance of Lot’s wife—the voice of God calling her to liberty, purity and salvation; the other voice of popularity and pleasure, the voice of Sodom. Get out or stay in. No neutrality. Choose right now what you will do. Those who look back will perish with the things they loved more than they loved God.

Look to Christ and don’t look back. He loves you and wants to save you. Amen.

Henry Dering





God Will Turn Your Scars Into Stars

A little boy invited his mother to attend his elementary school's first teacher-parent conference. To the little boy's dismay, she said she would go. This would be the first time that his classmates and teacher would meet his mother and he was embarrassed by her appearance. Although she was a beautiful woman, there was a severe scar that covered nearly the entire right side of her face. The boy never wanted to talk about why or how she got the scar.

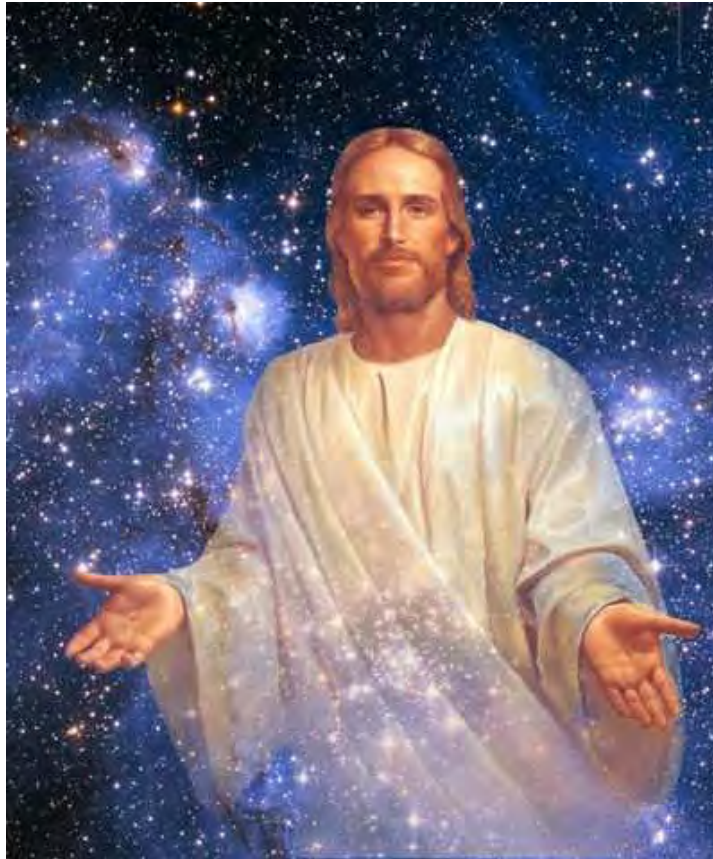
At the conference, the people were impressed by the kindness and natural beauty of his mother, despite the scar, but the little boy was still embarrassed and hid himself from everyone. He did, however, get within earshot of a conversation between his mother and his teacher, and heard them speaking. "How did you get the scar on your face?" the teacher asked. The mother replied, "When my son was a baby, he was in a room that caught on fire. Everyone was too afraid to go in because the fire was out of control, so I went in. As I was running toward his crib, I saw a beam coming down and I placed myself over him trying to shield him. I was knocked unconscious, but fortunately, a fireman came in and saved both of us." She touched the burned side of her face. "This scar will be permanent, but to this day, I have never regretted doing what I did." At this point, the little boy came out running towards his mother with tears in his eyes. He hugged her and felt an overwhelming sense of the sacrifice that his mother had made for him. He held her hand tightly for the rest of the day.

In a similar manner, Jesus Christ bears a scar—many scars, in fact. They are the reminder of His days full of pain and suffering on this earth. In fact, they symbolize the most terrible event in the history of the whole universe, but they also stand for Christ's unconditional mercy and love. Being raised from the dead did not erase His scars; He still bore nail prints in His hands. The Christian faith does not deny the pain, the reality of the wound, or the existence of the scars. But it's our faith that enables us to go on.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared before His disciples but they did not recognize Him. It was only when Jesus showed them His scars that they knew Him. Thomas had not been with the other disciples and that is why he said: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." John 20:25. One week later Jesus surprised the disciples again and Thomas was among them. When Thomas saw His scars they led him to say, "My Lord and my God!" John 20:28. They lead me to say the same thing. I am so thankful that something so ugly and horrible as those scars have taken on such beauty because they prove the great love that Jesus Christ had for me.

It was a hot day in the south of Florida when a young boy decided to go for a swim in the lagoon at the back of his house. Full of joy he ran out of the back door and dove into the water. His mother was observing him through a window and saw what was about to happen.

Immediately she rushed out towards her son and shouted as loud as she could. The boy heard her screaming and started swimming back to the shore but it was too late. The mother grabbed her child by his arms at the same moment that a crocodile took hold of his legs. The woman was pulling him with all her strength. The wild animal was very strong but the mother was even more determined and the love for her son was much stronger. A man heard the screaming, got to the shore with a gun, and killed the crocodile. The boy was saved, and even though his legs were badly injured, he was able



to walk again. When he got out of the trauma, a reporter asked him to show him his scars on the legs. The child raised the blanket and showed them to him. Then proudly he turned up his sleeves and said: "These are the ones you should have a look at!" Those were the signs of his mother's finger nails that had dug into his arms. "I have them because my mother didn't let go of me and saved my life."

Some of your scars are caused by your own sins, but some are God's finger prints when He grasped you with strength so that you would not fall into the claws of evil.

We all have scars, human as we are. I have a scar on my left knee which I got last year when I had a sporting accident. I had to have surgery and they fixed my knee. The operation left a scar of some centimeters in size on my leg. Every time I touch it, it reminds me of God's grace that I can walk and do sports again.

You have got your scars, some visible, some invisible, some more visible with age. Maybe hurt feelings, a broken heart, disappointment, anger or bitterness left a sign on your heart and soul. Every single one tells its own story. Your Saviour also has scars to prove His love for you. If you do not know Him, like Thomas, if you cannot believe, Jesus will graciously show you His scars "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son

of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." John 20:31. If you still struggle with your painful past, Jesus tells you: "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee." 2 Kings 20:5. Peter wrote that by His wounds and scars we have been healed (1 Peter 2:24). One day when Jesus will come back to this earth, these signs will still be visible for all of humanity to see. Nobody will be able to deny His sacrifice on the cross. Then with love in His eyes He will take you by the hand and turn your scars into stars.

Manuela Di Franca

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CORRECTION: In the article, "Faith In Your Daily Life" in the November 2012 Messenger, the subject heading "PEACEMAKER" should have read "PACEMAKER." We apologize if this has caused any confusion in the author's intent because of this error by IMS Publishing.



Thy Will be Done

In His prayer to His Father, Jesus spoke these words in the end, “Thy will be done.” Jesus was facing a terrible ordeal that same night. Gladly He would have avoided it, but the will of His Father was more important to Him than His own comfort. How often do we pray and ask many things from God, but forget to add in the end, “Thy will be done.”

When you became a Christian you joined the army of Christ to fight against the powers of evil, against sin and corruption, against selfishness and pride, against the love of the world.

Only a few Christians truly understand the terrible warfare that is going on for their souls and for the souls of every person that is born into this world. Satan is a terrible enemy of God’s children. Very few even among professed Christians escape his deceptions. If he could deceive the holy angels in heaven, can he not also deceive us, especially after six thousand years of experience in deceiving people?

Jesus met a man with an unclean spirit. “And when He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. Who had his dwelling place among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped Him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure Thee by God, that Thou torment me not. For He said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And He asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.” Mark 5:2–9

Satan sent a legion of evil angels to keep this man a prisoner. He was in a hopeless condition. Alone he could not have freed himself. “The same evil spirit that tempted Christ in the wilderness, and that possessed the maniac of Capernaum, controlled the unbelieving Jews. But with them he assumed an air of piety, seeking to deceive them as to their motives in rejecting the Saviour. Their condition was more hopeless than that of the demoniac, for they felt no need of Christ and were therefore held fast under the power of Satan.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 256

How did these Jews come under Satan’s control while believing that they were serving God?

Sister White writes, “It is not only by resistance but by neglect that the soul is destroyed.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 323

They did not deliberately choose the service of the kingdom of darkness, but by neglect, they did not ally themselves with the kingdom of light.

Unless we are vitally connected with Christ we cannot resist Satan and the effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin.

“The hearts of many are at war with God. They are not subject to His law. Only as they shall come into harmony with the rule of His government, can Christ be of any avail to them. They may talk of Christ as their Saviour, but He will finally say to them, I knew you not.” — *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 239

Paul did not know that he was fighting against God and His people. He thought that he was doing service for God in persecuting the Christians. So great can be the deception with Christians even today. In the name of religion, terrible crimes have been done. Millions of people have been killed in the name of God. When legions of evil spirits control the religious leaders, we can

only expect hatred, confusion and false doctrines.

Sister White wrote that, by neglect the soul is destroyed. Neglecting prayer, Bible study, and also missionary work, can destroy our soul.

Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16:10

By willful unfaithfulness in small things we lose the power of God and then we will be unfaithful also in the greater things. Even our eating habits can led us in the wrong direction. When we ask of ourselves what we like to eat, we may ignore the health reform that God has given us.

In anything that we want to think, speak or do, we must ask the Lord, "Is this Thy will?" We should tremble at the thought that our own will would be done. To do our will is selfishness, and also it is sin.

Sister White wrote, "The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God and being clothed with humility, possessing that love that is pure, peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of gentleness and good fruits, is not an easy attainment." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 106–107

Satan was very successful in heaven, deceiving the angels by offering them the freedom of will. No more doing God's will but their own; and this great deception he is using in the world today.

Satan is presenting an easier religion, one that does not require self-denial nor cross-bearing. He is successful in offering people heaven without the bitter cup that Jesus is offering to us.

Jesus will ask of everyone, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" To love Jesus more than these, means all those things that we liked before in life. Now for Jesus we give them up. We are in a war against ourselves, against our desires, appetites, and passions. Our reformation means complete surrender of our will to God.

"Wrongs cannot be righted, nor can reformations in character be made by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Sanctification is the work, not of a day, or of a

year, but of a lifetime." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 312–313

Our efforts towards holiness must be continuous, and persevering. We must war against temptations from without and within. All can overcome in this battle if they put all their body, mind, and soul into it. Life itself is less important than obedience to God, while a life of self-indulgence leads to death. To young people, Sister White wrote, "Beacons of warning are placed on every side in the pathway of life to prevent men from approaching the dangerous, forbidden ground; but, notwithstanding this, multitudes choose the fatal path, contrary to the dictates of reason, regardless of God's law, and in defiance of His vengeance.

"A little time spent in sowing your wild oats, dear young friends, will produce a crop that will embitter your whole life; an hour of thoughtlessness, once yielding to temptation, may turn the whole current of your life in the wrong direction. You can have but one youth; make that useful. When once you have passed over the

ground, you can never return to rectify your mistakes. He who refuses to connect with God, and puts himself in the way of temptation will surely fall. God is testing every youth." – *Adventist Home*, p. 59

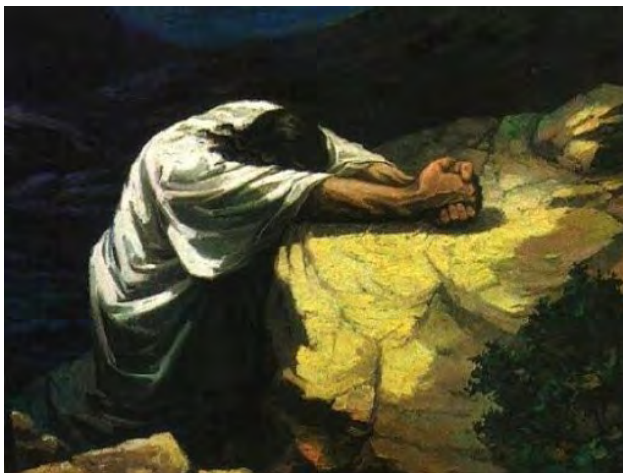
It is not important what I want, what I love, or desire, they all have been crucified; the only important thing is to do God's will even if it kills me. This is the victory that we

must gain.

When Satan offered to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, He despised this offer. Jesus overcame by fasting and prayer, and we can do the same. Then we can say with Paul, "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

All who are willing to give up their own will and do the will of God will have a crown that Jesus will place upon their heads, which no one can take away. Amen.

Timo Martin





There is Hope.

Hope, Even For You!

Many people get discouraged in their Christian experience and they feel like there is no hope for them, because they repeat the same mistakes until Satan comes and says, “You are not forgiven. Look at your life, it is a disaster. Don’t you see how far you are from the standard of God? God has forsaken you,” Satan whispers to those people who fall into sin. For whatever reason, have you ever felt that way in your life? Have you ever felt very much alone? Have you ever felt that you are fighting the battle of your life, alone? Fighting the struggle of life, alone? Have you ever felt that you had to navigate through life alone? If this is your case, I would like to suggest to you that you are not alone; you are not on your own. As I traveled through many parts of the world, I could see people in this situation—people in despair, who try to get rid of one bad habit or another and they cannot. They try to find meaning in their lives, but they do not find it. People who are oppressed by evil spirits and evil thoughts—crying out in their despair, and no one hears them.

I would like to share with you some powerful testimonies from the Bible, wherein you will see how God’s love changes people and gives them a chance to win the battle and be prepared for Jesus’ second coming. I would like to share with you some testimonies of people who believed that they were not on their own. You and I today, if we come to Jesus with a contrite heart and open mind to receive His forgiveness, accepting the covenant God wants to make with us, thus keeping, through the power of the Holy Spirit, His commandments and fulfil the plan He has for each one of us, then we are building on the Rock of salvation daily; and the experience we get from such a relationship with Jesus will make us able to stand firm for the truth no

matter what will happen in our lives. As we do the will of our Father in heaven, our lives are transformed into His image; and the more we walk with Jesus the more we will be like Jesus—doing His will and showing other people the way to heaven. The Bible says in Psalm 77:13 “Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary.” Jesus, in order to forgive us, needs only one second; but to sanctify us, He needs the rest of our lives. We can learn many lessons from the Hebrew’s sanctuary that can be applied in our spiritual lives.

I have seen people who got lost on the way to salvation, and I asked myself, why did it happen? How can we avoid such dramatic situations? Well, I have found the answer in the Bible. There was a man, his name was Asaph, and he faced a problem. Here was his problem—He could not understand why the wicked people always seem to prosper. Come with me to the book of Psalms. This Psalm was written by Asaph. I want you to notice how he expressed himself in the beginning and how he acted at the end. Let us read Psalm 73:3, “For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.” And later in the chapter he says, “Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence.” Psalm 73:12–13. In other words, what use is it to cleanse your life—to be righteous because the wicked prosper and the righteous are chasten? But now I want you to notice the answer he found to the problem. “Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.” Psalm 73:17

There was something in the Hebrew sanctuary that explains that it is good to cleanse your heart from all un-

righteousness and let the wicked be rewarded when Jesus comes. The Hebrew sanctuary has the explanations that many times we need to face in this life. The only way to understand the plan of salvation is to study the sanctuary and its details. Like Asaph, unless we go to the sanctuary and study every detail connected with its services and their application to our spiritual life, we won't be able to understand how Jesus saves us from sin.

Sin is the most horrible thing in God's sight; it took the life of His dear **and** beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Sin destroys us both inside and out, and Jesus wants to cleanse us. Will you allow Him to do so? There were people in the Old Testament who we find forgiven, although they have committed great mistakes in their lives.

For instance, let us talk about Moses—the man that was declared in the Bible a meek and humble man, and a great prophet and leader. He killed a man but he repented of his sins and his life was really what God wanted it to be. Notice what the Bible has to say about Moses. “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.” Numbers 12:3. What do you think of when you think of Moses? God is not impressed with all our credentials or accomplishments; He is interested in our character. He sees the root of our motives and He rightly discerns our hearts. So what did God see when He looked into the heart of Moses? According to the Scripture above, **He saw a meek and humble man**, the most humble man on the face of the earth. Can Moses' life speak to any of us today?

I would like to talk a little bit about this characteristic, namely humility. It is so important in our Christian life because Jesus said in Matthew 5:5, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” Moses said in Exodus 33:13, “Now, therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me now Thy way, **tht** I may know Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight: and consider that this nation is Thy people.” You see, my friend, Moses understood the character of God, and he found mercy and favour in God's sight—not because Moses deserved it, but because he was willing to humble himself before God. He said, if You are pleased with me, teach me Your ways.”

Let me ask you a question—Are you willing to receive teaching and instruction from God through His servants? Moses was indeed a good student. What about you, my dear brother or sister, my friend?

Asaph, when he didn't understand why the wicked people prosper and the righteous in his sight are chastened, he went to the sanctuary lessons and then he saw everything different than before. Why? Because the terminology of the sanctuary is found in almost all of the Bible. The plan of salvation starts there, and a right understanding of the sanctuary makes us able to avoid unpleasant situations and defends us from error and false doctrine. It gives us power and strong roots in the truth. Moses understood God's plan for him and his life was changed.

Deuteronomy 7:9 states: “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy.” I like these words that Moses uses. “He is God, the faithful God.” You see, Moses knew God and he experienced His mercy and love; that is why he could speak so much about the faithful God. The God of heaven is steadfast and His promises are rock solid; they never let us down.



Think about Moses when he was looking back over his life. Moses was cursed at birth. Pharaoh passed a decree that every male child would be killed at birth, but

God reached out and kept Moses in His arms and blessed his mother. She put him in a little basket, later as he looked back over his life, he remembered the hand of God that protected him when he was born; he remembered the hand of God that led Pharaoh's daughter to that river where she found the little basket. He remembered the hand of God that guided him for the first twelve years of his life at his mother's knees. He remembered the hand of God that guided him there at the Egyptian court; the hand of God that guided him in the wilderness; the hand of God that guided him throughout all of his life—when he led the children of Israel through the desert; the hand of God that caused manna to fall from heaven; the hand of God that guided him by a pillar of fire by night and sheltered him with a cloud by day. Moses remembered God. So Moses looks back over his life and he says, “God is faithful.” God is there in the sorrow and joy of life. He is there for you—just for you, my friend.

“He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.” Deuteronomy 32:4. What words, what encouragement, my friends, to have such a great God, as is the God of Moses? He may be your God too, if you accept His teaching and let Him transform your life. Face life with courage, face life with hope, face life with joy, face life with optimism because the God who took Moses’ hand will take your hand and bring you into His joy and salvation. In life, all the evil forces in the world cannot destroy God’s plan for your life. They cannot. When you put your life in the hand of God, God will accomplish His purpose in your life. Many times I have seen how Jesus lifted me up and gave me hope.

When we give our lives to Jesus Christ, it doesn’t mean that there will not be disappointments in our lives; it doesn’t mean that we would never get sick; it doesn’t mean that our children would never die in an accident. What it does mean is that in the joys and sorrows of life He is there.

Do you remember that amazing story about a man who dreamed he was walking along the beach with his Lord?

Many scenes from his life flashed across the sky. In each scene, he saw two set of footprints as he was walking down the beach. And this man said, “Lord, You were so wonderful. You were walking beside me. One set of footprints is mine, Lord, the other were Yours.” And then this man looks at periods of his life that he went through real



trials—very, very difficult times—times that ripped his life apart, times of loneliness and sorrow and defeat and sickness. At those times he saw only one set of footprints and he looks up at his Lord and he said, “Lord, where were You? Where were You when there was only one set of footprints? And the Lord said, “Look, My child, look a little bit closer because those set of footprints are deep. I was not walking by your side then, I was carrying you. I was carrying you then.” That’s the way God feels about you; truly that’s the way He feels about you. Moms and Dads don’t have more love than God has for you. There is a place in God’s heart just for you; there is a place, just for you.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:37, “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” Friend, do you need Jesus right now? Do you

have a burden you would like to give to Him? Do you need forgiveness? Do you want a new beginning with Jesus? He cares for you and He wants to embrace you right there where you are. Would you allow Him to take your hand and guide you through this life? I tell you, there will be a great change if you let Him in your life. I experience it daily and just because of that I would like to encourage you, no matter what your past is, no matter what people say about you. What does matter is now, this present time and this appeal Jesus is making to you. There is still an open door in heaven where Jesus ministers as yours and my Advocate. Now there is taking place, right now, the judgement; it could be taking place and you and I need Jesus’ blood to cleanse us from our sins.

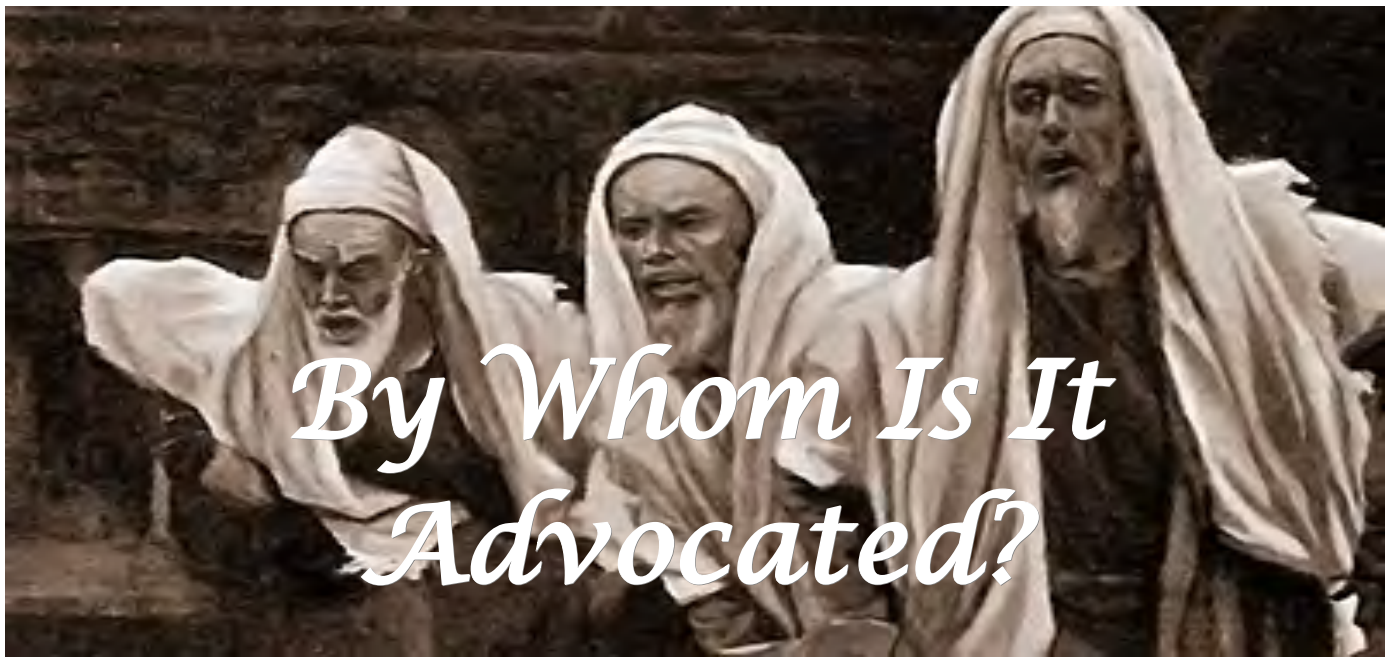
The word of God declares: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Hebrews 8:1–2. In addition, the last disciple of Jesus, the man who was transformed in the likeness of Jesus, wrote in his first epistle, 1 John 2:1, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” You see, my friend, such beautiful words of encouragement come from Jesus. He loves you so much. He demonstrated His love towards humanity. Why not right now say to Him these words with me. “Father in heaven, I acknowledge my lack of faith, I just want to let You into my life. Help me, Lord. Take my hand and lead me through this life until my last breath. This I pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Brother, Sister, Friend, I tell you, this name that is so sweet, for those who accept His great sacrifice on the cross, that cross where Jesus paid all my debt can be called upon at any time.

In closing, I turn to Isaiah 43:4 which states: “Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee.” “Our God shall come.” Psalm 50:3. As well, in Psalm 50:15 “Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” As a matter of fact, not only in the day of trouble should we call upon God but also when everything is going well in our lives.

May God help us to understand His will and may His plans be fulfilled in our lives as we approach the end of time is my wish and prayer for all of us. Amen.

*In Christ,
Nicholas Anca*



By Whom Is It Advocated?

"I am that bread of life." John 7:48. Have any of the Scribes or Pharisees believed on Him? "Those to whom the message of truth is spoken seldom ask, 'Is it true?' but, 'By whom is it advocated?' Multitudes estimate it by the numbers who accept it; and the question is still asked, 'Have any of the learned men or religious leaders believed?' Men are no more favorable to real godliness now than in the days of Christ. They are just as intently seeking earthly good, to the neglect of eternal riches; and it is not an argument against the truth, that large numbers are not ready to accept it, or that it is not received by the world's great men, or even by the religious leaders." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 459 Is this the criteria whereby we can see if something is true or right—by asking who is advocating it?

What if our spiritual forefathers had accepted what the Seventh-Day Adventist General Conference were saying: "Have any of the leading men of the General Conference accepted this weird doctrine of being a Conscientious Objector?" Can we put our faith or trust in our church organization to save us? Like something can only be true if our own organization endorses it? What did Sister White do time after time with the General Conference leaders and the corporate entity of Adventism? And on the other side, people seldom ask about the message if they can dismiss it by attacking those who advocate it.

Slander—to blacken the reputation of someone. There are some of us in our church who seem to believe that as long as he has left our church, then slander is okay. . . . It is okay if he has left our church, isn't it? "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful,

and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Titus 3:2–8 We are to speak evil of no man, the Bible says.

"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Matthew 7:2–3. Be careful how you treat others—it is going to be measured back to you again.

We have the Seventh-Day Adventist example before us of what they have done with the writings of Ellen G. White. They have tried to trademark them, so that no one can use them on one hand; and on the other, they say it is only right if it comes out of their church organization.

"When we condemn or criticise others, we declare ourselves guilty; in the very act of judging them, we are breaking God's law. Our own character is revealed in the way we treat others. He who is censorious, self-sufficient, in judging others, shows that he himself is devoid of the grace of Christ. It is those that are blinded by the enemy to their own defects of character who are forward in criticising and condemning. Their own lack of the spirit of forbearance and love leads them to make a

world of an atom. He who is watching for the defects of others, ready to accuse and condemn, is doing the same work in which Satan has been engaged since his rebellion. He links himself with him who is the accuser of the brethren.

“Thus in accusing others we are passing sentence upon ourselves, and God declares that this sentence shall stand. Remember this, you who are so ready to criticise others. The sentence which you think to pass upon them you are passing upon yourselves, and thus it stands in the records of heaven. God accepts the sentence, your own verdict against yourselves. Are you willing to abide by it in the final day?” —*Signs of the Times*, March 21, 1892

“For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” John 5:22, 27

“God declares that He has committed all judgment unto the Son. Not to finite men, who can judge only from the outward appearance, but to Him who reads the heart, who knows the secret springs of action, and who deals tenderly and compassionately,—to Him it is given to decide the case of every soul. And those who take upon themselves the work of passing judgment or pronouncing upon the motives of another, are assuming the prerogatives of the Son of God. Are they not thus also linking themselves with Satan, the usurper?” —*Signs of the Times*, March 21, 1892

Can we be looking at our own faults if we are focused on the faults of others? How did the Pharisees lose Christ? Wasn't it this very way? “Those who allow prejudice to bar the mind against the reception of truth cannot receive the divine enlightenment. Yet, when a view of Scripture is presented, many do not ask, Is it True,—in harmony with God's word? but, By whom is it advocated? and unless it comes through the very channel that pleases them, they do not accept it. So thoroughly satisfied are they with their own ideas, that they will not examine the Scripture evidence, with a desire to learn, but refuse to be interested, merely because of their prejudices.

“The Lord often works where we least expect Him; He surprises us by revealing His power through instruments of His own choice, while He passes by the men to whom

we have looked as those through whom light should come. God desires us to receive the truth upon its own merits,—because it is truth.

“The Bible must not be interpreted to suit the ideas of men, however long they may have held these ideas to be true. We are not to accept the opinion of commentators as the voice of God; they were erring mortals like ourselves. God has given reasoning powers to us as well as to them. We should make the Bible its own expositor.

“All should be careful about presenting new views of Scripture before they have given these points thorough study, and are fully prepared to sustain them from the Bible. Introduce nothing that will cause dissension, without clear evidence that in it God is giving a special message for this time.

“But beware of rejecting that which is truth. The great danger with our people has been that of depending upon men, and making flesh their arm. Those who have not been in the habit of searching the Bible for themselves, or weighing evidence, have confidence in the leading men, and accept the decisions they make, and thus many will reject the very messages God sends to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them.

“No one should claim that he has all the light there is for God's people. The Lord will not tolerate this. ‘I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.’ [Revelation 3:8.] Even if all our leading men should refuse light and truth, that door will still remain open. The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time.

“Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth. Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians, and investigate the position presented, in the light of God's work, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it



were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Phariseism cherished among us.” —*Gospel Workers 1892*, p. 125–127

Do you remember Martin Luther’s example when studying the Bible—what he said about the kind of attitude we should have when it comes to studying the Bible? (Though he was very learned, yet he humbled himself like a little child).

“We should come with reverence to the study of the Bible, feeling that we are in the presence of God. All lightness and trifling should be laid aside. While some portions of the word are easily understood, the true meaning of other parts is not so readily discerned. There must be patient study and meditation, and earnest prayer. Every student, as he opens the Scriptures, should ask for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and the promise is sure, that it will be given.

“The spirit in which you come to the investigation of the Scriptures will determine the character of the assistant at your side. Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance. But if the Bible is opened with irreverence, with a feeling of self-sufficiency, if the heart is filled with prejudice, Satan is beside you, and he will set the plain statements of God’s word in a perverted light.

“There are some who indulge in levity, sarcasm, and even mockery toward those who differ with them. Others present an array of objections to any new view; and when these objections are plainly answered by the words of Scripture, they do not acknowledge the evidence presented, nor allow themselves to be convinced. —*Gospel Workers*, 92 p. 127–128

We must be very careful when it comes to examining truth—and not gauge it by whom it is advocated, merely. We also have to be careful not to criticize or condemn others that have left our church organization—feeling free to slander or blacken their characters, just because they have left us—perhaps, especially if they have left us—for how could they ever find their way back to the truth, if we only condemn and slander them?

In fact, when we dwell upon the faults and errors of others at any time, we are really in great danger—why? Because then we can’t see our own faults and errors—and those are the very ones that we have to focus upon, isn’t it? (In fact, the Spirit of Prophecy says it is better for us to see ten of our own faults, than one of someone else’s faults).

“I then saw a company pressing through the crowd with

their eyes intently fixed upon the heavenly crown. As they earnestly urged their way through the disorderly crowd, angels attended them, and made room for them to advance. As they neared the heavenly crown, the light emanating from it shone upon them and around them, dispelling their darkness, and growing clearer and brighter, until they seemed to be transformed, and resembled the angels. They cast not one lingering look upon the earthly crown. Those who were in pursuit of the earthly, mocked them, and threw black balls after them. These did them no injury while their eyes were fixed upon the heavenly crown, but those who turned their attention to the black balls were stained with them. The following scripture was presented before me: ‘Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.’ Matthew 6:19-24

“Then that which I had seen was explained to me as follows: The multitude who were so eagerly striving for the earthly crown, were those who love this world’s treasure, and are deceived and flattered with its short-lived attractions. Some, I saw, who profess to be the followers of Jesus, are so ambitious to obtain earthly treasures that they lose their love for heaven, act like the world, and are accounted of God as of the world. They profess to be seeking an immortal crown, a treasure in the heavens; but their interest and principal study is to acquire earthly treasures. Those who have their treasures in this world, and love their riches, cannot love Jesus.” —*Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White*, p. 163–164

Couldn’t we also say that these treasures include the power that this world has to offer? The Jews did not recognize Jesus when He came to them, because the Scribes and Pharisees would not accept Him. Is it any different for us today? How many people are willing to accept truth in any guise in which it comes to them? Only those who will be saved, isn’t it? Amen.

Jerry Eaton



John or Judas?

We know John as one of the disciples of Jesus, a brother of James, son of Zebedee (Matthew 10:2). They were surnamed Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder (Mark 3:17). John is distinguished above the other apostles as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” John 21:20 (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 292).

Just as John, we know Judas as one of the disciples of Jesus. Judas was the son of Simon (John 12:4; 13:2), or of Simon Iscariot. The term “Iscariot” is used to distinguish Judas from the other disciple named Judas (Luke 6:16; John 14:22). “Judas Iscariot was from Kerioth, in southern Judah. Thus, Judas was a Judean, the only one of the Twelve who was not from Galilee.” *The Reformation Messenger*, May 2006, vol. 13, No. 5, p.3. We know Judas as a traitor, the one who betrayed the Lord Jesus.

Do we not know these two disciples already? Why then talk about them? Well, “John and Judas are representatives of those who profess to be Christ’s followers.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 558. Thus, it is either that you are like John or Judas, or indeed, end up like John or Judas.

Among the most inspiring chapters in the Sacred Writings on the subject of sanctification, with a “case study” is “Transformed by Grace” found in the book *The Acts of the Apostles*. Those who desire a sanctified life can not afford reading only a portion of that chapter. Of course, the whole story of John in that book begins two chapters before the one aforementioned. It is continued in the last three chapters of the book. Interestingly, *The Desire of Ages* devotes a full chapter on Judas. It is mainly in light of these two cited chapters, that we study this solemn lesson.

As noted, John and Judas were both connected to, or with Jesus, as disciples. When they joined Him they both had marked defects of character, many besetting sins within them and also bad, unsanctified habits, etc.

“John did not naturally possess the loveliness of character that his later experience revealed. By nature he had serious defects. He was not only proud, self-assertive, and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injury. He and his brother were called ‘sons of thunder.’ Evil temper, the desire for revenge, the spirit of criticism, were all in the beloved disciple.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 539

“And when His disciples James and John saw this they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?” But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Luke 9:54–56

John and his brother, through their mother, presented a petition:

“Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” Matthew 20:21–22

“And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followed not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is on our part. . . And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.” Mark 9:38–40, 42

In all the cases the requests or reports were met with stern rebuke from the Saviour. These events revealed John’s impure character.

Judas also had an imperfect character like John. Let us read some portions from the book *The Desire of Ages*:

“The small sums that came into his hands were a continual temptation. Often when he did a little service for Christ, or devoted time to religious purposes, he paid himself out of this meager fund. In his own eyes these pretexts served to excuse his action; but in God's sight he was a thief.” p. 717

“Judas was treasurer for the disciples, and from their little store he had secretly drawn for his own use, thus narrowing down their resources to a meager pittance. He was eager to put into the bag all that he could obtain.” p. 559

“Judas had naturally a strong love for money.” p. 716

When Mary performed the lovely gesture of anointing Jesus with oil, he tried to secure its value if it were sold under the pretext of helping the poor. But Jesus rebuked him saying: “For the poor always ye have with you; but Me ye have not always.” John 12:8

It is fearful that a similar history is repeating itself again. Today some members in the church still rob God in tithes and offerings! Others engage in exacting business, making more profit than required!

“Notwithstanding the Savior's own teaching, Judas was continually advancing the idea that Christ would reign as king in Jerusalem. . .” “He hoped to secure a high position in the new kingdom. . .” “The desire for supremacy had taken hold of the disciples. “When the disciples entered the supper room, their hearts were full of resentful feelings. Judas pressed next to Christ on the left side; John was on the right. . .” “In choosing his position at table, [he] had tried to place himself first . . .” “If there was a highest place, Judas was determined to have it, and that place was thought to be next to Christ. . .” “At the feeding of the five thousand he tried to bring this about.

Further, “he would introduce texts of Scripture that had no connection with the truths Christ was presenting. These texts, separated from their connection, perplexed the disciples, and increased the discouragement that was constantly pressing upon them.” –*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 718, 293, 644, 645, 718, 719

Why did Jesus recruit and employ such people in His

service? Well, as we are about to read, that is the principle of Jesus.

“God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and learn of Him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their imperfections, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image.” – *Ibid*, p.294

The opportunity to be transformed is given to everyone. Grace has been given in order for us to separate from sin.

“Like his associate, Judas professed to be a disciple of Christ, but he possessed only a form of godliness. He was not insensible to the beauty of the character of Christ; and often, as he listened to the Savior's words,

conviction came to him, but he would not humble his heart or confess his sins. By resisting the divine influence he dishonored the Master whom he professed to love. John warred earnestly against his faults; but Judas violated his conscience and yielded to temptation, fastening upon himself more securely his habits of evil. The practice of the truths that Christ taught was at variance with his desires and purposes, and he could not bring himself to yield his ideas in order to receive wisdom from heaven. Instead of walking in the light, he chose to walk in darkness. Evil desires, covetousness, revengeful passions, dark and sullen thoughts, were cherished until Satan gained full control of him. –*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 557–558

“In connecting this man [Judas] with Himself, He placed him where he might, day by day, be brought in contact with the outflowing of His own unselfish love. If he would open his heart to Christ, divine grace would banish the demon of selfishness, and even Judas might become a subject of the kingdom of God. . . .

“Judas had the same opportunities as had the other disciples. He listened to the same precious lessons. But the practice of the truth, which Christ required, was at variance with the desires and purposes of Judas, and he would not yield his ideas in order to receive wisdom from Heaven.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 294

“Judas had indulged avarice until it overpowered every



good trait of his character. —*Ibid*, p. 564

“He did not come to the point of surrendering himself fully to Christ. . . . [until] He was possessed by a demon, and he resolved to complete the work he had agreed to do in betraying his Lord.” —*Ibid*, p. 716, 645

John, on the other hand, warred earnestly against his faults.

“The lessons of Christ, setting forth meekness and humility and love as essential to growth in grace and a fitness for His work, were of the highest value to John. He treasured every lesson and constantly sought to bring his life into harmony with the divine pattern. John had begun to discern the glory of Christ—not the worldly pomp and power for which he had been taught to hope, but ‘the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.’ John 1:14

“The depth and fervor of John’s affection for his Master was not the cause of Christ’s love for him, but the effect of that love. John desired to become like Jesus, and under the transforming influence of the love of Christ he did become meek and lowly. Self was hid in Jesus. Above all his companions, John yielded himself to the power of that wondrous life. He says, ‘The life was manifested, and we have seen it.’ ‘And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.’ 1 John 1:2; John 1:16. John knew the Saviour by an experimental knowledge.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 544

“Such transformation of character as is seen in the life of John is ever the result of communion with Christ. There may be marked defects in the character of an individual, yet when he becomes a true disciple of Christ, the power of divine grace transforms and sanctifies him. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed from glory to glory, until he is like Him whom he adores.” —*Ibid*, p. 559

A synopsis of the end of Judas indicates the following:

“As the trial drew to a close, Judas could endure the torture of his guilty conscience no longer. Suddenly a hoarse voice rang through the hall, sending a thrill of terror to all hearts: He is innocent; spare Him, O Caiaphas!

“The tall form of Judas was now seen pressing through the startled throng. His face was pale and haggard, and great drops of sweat stood on his forehead. Rushing to the throne of judgment, he threw down before the high priest the pieces of silver that had been the price of his Lord’s betrayal. Eagerly grasping the robe of Caiaphas,

he implored him to release Jesus, declaring that He had done nothing worthy of death. Caiaphas angrily shook him off, but was confused, and knew not what to say. . . .

“‘I have sinned,’ again cried Judas, ‘in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.’ But the high priest, regaining his self-possession, answered with scorn, ‘What is that to us? see thou to that.’ Matthew 27:4. . . .

“Judas now cast himself at the feet of Jesus, acknowledging Him to be the Son of God, and entreating Him to deliver Himself. The Savior did not reproach His betrayer. He knew that Judas did not repent; his confession was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation and a looking for of judgment, but he felt no deep, heartbreaking grief that he had betrayed the spotless Son of God, and denied the Holy One of Israel. . . .

“Judas saw that his entreaties were in vain, and he rushed from the hall exclaiming, It is too late! It is too late! He felt that he could not live to see Jesus crucified, and in despair went out and hanged himself.

“Later that same day, on the road from Pilate’s hall to Calvary, there came an interruption to the shouts and jeers of the wicked throng who were leading Jesus to the place of crucifixion. As they passed a retired spot, they saw at the foot of a lifeless tree, the body of Judas. It was a most revolting sight. His weight had broken the cord by which he had hanged himself to the tree. In falling, his body had been horribly mangled, and dogs were now devouring it. His remains were immediately buried out of sight.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 721–722

Of John we know he wrote one of the gospels that bears his name, the three letters, and the Revelation of Jesus Christ. He reached a high level in spirituality and challenged sin: “Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.” 1 John 3:6. We also can reach that level.

For everyone, my prayer is that we will use this time to decide to be overcomers in the battle against evil. What we do today will determine our fate tomorrow; and if we wait, then it might be too late. As we are about to enter the New Year it is of crucial importance to consider our past, and with the help of Jesus, change. The question is: John or Judas? May the Lord help us to be, and end up like John, remains my wish and prayer. Amen.

Joel L. J. Msiska



Religion In Your Daily Life

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27

1. DEFINING RELIGION

“A religious life is action of the mind and body in harmony with divine forces.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 371

RARE

“God requires His people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate than they are. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27. Here genuine religion is defined. God requires that the same consideration which should be given to the widow and fatherless be given to the blind and to those suffering under the affliction of other physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world (Gr. *kosmos*).” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 516

WORLD VIEW

““And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship Him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:8. World (Gr. *kosmos*). Summary: In the sense of the present world system, the ethically bad sense of the word refers to the order or arrangement under which Satan has organized the world of unbelieving mankind upon his cosmic principles of force, greed, selfishness, ambition, and pleasure (Matthew 4:8–9; John 12:31; 14:30; 18:36; Ephesians 2:2; 6:12; 1 John 2:15–17). This world system is imposing and powerful with military might; is often outwardly religious, scientific, cultured, and elegant; but, seething with national and commercial rivalries and ambitions, is upheld in any real crisis only by armed force, and is dominated by satanic principles. Cp. (Zechariah 12:1–6); (Matthew

4:8).” *Holy Bible, Authorized King James Version*, C.I. Scofield, D.D., New York—Oxford University, 1967. Footnote #2: Revelation 13:8, p. 1365

“We are nearing the close of time. We want not only to teach present truth in the pulpit, but to live it out of the pulpit. Examine close the foundation of your hope of salvation.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 530

OLD THINGS

“The precious blood of Jesus is the fountain prepared to cleanse the soul from the defilement of sin. When you determine to take Him as your friend, a new and enduring light will shine from the cross of Christ. A true sense of the sacrifice and intercession of the dear Saviour will break the heart that has become hardened in sin; and love, thankfulness, and humility will come into the soul. The surrender of the heart to Jesus subdues the rebel into a penitent, and then the language of the obedient soul is: ‘Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.’ This is the true religion of the Bible. Everything short of this is a deception.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 625

STUMBLING BLOCK

“Vice and crime, and iniquity of all kinds, are steadily on the increase. The penetrating power of Bible truth must show the contrast between truth and error. A higher grade of preparation is required in order to do good service for the Master. But if the minister leans upon the knowledge he acquires, and does not feel the great necessity of divine enlightenment daily, the education gained is only a stumbling block to sinners. We want the God of all wisdom to be brought into all our labor, into all our experiences; then every iota of knowledge obtained is a power for good and will aid in developing capacity and Christlike earnestness. This is

religion.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 529

2. OBJECTIONABLE RELIGION

Is as “a dry husk without the true kernel” (*Christian Service*, p. 263); **“Is worth nothing.”** —*Steps to Christ*, p. 44

CHEAP

“There is cheap religion in abundance, but there is no such thing as cheap Christianity. Self may figure largely in a false religion, but it cannot appear in Christian experience. You are workers together with God. ‘Without Me,’ said Christ, ‘ye can do nothing.’ (John 15:5). We cannot be shepherds of the flock unless we are divested of our own peculiar habits, manners, and customs, and come into Christ’s likeness. When we eat His flesh and drink His blood, then the element of eternal life will be found in the ministry. There will not be a fund of stale, oft-repeated ideas. There will be a new perception of truth.

“Some who stand in the pulpit make the heavenly messengers in the audience ashamed of them. The precious gospel, which it has cost so much to bring to the world, is abused. There is common, cheap talk; grotesque attitudes and working of the features. . . . Everyone who ministers before the people should feel it a solemn duty to take himself in hand. He should first give himself to the Lord in complete self-renunciation, determined that he will have none of self, but all of Jesus.” —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 339

A SPORT

“Many of the revivals of modern times have presented a marked contrast to those manifestations of divine grace which in earlier days followed the labors of God’s servants. . . . Popular revivals are too often carried by appeals to the imagination, by exciting the emotions, by gratifying the love for what is new and startling. Converts thus gained have little desire to listen to Bible truth, little interest in the testimony of prophets and apostles. Unless a religious service has something of a sensational character, it has no attractions for them. . . . Where, in the popular churches of today, is the spirit of consecration to God? The converts do not renounce their pride and love of the world. . . . Religion has become the sport of infidels and skeptics because so many who bear its name are ignorant of its principles.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 463

FALSE

The “compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of ‘the man of sin’ foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his

will. . . .

“Those who fear and reverence God meet this heaven-daring assumption as Christ met the solicitations of the wily foe: ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.’ (Luke 4:8). God has never given a hint in His word that He has appointed any man to be the head of the church. . . . The spirit of concession to paganism opened the way for a still further disregard of Heaven’s authority. Satan, working through unconsecrated leaders of the church, tampered with the fourth commandment also, and essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified (Genesis 2:2,3), and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as ‘the venerable day of the sun’ (Sunday).” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 50–51

FORMAL

“A formal religion is to be dreaded, for in it is no Saviour. Plain, close, searching, practical discourses were given by Christ. His ambassadors should follow His example in every discourse. Christ and his Father were one; in all the Father’s requirements Christ cheerfully acquiesced. He had the mind of God. The Redeemer was the perfect pattern, Jehovah was manifested in Him. Heaven was enshrined in humanity, and humanity enclosed in the bosom of Infinite Love. If ministers will in meekness sit at the feet of Jesus, they will soon obtain right views of God’s character and will be able to teach others also. . . . Unfaithful watchmen are serving themselves instead of feeding the flock and attending to their pastoral duties, the people perish for want of proper instruction.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 396

3. TRUE RELIGION (genuine)

“True religion does not consist in rights and ceremonies, creeds and theories.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 451

NO TRIFLING MATTER

“True religion is ever distinctly seen in our words and deportment, and in every act of life. With the followers of Christ, religion should never be divorced from business. They should go hand in hand, and God’s commandments should be strictly regarded in all the details of worldly matters. The knowledge that we are children of God should give a high tone of character even to the everyday duties of life, making us not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit. Such a religion as this bears the scrutiny of a critical world with a grand consciousness of integrity. . . .

“The constant inquiry should be: ‘Is this in accordance with the will of God? Will this please my Redeemer?’ . . . Every action, every word, and every moment of our lives should bear the impress of our holy faith. The end of all

things is at hand, and we have no time to be idle or to live in pleasure, at cross-purposes with God.

“The Lord will not be trifled with. Those who neglect His mercies and blessings in this day of opportunities will bring impenetrable darkness upon themselves and will be candidates for the wrath of God.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 190–191

“Perfection is no trifle—but trifles make for perfection.”

–Joseph R. Jarabak, D.D.S., M.S., Ph.D., LL.D. (Hon.), University of Loyola, Chicago, Illinois

CHIEF ENEMY

“The world is the chief enemy of religion. The satanic forces are constantly at work through the world, and those who are professed Christians, yet associated with the world in close fellowship, are so much one in spirit, aims, and principles of working, that they cannot discern between him who serveth God and him who serveth the world. The enemy works constantly to push the world to the front, to be looked upon as superior to those who believe in Jesus, and who seek to be doers of His word. Words of praise and flattery from worldlings are received as sweet morsels, but the judgment of those who love this sort of food is in accordance with the weakness which they show in this direction. Their spiritual life is composed of just the kind of material they feed upon. Their Christian experience is largely dependent on flattery and human appreciation. The fear and love of God are not interwoven in their experience.” –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 270

HEALTH AND RELIGION

“‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.’ When men of wrong habits and sinful practices yield to the power of divine truth, the entrance of God’s word gives light and understanding to the simple. There is an application of truth to the heart; and moral power, which seemed to have been paralyzed, revives. The receiver is possessed of stronger clearer understanding than before. He has riveted his soul to the eternal Rock. Health improves in the very sense of his security in Christ. Thus religion and the laws of health go hand in hand. . . . Let the conscience be aroused and much is gained. Nothing but the grace of God can convict and convert the heart; here alone can the slaves of custom obtain power to

break the shackles which bind them.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 552–553

HOPE FOR THE YOUTH

“Many [youth] have not yet heard the voice of Jesus, and the saving message has not taken hold of the soul and worked a reformation in the life. Many of the young have not the spirit of Jesus. The love of God is not in their hearts, therefore all the natural besetments hold the victory instead of the Spirit of God and salvation.

“Those who really possess the religion of Jesus will not be ashamed nor afraid to bear the cross before those who have more experience than they. They will, if they earnestly long to be right, desire all the help they can get from older Christians. Gladly will they be helped by them; hearts that are warmed by love to God will not be hindered by trifles in the Christian course. . . .

“Why the young feel more liberty when the older ones are absent is: They are with those of their kind. Each thinks he is as good as the other. All fail of the mark, but measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves, and neglect the only perfect and true standard, Jesus the true Pattern. His self-sacrificing life is our example.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 154

“The only hope of these children, whether they profess religion or not, is to be thoroughly converted. Their whole character must be changed. Thoughtless mother, do you know, as you teach your children, that their whole religious experience is affected by their teaching when young? Subdue them young; teach them to submit to you, and the more readily will they learn to yield obedience to the requirements of God. Encourage in them a truthful, honest disposition. Let them never have occasion to doubt your sincerity and exact truthfulness. The young profess, but do not enjoy the saving power of God. They lack religion, lack salvation.” –*Ibid*, p. 157

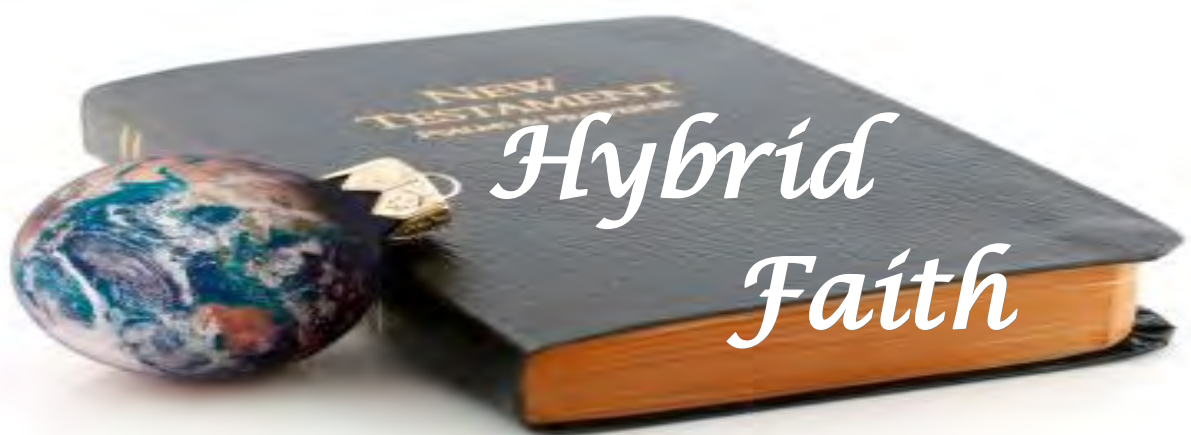
4. RELIGIOUSNESS

“YOU CANNOT BE RELIGIOUS AT TIMES, AND AT OTHER TIMES IRRELIGIOUS.” –*Medical Ministry*, p. 202. Amen.

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John Theodorou
U.S.A.





“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.” Psalm 12:6–7

What is a hybrid? The term denotes the mixing of two different elements. This has been done with plants, animals, fuels and now, even cars.

The purpose of creating hybrids is to enhance the quality of the original; it is the process of taking the best of the originals. They are more vigorous than either of the species they were derived from.

For example, the mule, which is the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse, is strong for its size and has better endurance and a longer useful lifespan than its parents. However, mules are sterile, as are all plants and animals that are hybrids between two species.

The key sentence here is that they are sterile. Hybrids cannot reproduce.

How does this relate to Christianity? In a sermon one Sabbath the preacher mentioned the term, “Hybrid Faith” from a quote that described the Jewish nation. “Although they had sought the Messiah for centuries, they were entrenched in thinking and worshiping in traditional forms. . . . Those who did accept Jesus as the Messiah often found themselves slipping back into familiar routines, trying to live a hybrid faith.” *Life Application Study Bible, New Living Translation*. He then brought out some important points regarding how some Christians today have created a hybrid religion. This prompted me to study more into the subject.

Hybrid faith, then, would be the combination of two different belief systems. For example someone who says, “I believe in Jesus Christ as my Saviour” and then adds, “but all religions lead to the same place.”

Or, when a person claims to be a Christian, but is not in harmony with the counsels given in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. It is not genuine. Hybrid faith is a form of religion that embraces Jesus Christ, using His name, claiming to believe the Bible while mixing the traditions of man and using man’s human reasoning to measure

Biblical truth. “And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by Thy name, to take away our reproach.” Isaiah 4:1. The end result is a faith that is nothing but a mixture or blending of two totally different species—the word of God and the flesh of man. It is not “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” John 14:6

Although the word “hybrid” is not found in the Bible, yet the concept is there regarding faith.

“So they feared the LORD, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children’s children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.” 2 Kings 17:32–33, 41

But the truth is “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 6:24

Regarding hybrid faith, a pioneer of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, R.F Cottrell, described it as “A kind of hybrid, obtained by crossing your own theory with the words of the text and other teachings of the Bible.” – *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 23, 1865

A hybrid is sterile—it cannot reproduce. Consequently, hybrid faith is also sterile. It cannot reproduce.

Jesus gave a parable about a man who entrusted talents to his employees and then went to a far country (Matthew 25:14–30); when he came back he asked his employees to give an account of their talents. Two of the employees reproduced their talents—doubling them. The third employee had hybrid faith and his talent did

not reproduce. It was sterile. He was cast into outer darkness and his talent given to another.

Hybrid faith is clearly seen in the Christian world, but is it found in God's church? In God's church, we teach that the way of salvation is to believe in Christ as our personal Saviour from sin; to allow Him to live in our hearts and be willing to let Him change our characters from sinner to righteousness. We believe that God's measuring stick for salvation is the Ten Commandments. Yes, we teach; we believe, but what about practice? Do some practice hybrid religion as they did in Ancient Israel? Saying they fear the Lord, but worship their graven images?

The Christian with hybrid faith may speak much about loving God and people. Since this agrees with God's word it is a deadly form of deception and can be so difficult to detect.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF HYBRID FAITH:

1) The Lord says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8. And then He gives us plenty of instructions on how to keep the Sabbath. "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, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD." Isaiah 58:13-14. Although we believe in the Sabbath truth, yet, listen to the conversations of some people as they come out of church, sit at lunch, or on Sabbath afternoons. Do you hear people talking of the Lord? Discussing the sermon? Or are they speaking their own words?

2) The Lord says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse" (Malachi 3:10), but some say, "I can't afford to do so this month or I will not be able pay my bills." Of course you cannot pay your bills unless you pay your tithes first. "There are many who urge that they cannot do more for God's cause than they now do; but they do not give according to their ability. The Lord sometimes opens the eyes blinded by selfishness by simply reducing their income to the amount they are willing to give." *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 484. Or the person with hybrid faith will give the Lord a handful of coins that they have left over by the end of the week, after they have taken care of their own needs and interests. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:21

3) The Lord says, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." Matthew 22:21. The Christian with hybrid faith will say, "The government is corrupt so I will not pay my taxes." They use this argument

as a justification to cheat on their income taxes. What government could be more corrupt than the Roman government in the days of Christ? It is sin to not be faithful with your taxes to the government.

4) The Lord says, "The true Christian will not desire to enter any place of amusement or engage in any diversion upon which he cannot ask the blessing of God. He will not be found at the theater." —*Messages to Young People*, p. 398. The hybrid Christian will claim that the theatre is different today and there are wholesome movies so it is okay to go to the theatre. Or then they will not be found in the theatre, but wait until the movie comes out on DVD or on the Internet, and then they will watch it with a "clean" conscience. We should ask ourselves if Jesus would be willing to sit down and watch with us. If not, then should we watch? Would we even want to? To be somewhere without the presence of Jesus is a fearful thought.

5) A whole book has been written about what the Lord says regarding health laws (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*). There are many health counsels that the Lord expects us to follow so that we can have optimum health. The reason for so many counsels is because man has invented so many foods, and habits, that are not healthful (i.e. No eating between meals, no sweets that combine sugar, milk and eggs, no drinking with meals, etc.) The Christian who is hybrid will say, "Oh, it does not matter so much. God is not that particular about small breaches of health laws." Is He not? How serious was the sin of appetite that placed Adam and Eve outside of the Garden of Eden? One piece of fruit wrongly indulged. How seriously did Daniel take the health laws? "There are many among professed Christians today who would decide that Daniel was too particular, and would pronounce him narrow and bigoted. They consider the matter of eating and drinking as of too little consequence to require such a decided stand—one involving the probable sacrifice of every earthly advantage." —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 19, 20. How many adhere strictly to a "thus saith the Lord" in regard to the health laws? "Those who reason thus will find in the day of judgment that they turned from God's express requirements and set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong." —*The Sanctified Life*, p. 20. "You should never let a morsel pass your lips between your regular meals." —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 180. One small crumb eaten between meals is condemned by God. Do not let a crumb keep you out of heaven.

6) The Lord says, "Love your enemies." Matthew 5:44. The Christian with hybrid faith says, "I can love my enemies, but those that left our faith and are no longer in

the church, I will ostracise them and have nothing to do with them. They are out of fellowship with God.” The Lord reproves this attitude from the members of His church. “In laboring with the erring, some of our brethren had been too rigid, too cutting in remarks. And when some were disposed to reject their counsel and separate from them, they would say: ‘Well, if they want to go off, let them go.’ While such a lack of the compassion, and long-suffering, and tenderness of Jesus was manifested by His professed followers, these poor, erring, inexperienced souls, buffeted by Satan, were certain to make shipwreck of faith. However great may be the wrongs and sins of the erring, our brethren must learn to manifest not only the tenderness of the Great Shepherd, but also His undying care and love for the poor, straying sheep. Our ministers toil and lecture week after week, and rejoice that a few souls embrace the truth; and yet brethren of a prompt, decided turn of mind may, in five minutes, destroy their work by indulging the feelings which prompt words like these: ‘Well, if they want to leave us, let them go.’” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, 18–19

The prayer of the Christian with hybrid faith is even very self-centred. They pray for blessings for themselves. If you study the prayer of the New Testament Christians, they did not pray for employment, healing, comfort, and money alone. They initially prayed for obedience, boldness to preach and speak the gospel, the furtherance of the Kingdom, wisdom, knowledge, grace, perseverance in suffering, courage, and power. King Solomon prayed for wisdom (1 Kings 3:9).

The believer with hybrid faith is often consistently late for church, or is always absent when there are church work days or missionary days. Yet they would never miss work or school. They honor their jobs, education, and responsibilities far more than they honour God.

The formula is: Flesh + Spirit = Hybrid faith. . . dead end. Unfortunately, those with hybrid faith are absolutely convinced in their hearts that they love the Lord and are on their way to heaven, spending eternity with Him. Often, when confronted with His Word, revealing their deceptions, some refuse to listen to Him, becoming enraged at anyone who shares His word. The truth is that a person with hybrid faith does not even know Jesus.

There are many more examples that could be brought out, however, we do not want to make religion legal by reciting, and focusing on, a list of rules that must be kept in order to receive salvation, or then we will be no better than the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of Jesus. If the Holy Spirit is invited into the heart, the Lord

says, I will “put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. This article was just intended to help each of us to determine if our faith is genuine or hybrid. If it is not genuine, we need to allow the Holy Spirit to destroy the desires of our flesh.

The only hope is for the death of the desires of the flesh. If it dies, then our faith is no longer hybrid—it is spiritual. No longer will we be thinking of what is the least I can do for Christ and still be saved. How much of the world can I retain? How much of the world is acceptable? The truth is, none of the world is acceptable. There is no salvation apart from a heart that desires above all else to obey God. “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:4

“You say, ‘I have heard that we are not saved for our good works.’ No, but we will not be saved without them. You cannot depend upon your good works for salvation. We must have a living dependence upon a living God. And when there is a living connection with a living God, Christ abides in the heart by living faith, and the human agent works after Christ’s life. He is going to change our life and character that Christ reveals.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 36

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN

The true Christian does not simply “join” the church. They are “born” into it when they are born again. When we truly fall in love with Jesus we will want to know what is the most we can do for Him. Our daily prayer will be, “What must I do to be saved?” Acts 16:30. No sacrifice will be too harsh or difficult. All sin will be given up with joy. “The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.” —*Prayer*, p. 118–119

“Go daily to the Lord for instruction and guidance; depend upon God for light and knowledge. Pray for this instruction and this light, until you get it. It will not avail for you to ask, and then forget the thing for which you prayed. Keep your mind upon your prayer. You can do this while working with your hands. You can say, Lord, I believe; with all my heart I believe. Let the Holy Spirit’s power come upon me.” —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 531. Amen.

Wendy Eaton



A Child is Lost

It was spring time in Battle Creek, and a general meeting was being planned in the church. It had been announced in the Review and Herald that all were invited to this conference and that the church members of Battle Creek would entertain, as well as they could, all who came.

Every Sabbathkeeper in the town was busy setting his house in order and putting up extra beds, even making places to sleep in the big haymows and in the carriage houses. In the White home every preparation possible was made to accommodate guests.

Willie, the youngest son of Ellen and James White, was less than two years old, and he played about the house, getting in the way as all babies do when extra work is being done. Someone was getting ready to mop the floor, and a large tub of water had been placed in the middle of the kitchen floor. The girl who helped with the housework and cared for the baby hurried through the kitchen, but a gurgling sound attracted her attention and she turned to look back. A little foot was sticking out of the tub of water. She ran across the room, pulled the baby from the water, and rushed with him to his mother. "He's drowned! He's drowned!" she screamed.

Ellen White took her baby and ran into the yard with him and laid him on the grass. "Call James White and send for the doctor," she said. The girl ran to the front of the house, where she saw one of the pressmen who happened to be passing by. She called to him, "Run for the doctor." But this she felt was not enough to do; so she ran after him, hitting the surprised man on the back at every step and shouting, "Run, run, run." Of course, the man ran with great speed, and the girl came back

to see what more she could do to make up for her neglect in not watching the baby.

Ellen White cut off his wet clothes and laid Willie on the grass and rolled him back and forth. Neighbours who gathered told her it was of no use, that the baby was dead, but with a constant prayer on her lips she kept on working over the child. Finally she took him in her arms, and as she kissed him, his eyelids flickered and he puckered his little lips to return her kiss. With a glad heart she took him into the house and laid him in his little crib and put warm cloths around him. And before the doctor came, he was breathing naturally again.



That night Ellen White lay in her bed with her little one in her arms. She rejoiced that God had spared his life and returned him to them again. With a thankful heart she praised her Saviour. Suddenly on the clear night air sounded the sharp ringing of the bells and a cry, "Lost! Lost! A child lost!"

She held her little one closer as she thought of how that day he had almost been lost, and of the vacant place there would have been in his little cradle and in their own hearts if he had not been restored to them. The meaning of the word lost came home to her with a force it had never had before.

"Never shall I forget the incidents of that night," she wrote later. "It was just one little life that was at stake; but it seemed as though the whole city of Battle Creek was stirred to go out in search of the lost child. Lights were glimmering everywhere. They flashed through the streets, along the river-bank, and through the adjacent woods, and the cry resounded, 'A child is lost! A child is lost!' After a long search, a shout was raised,

'The child is found!'

"Yes, the child was found; but it might go astray on the journey of life and be lost at last.

"I knew, too, that death might come to the little one that was saved to me; and that should he live, he would have the evils of this life to battle with. And the thought with me was, Will this little child, whose life I hold so dear, be finally lost, or will he be saved to praise God forever in His kingdom?"

"There was no sleep for my eyes that night. I thought of the lost sheep that Jesus came from heaven to earth to seek and to save. I thought of Christ as He looked down from heaven upon a world of lost sinners, lost without hope, and of the sympathy that led Him to leave His high and exalted place upon His Father's throne, and make the infinite sacrifice necessary to lift man up from the degradation of sin, and bring him back to the fold of God."

John Newton

I would like to ask you a question. . . Have you noticed which hymn, of all the ones we sing at a nursing home, is the one that the people know best and remember? If you guessed "Amazing Grace" you are correct. By the 19th century this song had become a staple in the religious services of many denominations. Amazing Grace is a beautiful hymn with very meaningful words, especially to its author.

John Newton was born in London, England on the 24th of July, 1725. He was the son of a commander of a merchant ship, engaged in the Mediterranean trade. His mother, who gave him some religious training, died when he was seven years old. Unfortunately, his father was not a very religious person and Newton grew up without morals and without the fear of God. He was a reckless and vicious youth. When he was 18 years old he was forced into naval service, but he deserted. When he was caught, he was kept in irons, publicly whipped, and was demoted in rank. Soon afterwards he was exchanged into a slave ship going to Africa. There, Newton became a servant to a slave trader and suffered brutal persecution. He had become like the prodigal son, who, away from his father was happy

to eat what was left for the swine. But God in his mercy allowed this young man to be rescued, and on the journey back to England a terrible storm hit. Newton saw death at the door. Like Jonah, he realized that he was completely in God's hands. His life of sin flashed before him and he purposed in his heart to abandon all evil.



Unfortunately, Newton had a great desire to do good but, nevertheless, he became the captain of a slave ship and made four voyages. Finally the inhuman aspects of the business began to pall on him and he left the sea for good.

In his old age, he once said, "My memory is nearly gone but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Saviour."

John Newton was indeed a marked example of the transforming power of the grace of God. Nothing is impossible with God. A wretch, blind

and lost, has hope of salvation. We have this hope and only through God's grace and mercy can we achieve it. Amen.

From a speech presented by Stephen Newby



ANNOTTO BAY, JAMAICA



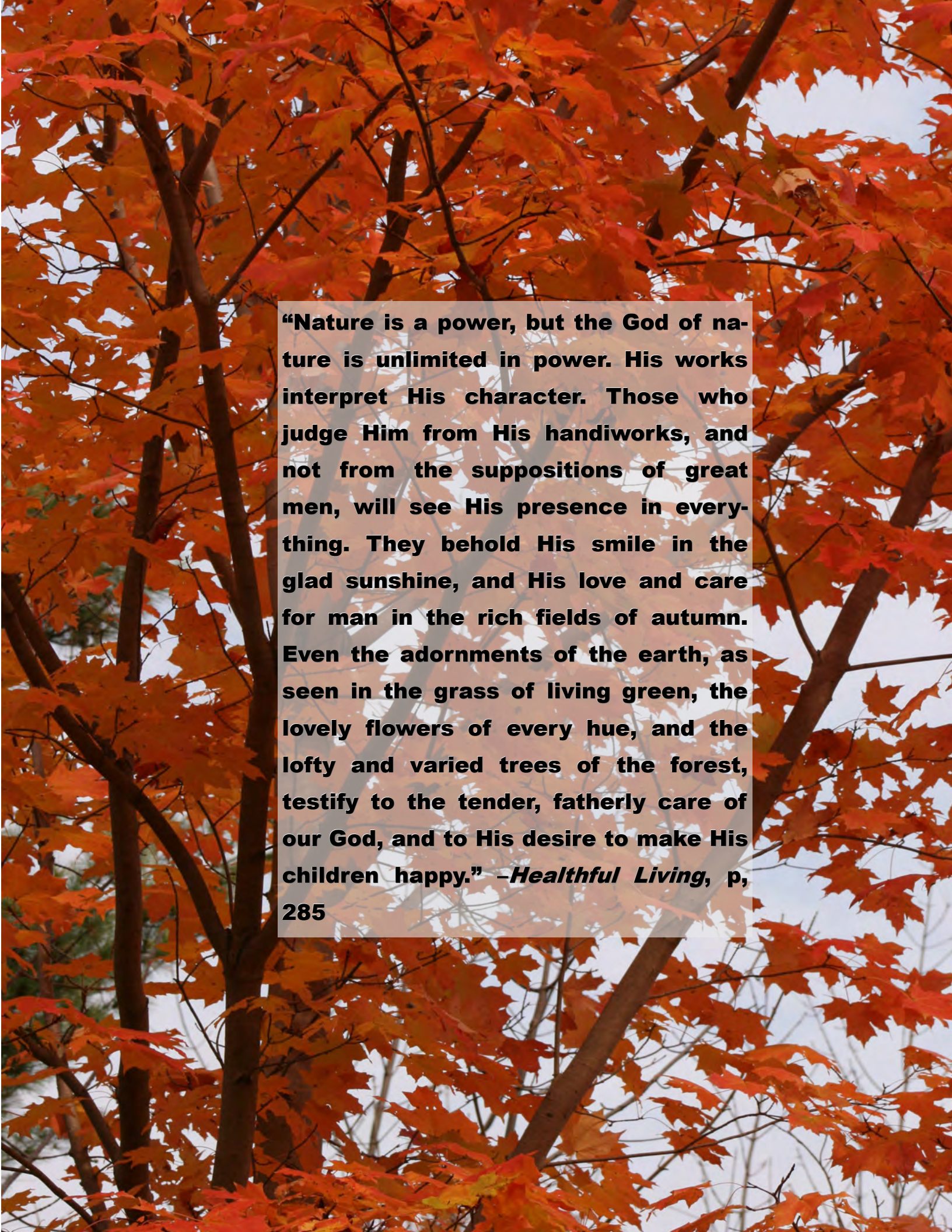
MALAYSIA



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CHURCH AT ANDRAISORO ANTANANARIVO, MADAGASCAR



“Nature is a power, but the God of nature is unlimited in power. His works interpret His character. Those who judge Him from His handiworks, and not from the suppositions of great men, will see His presence in everything. They behold His smile in the glad sunshine, and His love and care for man in the rich fields of autumn. Even the adornments of the earth, as seen in the grass of living green, the lovely flowers of every hue, and the lofty and varied trees of the forest, testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God, and to His desire to make His children happy.” *–Healthful Living, p, 285*