

The background of the cover is a photograph of a rocky beach. In the foreground, there is a large, bleached piece of driftwood lying horizontally. Behind it, several other pieces of driftwood are scattered among the grey rocks. The beach leads to a sandy shore with more rocks, and the blue ocean extends to the horizon under a clear sky. The title 'The Reformation Messenger' is overlaid on the top half of the image.

The Reformation **Messenger**

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 1, JANUARY 2014

“These idle, frivolous persons will never be anything better than driftwood unless there is a decided change in their life and character. They are Christians only in profession; their life, their deportment, is a constant testimony to the world that they know nothing of experimental godliness, of a self-denying life of cross-bearing for Christ's sake. . . .

“They are ever studying their convenience, ever planning for their own comfort, their amusement or gratification. They are as salt without the savor. In the day when the Judge of all the earth shall balance the accounts of men, this class will be pronounced wanting.” –*The Review and Herald*, June 3, 1880

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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Are You

Drifting?

“Those who are drifting with the tide, who love pleasure and self-indulgence, and choose the easier way, regardless of principle so long as their desires are gratified—these will never stand with the overcomers around the great white throne.” —*My Life Today*, p. 72

“The living Christ demands self-denial and strong faith. Circumstances are not to rule the life. The child of God, the heir of heaven, cannot drift hither and thither.” —*The Review and Herald*, November 9, 1897

“We can never be saved in indolence and inactivity. There is no such thing as a truly converted person living a helpless, useless life. It is not possible for us to drift into heaven. No sluggard can enter there. If we do not strive to gain an entrance into the kingdom, if we do not seek earnestly to learn what constitutes its laws, we are not fitted for a part in it.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 280

“If you are willing to drift along with the current of evil, and do not cooperate with the heavenly agencies in restraining transgression in your family, and in the church, in order that everlasting righteousness may be brought in, you do not have faith.” —*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 374

“The lives of many show that they have no living connection with God. They are drifting into the channel of the world. In reality they have no part or lot with Christ. They love amusement and are filled with selfish plans, hopes, and ambitions. They serve the enemy under the pretense of serving God. They are in bondage to a taskmaster, and this bondage they choose, making themselves willing slaves of Satan.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p.81

“In the struggle against evil, we must put every muscle to the stretch, exercising every God-given qualification for the right, in order that we may resist temptation and

advance step by step in the Christian life. Saved in indolence, in inactivity, we can never be. It is not possible for us to drift into heaven. No sluggard can enter there. If we do not strive to gain an entrance into that kingdom, if we do not seek earnestly to learn what constitute its laws, we are not fitted to take part in it. Those who enter there must be loyal and faithful servants of God, yoking up with Christ, working his works, overcoming as he overcame, wrestling day after day with hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong, which must be oft crucified.” —*The Signs of the Times*, April 1, 1897

“I must tell you that heaven is to be sought for, to be prayed for, to be worked for. We cannot, with our unconverted traits of character, drift into heaven.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 214

“Let us look closely and critically to ourselves. Are not the vows we entered into at our baptism violated? Are we dead to the world and alive unto Christ? Are we seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God? Is the cable cut which anchored us to the eternal Rock? Are we drifting with the current to perdition? Shall we make no effort to press and urge our passage upstream? Let us not hesitate longer, but vigorously apply the oars; and let us do our first works ere we make hopeless shipwreck.” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 361

“Cease your jealousies and your faultfinding. Turn your attention to your own case and by humble repentance, relying alone upon the blood of Christ, save your own soul. Make thorough work for eternity. . . . Truth, sacred truth, is your anchor, which will save you from drifting in the downward current to crime and destruction.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 90

Ellen G. White



We have all attended schools, some more, others less. When we finish our schooling, we think that we know enough that we need for our life journey. We may have studied languages, science, history, geography and perhaps many other topics. Yet there is much more to learn. In the Harvard University library there are over seven million books.

If you read one book each day it would take 20,000 years to finish them all. So then our life is not long enough to learn everything that is available. But if we start reading in the order of importance, then the first book to us would be the Bible, the word of God. This one book will benefit us more than the millions of other books that men have written.

There is one school where the Bible is used as the text book every day, and that is in the school of Christ.

Jesus is the teacher in this school. We read in John 3:2, "The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God is with him."

What are the subjects that Jesus wants to teach us? Are they not how to live, how to serve God, how to be saved, how to have a happy life, and how to have peace and joy? His teaching is done by His words, by object lessons, and by His own example.

How many are willing to enroll in the school of Christ? It is free, yet it costs something. How many are attracted to His life, to His character, and to His work? Not many want to live a life as Jesus lived. When He was on the earth, people saw His goodness, but very few admired Him and wanted to follow His example. His perfect life bothered them, and therefore they wanted to do away with Him, and finally nailed Him to the cross to die.

Today only few people are in the school of Christ, learning by His example on how to live. Therefore, many do not read the Bible because it shows them the life of Jesus, and of the prophets, how they sacrificed, and endured persecution.

Daily, God is teaching us lessons to develop our characters, and this takes our whole lifetime.

The twelve disciples joined the school of Christ, and after three and a half years in His company they had not learned everything yet. Jesus said to them, "I have yet many things

to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." John 16:12. After Jesus left them, the Holy Spirit continued to teach them. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." John

16:13

Jesus said to them also, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26

In the school of Christ we also learn practical lessons, and the end result will be Christlikeness. We will live as He lived, we will work as He worked, things that were important to Him will be important to us, things to which He put no value, we will not put any value, we will sacrifice for others as He sacrificed, we will love as He loved, and we will be meek and lowly as He was.

Satan also has many schools, and many of them have religious names. He teaches how to rule others, how to gain money, how to gratify flesh; he also teaches religion, but not correctly. Christ and Satan came from the same school, from the presence of God. But their teachings are completely the opposite. The school of Christ makes us holy, but the school of Satan makes us sinners.

The first lesson to learn in the school of Christ is to know God, who He is, His character. If we learn to know God truly, then we also will learn to love Him above all, even more than ourselves.

The second lesson to learn is to know ourselves, our weaknesses, our helpless, lost condition, and that without God's help we will perish. We need His help every day, every moment.

The third lesson we learn is the character of sin, how terrible and evil it is. This will make us hate sin, that we would rather die than commit even the smallest sin.

Then the next lesson we learn is that through Christ we can do all things, even move mountains. Then we are no more weak, but strong, faithful Christians.

We also will learn how to pray, even without ceasing, and how to forgive, how to love, even our enemies. We learn to do missionary work, to save souls. We will learn to

suffer fiery trials and also to deny ourselves—things that we used to love.

Some lessons are hard, difficult, which may take weeks, months, or even years to learn.

One difficult lesson is to learn to live in unity with others. The reason why it is so difficult is because we are so different, and faulty, and often irritating, getting on each other's nerves. David writes, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1

It is sin that broke this unity. But once we become Christ-like, then we will all be united in perfect love. This love brings tolerance, forgiveness, and meekness. These characteristics we learn from Christ in His school.

Judas was in the school of Christ, but did not learn the lessons He taught. Today there are many students in His school, and yet remain selfish, and unchanged. On the other hand, John, James, and Peter, who were quick tempered and revengeful did change and became like their Teacher, Jesus.

In the school of Christ we face new lessons every day. One lesson that is very important is how to control and overcome the desires of our weak flesh. Jesus said, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:41. Jesus was born with this weak human flesh, but He controlled and overcame it. How did He do it? Was it not by fasting and praying, sometimes spending the whole night in prayer? If we learn of Him and follow His example, we also will be overcomers. Also our health reform helps us to keep our body under, e.g. Paul learned how to keep his body in subjection to the mind.

He writes, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." 1 Corinthians 9:27. In this school of Christ, Paul is also teaching many lessons to us. He writes, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Hebrews 12:4

Jesus said, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." Matthew 5:29–30

"God is also helping us to reach the perfection of character. There calamities were sent for their purification." – *Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1144

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their

robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a great special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth." – *The Great Controversy*, p. 425

"Trial is part of the education given in the school of Christ, to purify God's children from the dross of earthliness. It is because God is leading His children that trying experiences come to them. Trials and obstacles are His chosen methods of discipline, and His appointed conditions of success. He who reads the hearts of men knows their weaknesses better than they themselves can know them. He sees that some have qualifications which, if rightly directed, could be used in the advancement of His work. In His providence He brings these souls into different positions and varied circumstances, that they may discover the defects that are concealed from their own knowledge. He gives them opportunity to overcome these defects and to fit themselves for service. Often He permits the fires of affliction to burn, that they may be purified.

"God's care for His heritage is unceasing. He suffers no affliction to come upon His children but such as is essential for their present and eternal good. He will purify His church, even as Christ purified the temple during His ministry on earth. All that He brings upon His people in test and trial comes that they may gain deeper piety and greater strength to carry forward the triumphs of the cross." – *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 524–525

These are things that we need to keep in our minds, and meditate upon. God has given us His law, including the Sabbath, as mediums for our purification and sanctification.

"Purified by obedience to the law of God, sanctified by a perfect observance of His holy Sabbath, trusting, believing, patiently waiting, and earnestly working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we shall learn that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do His good pleasure." – *Evangelism*, p. 290

May the Lord help us to learn the lessons in the school of Christ. If we graduate from this school with honour, then we shall receive the reward of eternal life and heaven. But already in this earthly life we will receive the fullness of joy and happiness that sinners have never felt.

My dear fellow students in this school of Christ, let us put out all our efforts to learn the lessons and also to put them into practice; nothing else is so important to us. Amen.

Timo Martin



Earth's Last Prophetic Warning!!

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” Revelation 14:9–11

1. IT IS A WARNING!

A WARNING!

The planet earth is wildly careening on the path to destruction—a runaway freight train without an engineer! A fearful wreck is looming ahead—and then judgments. Many will needlessly perish!

This, therefore, the message of Revelation 14:9–11, is the most important message and truth for our time! It is the last message, to the last church, to the last generation! Read on to see why.

Here we have the Third Angel of Revelation 14:1–9, the third of the three angels, all three—messengers of God, sent from heaven to give notice of the fall of Babylon, and those things that are consequent to that great and fearful event. It calls attention to the vital issues at stake in the final conflict between Christ and Satan, and in a most emphatic way calls for a decision from every individual on planet earth.

The message from the Third Angel contains the most fearful, grim, startling warning ever issued to mankind in the history of the world!

- ® But first, what do we mean by a "warning?" Well, "warning" as an adjective is descriptive of "serving as an alarm, a signal, a summons, etc., announcing some thing imminent, or impending, or the presence of danger." —*Webster's Dictionary*
- ® Furthermore, "warn—vt. 1) to put on guard; 2) caution, admonish; 3) Give advance information to; 4) notify authoritatively; warning—n. 1) a hint of harm, etc.; 2) admonition; 3) advance notice." —*Collins Compact Dictionary*
- ® Moreover, "warning—as danger sign, (syn.) an omen. warn—v. to tell that danger or trouble is near, (syn.) to caution. —*The Newbury House Dictionary of American English*
- ® Perhaps, the best interpretation: "to inform plainly and strongly of **possible trouble**." —*The Random House College Dictionary*
- ® In essence these warnings, for our purpose, con-note—providential, prophetic, faithful, and eternal—warnings!

PRESENCE OF DANGER!

Context, though, is all! So where is this “presence of danger” involved; or the summons found in the opening verses of Revelation 14:10, 11? We find after re-reading the above opening verse, that, again, this is the most fearful threatening ever addressed to mankind since the beginning of time!

Since it is such a sober warning shouldn't it behoove us to know more pointedly, what the three things are that the angel warns against?

- a) The beast—a church/state system—the papacy.
- b) The image of the beast—a copy of the church/state system.
- c) The mark of the beast—of the religious and political mark in the forehead or right hand—a church and state mark.

Now that we have some inkling of the warnings, just what is the issue involved – and why the fuss over it? Ah! That is just the point! It has to do with the Law of God. Yes, the Law of God! The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). So, the beast power will make void the law of God. The apostle speaks of the “man of sin” as the man of lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:3). The issues—the final showdown—will be between the commandments of God and the commandments of men—mankind will have chosen between one or the other. Those who chose the commandments of men will receive the “mark of the beast!”

A SIGNIFICANT MESSAGE!

Why is this message so significant? Hmmm, to the un- wary this may appear irrelevant to one's life. Ah! But the significance of this message—of the Third Angel—lies in the fact that there are no more to follow, no more invitations of mercy to be given after the message shall have accomplished its work. When the warning of this message is heeded the world will be prepared to meet God! Ah! But the world is not prepared to meet God, because God's invitation to repent has been rejected by the large majority.

Are we faithful to our God-given trust?!

2. THE CHARACTER OF THOSE LIVING BEFORE JESUS COMES

SANCTIFIED AND BLAMELESS

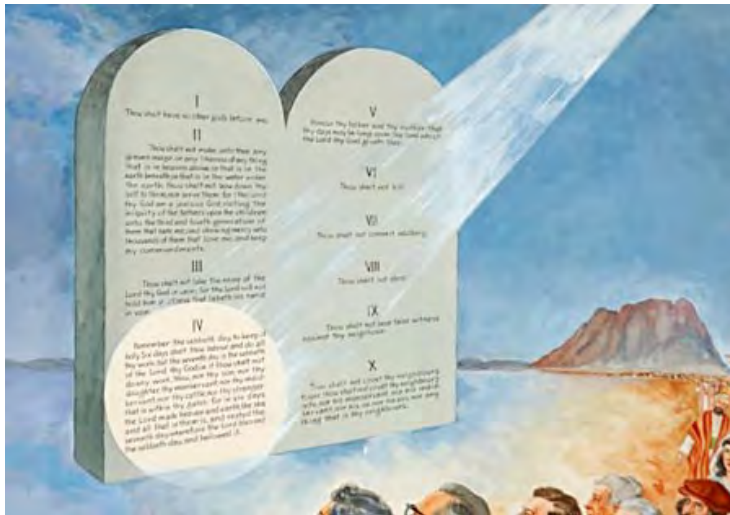
1) **Firstly, they are sanctified and blameless.** “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs, and ours.” 1 Corinthians 1:1–2. Only those who are justified can be sanctified. Because Christ purchased us from sin at Calvary, we have then no more—we stand guiltless before God. By walking in obedience we are “set apart” by God—we have been sanctified. We are not buying back our sins through disobedience—we are walking in Christ's righteousness. The man who rejects Christ bought back his sins, and must pay with his soul. Fearful!

2) **Secondly, they glorify Christ.** “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6–7. “When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.” 2 Thessalonians 1:10

heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6–7. “When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.” 2 Thessalonians 1:10

The chief purpose of Christ's coming, you see, is not simply to judge the wicked, but to be glorified and honoured among His saints. There are three exceedingly clear identifying qualities of a saint:

- a) They “keep” the commandments of God (Revelation 12:17; 14:12).
- b) They “keep” the faith of Jesus—they keep their faith in Jesus (Revelation 14:12).
- c) They have patience (Revelation 14:12). This is quiet strength. See Isaiah 40:31.



3. THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE IS A WARNING TO THOSE WHO REJECTED THE MESSAGES OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ANGEL'S (Revelation 18:1-5)

1) They are those that rejected the "everlasting gospel" under the everlasting covenant.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Revelation 14:6. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Hebrews 8:10

2) They have no fear of God in the heart, therefore they cannot give Him glory.

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear." Hebrews 12:28

We glorify God in our bodies and spirit. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

3) They rejected the judgment hour message, which calls mankind to recognize God as Creator.

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7

The rejection of the First Angel's message leads to "spiritual" confusion. The Bible clearly describes this as Babylon. "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Revelation 14:8

Remember the TOWER BUILDERS became the BABEL BUILDERS, because they rejected the word of the Lord that there would not be another flood—they defied the God of heaven (Genesis 9:11-13; 11:4). Furthermore, "they were warring against God and the Lord God of heaven. They wanted to ascend into heaven. The mortar and bricks in building the TOWER OF BABEL did not reach the builders until those that went up had completed a full year to ascend. This was done daily. The circumference of the TOWER was a three-day walk." (Book of Jasher 9:21-38; Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18). Incredible!!

The call of Revelation 18:1-4, moreover, is a call to true believers in Babylon. When all true believers are safely taken out of Babylon, her fall will be completed. The result will be the "mark of the beast." Only those who

received the "mark of the beast" will experience the final judgments of God in the pouring out of the "seven last plagues." See Revelation 16. Those that refuse to come out of Babylon, when called, and resolve to partake of her sins, must receive of her plagues. They shall be miserable in soul and body.

4) How are those, therefore, described who refuse to worship the beast?

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17. "Here is the pa-

tience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12

5) What, therefore, is the reward of the saints?

"And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before



Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest.” Revelation 15:2–4

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Revelation 20:4

The message of the third angel is a part of the everlasting gospel, because it warns against worshipping a system that rejects the “everlasting gospel.” “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.” 1 Peter 1: 24–25

It is the gospel that revives the fear of God, and retrieves His glory in the world. The gospel message will be carried by God’s people to a perishing world—with the power of God. This work will finish—triumphantly! It is important, therefore, to have principles and the blessings of God for those who believe—for His resources never fail!

Finally, it is a testing message for both saints and sinners. It tests the saint’s patience and loyalty to God, and warns the sinners of the terrible judgment of defying God’s truth; a test of life or death!

SAINT OR SINNER?

Ah! We like to make the distinction between the sinners on the outside of the ark and the saints on the inside, and it is a legitimate distinction. But in so doing, we tend to cover up the reality that the saints inside are still sinners. There is a difference though in that they are, sinners saved by grace, but nevertheless sinners. Although they may have overcome sin today, they are not free from ever committing sin in the future. There is no such thing as “once saved, always saved.” Noah didn’t take much time before he demonstrated that after the ark landed. Failure to be aware of this reality led the Pharisees of Christ’s day, and self-righteous saints all through history, to feel that the message of repentance does not apply to them. They

say that repentance is only relevant to those sinners outside the ark. We are all victims of our culture where the only time we ever hear the word repent is in a context of scolding lost sinners. The lost only have to repent once to end their “lostness” (justification), but the saved have to repent innumerable times (sanctification).



Whisper it, but Mark tells us the very first message that Jesus preached was that the kingdom of God was near and, therefore, people are to repent and believe the good news; the same message that John the Baptist had been preaching; and it was culminated by the Apostle John on Patmos Island of Greece, that wise old sage, that brought us the Revelation of Jesus Christ,

and an unfamiliar emotion for many sufferers—hope—in the Book of Revelation to His servants, the concluding book of the Scriptures, which unfolds to the wise those great events bringing history to consummation and the—

EARTH’S LAST PROPHETIC WARNING!

Amen <>< <>< <><

John Theodorou
U.S.A



LOOKING FOR YOU...

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Slaves In The Ship's Galley

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” Revelation 1:21

In the new earth there will be no more sea. Why is this a good thing? Is there something wrong with the sea? Sitting at the seashore can be a calm and relaxing place as one watches the waves rolling in and out, and feels the cool sea breeze on their face. It can be a very refreshing experience.

Prior to the flood, there were no large oceans. Although the oceans are large they do not represent a formidable barrier as they did in ancient times after the flood. In today's world we have rapid transportation (airplanes), that take us across the world in half a day. It was not always so. In ancient times, and even 100 years ago, to go across the ocean meant you may never see your loved ones again in this life. It was a long tedious journey. Also the sea is not always calm and relaxing. It can be a raging torrent, causing much destruction as seen in the latest typhoon that hit the Philippines.

Anciently, the sea was viewed like this: “The sea divides friends. It is a barrier between us and those whom we love. Our associations are broken up by the broad, fathomless ocean. In the new earth there will be no more sea, and there shall pass there ‘*no galley with oars.*’ In the past many who have loved and served God have been bound by chains to their seats in galleys, compelled to serve the purpose of cruel, hardhearted men. The Lord has looked upon their suffering in sympathy and compassion. Thank God, in the earth made new there will be no fierce torrents, no engulfing ocean, no restless, murmuring waves.” —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p.988 [emphasis mine]

The above paragraph was quoting Isaiah 33:21. “But

there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go *no galley with oars*, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.” Isaiah spoke of the New Earth, having only rivers and streams and he shared the same sentiment regarding the large oceans—the relief that there was “no galley with oars.”

Who was often seated in the galley with oars? It was slaves, yes, and of them “many who have served God.” Do you think that some of them were tempted to think that they had been forsaken by God? Were they tempted to ask, “Why God?” Perhaps they were lifelong Christians, faithfully serving the Lord, keeping His commandments, attending church services, doing missionary work, paying their tithes and offerings, eating, drinking and dressing to His honour and glory, and now they end up in the galley of a ship, chained to their seat. Is it worth serving God to find oneself in this situation?

JOB

In the Bible are many recorded events, where things did not go well for God's servants. The classic case that most Christians are familiar with is Job. Although he was a faithful servant of the Lord, he lost everything and even his health. Yet, he refused to question God's leading.

“The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” Job 1:21

Why did Job have to go through this? Was it only so that God could prove Satan wrong when Satan made the accusation that the only reason Job served Him was

because of all the blessings bestowed upon him by God?

No, there was another purpose. Although Job is described as, “perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil,” (Job 1:1) this experience was for his character development. Let’s read on. “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, **that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.** For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. **And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer.**” 2 Corinthians 1:3–6 [emphasis mine]

Why is Jesus our perfect High Priest? “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15

Yes, He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities. To have experiential knowledge is a lot more effective in helping someone in distress, as opposed to just book learning as to how to help others. We can sympathise with someone, but to be able to empathise, is a lot more effective. “I have been there and experienced it, I understand. Let me tell you what helped me.” And then you can provide a shoulder to cry on. Jesus can empathise with us in our distress.

Job was wealthy and used his wealth to help the poor. “I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. . . . I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” Job 29:12–16

Yes, although he was very helpful, he lacked experiential knowledge before his affliction. After his experience, he could now empathize with the poor and the sick rather than just sympathise. He could be a much better help to them, having experienced their pain and sorrow. Yes, this was the greater purpose of Job’s experience in the perfecting of his character.

Next time when things do not go as you planned—praise the Lord. “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the

olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places.” Habakkuk 3:17–19

At least you are not a slave in the galley of a ship, chained to your seat.

OTHER EXAMPLES

Joseph was extremely faithful in the service of Potiphar. For ten years he served so well that Potiphar made him overseer of his household. Where did he end up? What was his reward? Two years in prison.

Daniel was a faithful follower of the Lord, and where do we see him after Jerusalem was destroyed? He was taken to Babylon as a prisoner of war.

Not to mention the millions of martyrs in the Dark Ages who were burned at the stake, fed to lions or had their lives taken in another cruel manner, or then lived out their lives underground in the deep recesses of the catacombs in Rome.

In this life, there may be no freedom from physical oppression and suffering, but there is hope. “Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith.” Hebrews 11:35–39. Is this the life we can expect if we decide to follow Jesus?

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

The saying is that there is always light at the end of the tunnel. Having said this, is there only sadness, sorrow, darkness, persecution and evil to be had, if we serve the Lord? We read verses such as: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12. What kind of life can the Christian expect to have?

In Deuteronomy 30:15–18 we read. “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy

God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.”

Is there some kind of discrepancy? To the Israelites, God promised blessing and good to His faithful followers, and cursing and evil to those who turn away from serving Him. So why the slaves in the galley of the ship? “Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation.” Psalm 91:9

How could Paul and Silas sing praises in the prison cell? Why did God permit them to be there in the first place? “Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.” Acts 16: 24–25. They could see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Take heart. The promise is, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” John 16:20

This is Paul’s response to his sufferings. “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with **the glory which shall be revealed in us.**” Romans 8:18 [Emphasis mine]. Will we reach the light at the end of the tunnel finally when Jesus comes back to this earth? This is not how the verse reads. Paul is comparing the sufferings he is going through as of minor importance compared to “The glory which shall be revealed in us.” When will this glory be revealed? It should be on this earth prior to the second coming of Christ, like in the example of Joseph. After his two years in prison, God released him, and through Joseph His glory was revealed to the world through the greatest kingdom on earth. Likewise in the case of Daniel, the

glory of God was revealed to the mightiest nation on earth at the time and brought the greatest monarch to his knees. And also Job was blessed with a double portion of material blessings, and continued to be an even greater blessing to the people around him—revealing the glory of God.

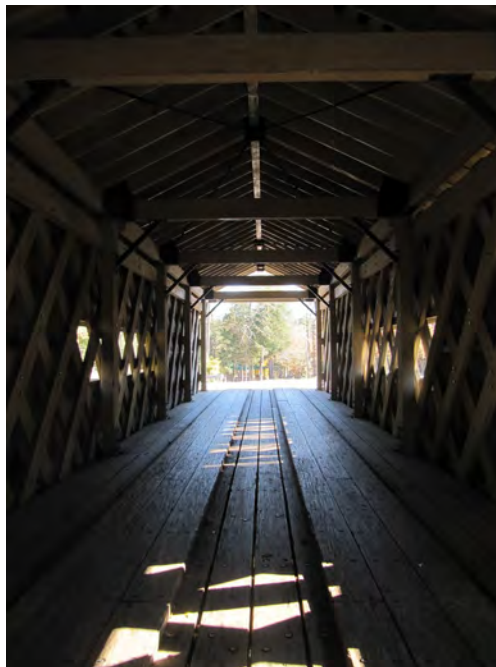
And the slaves in the galley of the ship, how was the glory of God revealed in their lives? Perhaps many of them perished at sea and were thrown overboard to be buried beneath the ocean. What other way did God have for reaching the other non-Christian slaves in the galley ship, who were without hope and without God, than to send some of His own servants there to reveal

His glory to them; to give them hope in the midst of their miserable condition, and perhaps to even reach the cruel and hard-hearted men who were enslaving them? Paul and Silas revealed the glory of God in prison to the other prisoners and to the guard. The guard was converted and he and his household were baptized.

Nothing happens by accident. God is in control. Has He permitted some of His followers to end up in the galley of a slave ship? Yes, He has. But remember, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;

but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13. A Christian can find grace and help even in the galley of a slave ship.

If you find yourself in a situation that you feel you simply cannot manage, or handle and yet you feel that you will crumble and give up on life because of it, do not give up in despair. Remember the promise of God in 1 Corinthians 10:13, and you will be able to manage the situation if you take the Lord with you. He has promised to be there for you. He will walk through the dark tunnel with you. He will share your oar in the galley of the ship. Just keep your eyes on the light at the end. God will never lead you into an impossible situation. Do not look at any situation as impossible because “with God all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26. Take God with you and watch the miracles happen—one day at a time.



Although your physical captivity may not turn in this life, your spirit can be free. “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Philippians 4:6. Careful here means anxious. Why worry? And then the following verse (v.7), “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Every tunnel has a light at the end of it and we have to keep looking for that light. The Christian slaves on the galley ship could see the light. They kept the light of the Lord burning in their hearts and that kept them going.

Things do not always turn out as you plan on this earth, but thank God that you are not in such a desperate situation as a slave in the galley of a ship. Count your blessings. When things go wrong, thank God. It may be for your salvation, for your character development.

Jesus could not see through the portals of the tomb—which means what? “The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 753. He was going into the sepulchre to die, and then what?

Can we see through the portals of the tomb? What did Paul see when he was about to die? “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. What a wonderful promise. We have hope.

Paul could see the light at the end of the tunnel through all his suffering. He said “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the

heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” 2 Corinthians 11:24–28. He did not have an easy life. Yet he died a happy man with no regrets. “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.” (v. 30)

We face minor trials and difficulties from time to time and at times, we get distressed over them. Sometimes we wonder why such little things disturb our peace. It need not be so. When we have learned to patiently endure smaller trials, we will be given greater and greater tests until our character is perfect. No matter what the devil throws our way (as in the case of Job), it will not disturb our peace and our oneness with God. Even if we end up in the galley of a slave ship, praise God there are souls to whom we can minister. We can have the peace and joy of the Lord in our hearts.

This is an evil and wicked world in which we live. Bad things happen to everyone at times, whether you lose a job or have a car accident, or do not have enough money to feed your family. The true Christian has a free spirit in Christ and nothing can disturb his/her peace. Following Christ does not entail only a life of sorrow, sadness and hardship. It is not darkness and fear. In fact it is happiness, joy, peace and blessings. This makes the devil angry and he wants to disrupt this happy state of being, but the true Christian will smile and look to Jesus and not let anything the devil brings their way cut the connection they have with Jesus.

God is in control. Take His hand and let Him lead. Follow on and keep your eyes focused on the light at the end of the tunnel. That light is Jesus Christ and all the heavenly host is waiting for you to join them in the glorious New Earth. It is yours if you keep on travelling with Jesus through the tunnel, or rowing your boat with Him. Do not give up. Amen.





Does God Have a Visible Church on This Earth?

I was recently thinking on the number of questions people have regarding God's visible church. In the last decade I have met many people who were questioning if they need to be a part of this church. They said it is not important to be part of God's true Church because God loves all churches the same; since He is love, no matter what we are doing, whether we keep His commandments or not, God still loves us. This is true; God loves people. He loves us so much that He gave His life for us. Therefore, we should understand a very important thing: God cannot save us while we continue in sin. Jesus atoning death on the cross cannot save me if I have all the evidence from the Scriptures and I turn my back on Him. In other words, if the truth has been revealed to me in such a way that I understand everything regarding the plan of salvation and its requirements such as commitment through baptism, faithfulness in offerings and returning the 10% from all my income to God, health and dress reform, and so forth, if this wonderful truth is not put into practice in our daily life, then God cannot save us—not because He does not want us to be saved, but because we harden our hearts—closing the only avenue the Holy Spirit works through, in making the truth a sanctified truth in our lives, preparing men and women for eternity. This is the character we must form in order to be saved, our recommendation for heaven through the merits of Christ on the cross. We know that the church does not save anyone by itself; it is Jesus who saves us, and through His atoning blood. But also the church plays a great role in our salvation as a family. Don't misunderstand me, I want to

make clear the point from the beginning—the church as a denomination, whatever its name is cannot save me—Christ alone and His righteousness, when received into our lives bring us together in what the Bible calls the church, which represents Christ's body.

EKKLESIA—THE CALLED OUT

In the Scriptures, the word "church" is a translation of the Greek "*ekklesia*" which means "a calling out." This expression was commonly used for any assembly summoned by the practice of calling people to meet. The Septuagint, the Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament, popular in Jesus' time, used *ekklesia* to translate the Hebrew *qahal*, which stood for "gathering," "assembly," or "congregation." "And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly." Deuteronomy 9:10. "According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not." Deuteronomy 18:16

This usage was broadened in the New Testament. We can see how it uses the term "church": believers assembled for worship in a specific place, believers living in a certain locality, a group of believers in the home of an individual, or a group of congregations in a given geographic area, the whole body of believers through-

out the world, the whole faithful creation in heaven and on earth, as Paul mentioned to the Ephesians. These are only a few examples given by Paul in order to understand the meaning of a church in terms of the Biblical definition.

So, we have seen until now the Biblical meaning of “church.” What is the nature of “the Church of God” as the Apostle Paul calls it in Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2? It is a Divine institution, invested by Christ with Divine authority, according to the words spoken by Christ in Matthew 18:17–18, “And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say to you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Having a special message to be given to the entire world before Jesus’ second coming, preparing a people, a special people as declared in the book of Revelation 14:12 as the remnant who keeps God’s commandments and the faith of Jesus.

God’s servant, Ellen G. White wrote about the purpose of God’s church. “The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvellous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to ‘the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ a final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9

So, the church is God’s fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world and we are His witnesses. The roots of the Christian church in the Old Testament also portrays the church as an organized congregation of God’s people from earliest times. They were God-fearing families in the lineage of Adam, Set, Noah, Shem and Abraham, who were the guardians of God’s truth. In the New Testament the book of Acts

portrays how God’s people were brought out from Egypt and were called God’s peculiar and chosen people—the church or congregation in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). This is a very important passage in the Scriptures that shows us the continuity of God’s church in the New Testament.

God desired, through Israel, to create the largest church on earth—a church where representatives of all nations of the world would come to worship, learn of the true God, and return to their own people with the message of salvation. They failed in fulfilling God’s purpose and unto us is given this great opportunity and privilege of proclaiming this great commission. Christ is the founder of Christianity from where its name derives. Let us ask ourselves some important questions; what is the visible church? Does God have a visible congregation or church? If yes, is it important to be a part of it? Does it affect my salvation?

THE GREAT COMMISSION

According to the Bible, the visible church is God’s church organized for service. It fulfills Christ’s great commission to carry the gospel to the world (Matthew 28:18–20), and prepares people for His glorious return (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:27). Christ’s specially chosen witnesses preach the gospel to the poor, and heal the broken-hearted. The question that should concern us is this: am I willing to search for the truth, not through churches but from the Bible and the Bible alone? Am I ready to give up my own ideas and take what is truth? Now, we also have the invisible

church, which is composed of all God’s people throughout the world. It includes the believers who, though they do not belong to a church organization, have followed all the light Christ has given them (John 1:9). This latter group includes those who have never had the opportunity to learn the truth about Jesus Christ but who have responded to the Holy Spirit and “do by nature the things contained in the law” of God (Romans 2:14).

A very good example in the Scriptures of how God leads His people to His church is the example of Saul of Tarsus, also called Paul. When Paul was converted, God put him in touch with His visible church and then appointed him to lead out in the mission of His church



(Acts 9:10–22). Here is a tangible point regarding salvation and work through the church. The same is today; He intends to lead His people into His visible church, characterized by loyalty to God's commandments and possessing the faith of Jesus, so they may participate in finishing His mission on earth. The terms “visible” and “invisible” have been used to distinguish two aspects of the church on earth, so that you and I may not be confused regarding the importance of present truth and its power of regeneration in terms of salvation in and through the church. In other words, my brother, my sister and dear friend, when God reveals truth in all its fullness and it is accepted into my life, the next step is my willingness to being a part of Christ’s body, which is the visible church, the one that Christ nourishes and cares about.

Let me ask you a question here—have you made a covenant with God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Are you an active member in the church—waiting for, and hastening, the coming of the Lord Jesus? Peter said in his epistle; 2 Peter 3:10–18, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware

lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

In this time we are living let me remind you, my friend, this is not an easy time; it is not the time for speaking smooth things or having a mere superficial experience with the Lord. This is not a time for undecided people; you and I must make sure which side we choose today. The right one, whose leader is Jesus, or the wrong one, whose leader is Satan. There will come a time in which the middle ground does not exist, I want to say that those people who today know all the truth and are convicted by it, but denying the power and impression upon the heart, choose the easy way; they choose the desires of the flesh, and put themselves in that place where God cannot save them.



Are you with me? Do you understand the importance of obeying God voluntarily and accepting the appeal of the Holy Spirit? Maybe there have been new truths revealed to you recently and there has temporarily been a conviction, but you did not pay attention to it. But listen, my friend, could it be possible that that conviction one day will go away and your conscience will not tell you anything when you are

wrong? I say, it is dangerous to play with conviction in terms of truth and salvation. I say to you today, my brother, my sister, dear friend, come boldly to the throne of grace and say, “Jesus, whatever truth has been revealed to me, whatever appeal of conviction from Your servants Lord, whatever it is, please help me to receive it as coming from You, Lord.” Because, when we do that there is healing, there is power, spiritual power coming down from on high, making men and women able to live a righteous life here on this planet Earth.

Are you tired of getting ready for Jesus in your own strength? Do you know how much you can accomplish without Jesus? Jesus said, “nothing.” “Without Me”, Jesus said, “you can do nothing.” But, praise God, there is a wonderful promise to those who put their trust in Jesus. Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” All things means much, doesn’t it? Jesus said in John 10:16, “And other sheep I

have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." If we believe with all our hearts that God has a visible church, a visible remnant, people working for the salvation of mankind, then we must do take our part in proclaiming this great commission committed to the church by Christ Himself just prior to His ascension to His Father in Heaven.

I do believe with all my heart that Jesus called me and gave me this great privilege to go in His Name and call people to repentance because the time is short—so little time remains for our preparation. Do you want to join these people who give the trumpet a certain sound, calling people out of Babylon, which means (spiritual confusion) and preparing them for our Lord's soon second coming? That God has a visible, remnant church in the time of the end is clearly taught in Revelation 12. We believe that the woman is a symbol of the church (see Isaiah 54:5, 6; 2 Corinthians 11:2); the dragon is Satan (v. 9); the man child is Christ (Revelation 19:15); and the 1,260 prophetic days refer to the period of papal supremacy from the sixth to the end of the eighteenth century (AD 538-1798).

THE INVISIBLE CHURCH

As far back as Martin Luther, Christians have recognized that God has an invisible church which consists of members from all Christian churches, because there are faithful members in all communions, including that of Rome. They have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour, and they are counted as His people. Therefore, in Revelation 18:4, in the time of the end, and this is that time, the call is made, "Come out of her (Babylon) My people." Many of God's people are still in Babylon; they belong to God's invisible church. At the time of the "Loud Cry" of Revelation 18:4, they will come out and join God's visible remnant church.

We know that the loud cry of Revelation 18 will be a powerful repetition of the messages of the three angels of Revelation 14. As the early church received the early rain which was poured out in the day of Pentecost, we do expect the latter rain which will be poured upon God's remnant people in the last days, and this time is now. God is willing to bestow upon us His Holy Spirit.



Why have we not received the latter rain yet? The answer is simply because we are not prepared. Do you remember the 120 in the upper room who were in one accord, as the Bible says? They were one in Christ, confessing their wrong doings to one another and their sins to God. What about us, my friends, are we in one accord in Christ? Do we confess our mistakes to one another, asking for forgiveness and healing from God? I am afraid we are not doing that properly, as we still have pride, human ambition and self-righteousness. The question is: When will I be willing to give up everything for Christ? Even the worst of all my ambitions or my ego? Let us ask God for power, He will give us sufficient strength to overcome all bad habits and selfishness. We know not the time when the latter rain in its fullness is to fall; this is not revealed to us in the Bible

or by God's servant, Ellen White. I want to conclude with these two quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy which seem to me as very important signs in my preparation for our soon returning King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ.

THE TIME OF THE LATTER RAIN

"I have no specific time of which to speak when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will take place—when the mighty angel will come down

from heaven, and unite with the third angel in closing up the work for this world; my message is that our only safety is in being ready for the heavenly refreshing, having our lamps trimmed and burning. Christ has told us to watch; 'for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.' 'Watch and pray' is the charge that is given us by our Redeemer." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 192

"The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 19

May God richly bless you. Amen!

Nicholas Anca

“Air is the free blessing of heaven; it invigorates the whole system. Deprived of pure air, the body becomes diseased, torpid, and enfeebled.” —*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 160

WHAT IS AIR POLLUTION?

Air pollution is the introduction of chemicals, particulate matter, or biological materials that cause harm or discomfort to humans or other living organisms, or damages the natural environment, into the atmosphere. In other words, air pollution is a term used to describe any unwanted chemicals or other materials that contaminate the air that we breathe resulting in poor air quality, which in turn has negative effects on our health.

Because the atmosphere cannot contain any more particles than it already does, if the atmosphere contains a lot of chemical particles that cause air pollution, some other particles have to be depleted. The particle that gets depleted when air pollution is high is oxygen. An increase in air pollutants directly affects the amount of oxygen in the air, by replacing the oxygen. Normally oxygen is found in the atmosphere at a concentration of approximately 21%. In some industrial cities, the amount of oxygen in the air has been decreased to 15%. This directly correlates to poor health in the people that live in areas with lower oxygen levels. God created our bodies so that the air we breathe contains the right amount of oxygen for the health of our lungs, brain, blood and organs. With lower levels of oxygen, our body does not receive its proper nutrients and we get sick.

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INDOOR AIR POLLUTION

Most of the attention in research has been focused on the poor quality of air outside our dwellings, but we forget that we spend up to 90% of our time indoors. Consequently, maintaining the air in our homes free from pollutants is even more important than maintaining pollution-free air outside of our homes. Poor indoor air quality can cause a variety of health problems. For those people that are most susceptible to indoor air pollution, such as children, the elderly, and people who have existing medical conditions, good indoor air quality is even more of a necessity.

“The lungs are constantly throwing off impurities, and they need to be constantly supplied with fresh air. Impure air does not afford the necessary supply of oxygen, and the blood passes to the brain and other organs without being vitalized. Hence, the necessity of thorough ventilation. To live in close, ill-ventilated rooms, where the air is dead and vitiated, weakens the entire system. It becomes peculiarly

HEALTH MATTERS:



Indoor Pollution

sensitive to the influence of cold, and a slight exposure induces disease.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 274

Let us look at some of the pollutants that we can be exposed to in our homes:

BIOLOGICAL POLLUTANTS

Biological pollutants are defined as living things, or the by-products of living

things. These include bacteria, molds, mildew, viruses, animal dander, dust mites, and droppings and body parts of cockroaches, rats, and other insects. Many of these contaminants are small enough to be inhaled. These contaminants circulate through the air in our homes via the heating or air conditioning systems. They cause many negative health effects including allergic reactions such as asthma, eczema and inflammation of the lining of the nose. Mold and mildew release disease-causing poisons and toxins, which contribute to lung damage and some cancers. Symptoms of exposure to biological pollutants include sneezing, watery eyes, coughing, shortness of breath, dizziness, fatigue, and digestive problems. Many of these health effects occur after repeated exposure to these contaminants. Allergic reactions worsen over time. Especially dust mites, mold and mildew grow in damp, warm environments. Regular cleaning, adequate ventilation and controlling the humidity levels in the home, can minimize the impact of these pollutants.

VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS

Volatile organic compounds (VOC's) include a large variety of chemicals which are emitted as a gas from various solids and liquids. What this means is that these chemicals easily release large numbers of molecules into the air through evaporation even though the substance may be in a solid or liquid form. Most scents or odours, even those that occur in nature are VOC's. But not all VOC's are harmful to human health. However, some VOC's can cause both short-term and long-term negative health effects. VOC's are present in thousands of items that we use in our homes. These include synthetic furnishings such as furniture fabrics, carpets, vinyl flooring, paints, varnishes, wax, cleaning supplies, air fresheners, dry-cleaned clothing, disinfectants, copiers and printers, glues, adhesives, and permanent markers. Automotive gasoline is another source of VOC's. All of these products can release organic compounds when they are being used, and to a lesser degree when they are stored. VOC's are present in the air outside our homes, but they are in concentrations of up to ten times more indoors. Think of the smell when you paint a room, and how those "paint fumes" last for hours. Those are

VOC's that you are smelling, and are a significant source of dangerous VOC's.

Harmful VOC's typically will not cause an immediate toxic or poisoning effect, but long-term exposure to them will have effects on one's health. It is difficult to determine their overall effect on health because the concentrations that people are exposed to are low and the symptoms take many years to develop. But, the evidence is becoming more clear as time goes on. Research does show that high levels of these VOC's do have immediate health effects, therefore it is reasonable to determine that long-term, low level exposure may also produce the same health effects over time. Some of these health effects include eye, nose and throat irritation, headaches, dizziness, memory impairment, nausea, vomiting; damage to liver, kidneys and brain. Many VOC's are known to cause cancer in animals, and some are suspected also of causing cancer in humans.

Ways to reduce exposure include having good ventilation when using these products, ensuring stored products are in closed containers, avoiding using dry cleaners that return your clothes to you with a strong odour, using natural fabrics on furniture, and installing hard wood floors.

WOOD BURNING STOVES, HEATERS, FIRE PLACES, AND CHIMNEYS

The major pollutants produced by these products include carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and fine particles. Residential wood combustion refers to the burning of wood in fireplaces, wood stoves, fire pits and other devices used for heating our homes or for cooking food. An improperly operated wood stove fails to achieve the high combustion temperatures necessary to burn the small particles and ignite the gases. Also, if wood stoves and fireplaces are not vented properly, these small particles will enter into the living space of homes. Carbon monoxide is produced when this partial combustion takes place. The danger with carbon monoxide is that it replaces the carbon dioxide in our bodies, which lowers the body's oxygen levels. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are headaches, dizziness, nausea, confusion, disorientation, fatigue, and chest pain. Often people confuse these symptoms with the flu or food poisoning. Continued exposure to nitrogen dioxide may lead to lung diseases such as emphysema.

Smoke from wood-burning stoves and fireplaces contain a complex mixture of gases and particles, which are significant pollutants. Smoke is produced when wood does not burn completely. The smell of smoke in the house is a sign that pollutants from wood burning are present in the air. A certified wood stove should never smell like smoke. Doors should be tight-fitting and inspected regularly. Smoke in the house can lead to respiratory problems for the occupants. It can also be a sign of graver danger.

A major health threat from smoke comes from fine particles (also called particle pollution, particulate matter) and volatile gases. The size of particles is directly linked to their potential

for causing health problems. Small particles less than 10 micrometers in diameter pose the greatest problems, because they can get deep into the lungs, and some may even get into the bloodstream. Among these particles are "fine particles," which are 2.5 micrometers in diameter and smaller. These fine particles can affect both your lungs and your heart. People who heat with wood should do so as cleanly as possible.

Carcinogens (cancer-causing agents) in wood smoke contain many of the same carcinogens that are in cigarettes. Breathing wood smoke increases your risk of cancer. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that wood smoke is 12 times more carcinogenic than equal amounts of tobacco smoke. More generally, small particulate matter and other pollutants in indoor smoke inflame the airways and lungs, impairing immune response and reducing the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

THE FORGOTTEN THREE BILLION

Is the concern about indoor pollution only applicable to those of us who live in the typical North American or European house, apartment or condominium? No. The World Health Organization refers to the "forgotten 3 billion," people in developing countries who still cook and heat their homes using solid fuels on open fires or traditional stoves, resulting in high levels of indoor air pollution. These solid fuels consist of wood, animal dung, and crop waste. Such cooking and heating produces high levels of indoor air pollution with a range of health-damaging pollutants, including small soot particles that penetrate deep into the lungs. In poorly ventilated dwellings, indoor smoke can be 100 times higher than acceptable levels for small particles. Exposure is particularly high among women and young children, who spend the most time near the domestic hearth.

Nearly 2 million people a year die prematurely from illnesses attributable to indoor air pollution due to solid fuel use. Among these deaths, 44% are due to pneumonia. Another 54% of deaths are from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and 2% from lung cancer. Nearly half of deaths among children under five years old are from respiratory infections due to particulate matter inhaled from indoor air pollution from household solid fuels. There is also evidence of links between indoor air pollution and low birth weight and tuberculosis.

According to Global Health Risks, deaths and diseases attributable to indoor air pollution is responsible for 2.7% of the world's disease burden.

The main problem with indoor air pollution is that we have no choice but to breathe in the air around us, regardless of its quality. Therefore, we need to control what we bring into our homes, the way we heat our homes and cook our food, and we need to be mindful of those practices that will minimize the effect of the pollutants that surround us to reduce the adverse, negative effects of indoor air pollution on our health.

“Lord, I Knew Thee That Thou Art an Hard Man”

Matthew 25:24



Have you ever met a man that was easy on himself in private, but very hard on others in public? Weren't the Pharisees like this?

"Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." Matthew 25:24–25. You see why this man was serving God? Because he feared Him, not with the godly kind of fear, meaning awe or respect, but because he looked upon God as being a hard person.

Have you ever met someone like this, that was so afraid of God, that they could not truly serve Him? They were too busy trembling in their boots to have fellowship with a God of love. Some are always dwelling upon the negative aspects of the gospel— all the dos and don'ts — especially the “Thou shalt nots”— so that they don't have any time to truly appreciate God's mercy and love.

There is another way this fear is manifest—when we see God as being a hard person. Look for it in this next statement:

“Many who have but little of this world are represented by the man with one talent. They are afraid to trust God. They are afraid that He will require something which they claim to be their own. They hide their talent in the earth, fearing to invest it anywhere, lest they will be called to give back the improvements to God. Instead of putting the talent out to the exchangers, as God required, they bury it, or hide it, where neither God nor man can be benefited by it.

“Many who profess to love the truth are doing this very work. They are deceiving their own souls, for Satan has blinded their eyes. In robbing God, they have robbed themselves more. Because of covetousness and an evil heart of unbelief, they have deprived themselves of the heavenly treasure. Because they have but one talent, they are afraid to trust it with God, and so hide it in the earth. They feel relieved of responsibility. They love to see the truth progress, but do not think that they are called upon to practice self-denial and aid the work by their own individual effort and by their means, although they have not a large amount.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 666

"And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Mark 12:42–44

Are you afraid that God is going to require something of you that you don't want to yield to Him?

On the other hand, does our relationship with God rest more on what we do for Him, or on what He has done and is doing for us?

Be careful how you answer this, because how we answer this question will really show if we are under the Old Covenant or the New Covenant. We could ask it this way: In what or whom are we trusting for our salvation—Christ, or our own obedience?

In 1888 there were three things that formed the basis of the controversy in that conference:

1. Law in Galatians. Whether it was the moral or ceremonial law—it was actually both (so many were trusting in their obedience to the law, but that is living under the old covenant. Sister White only said about 12–13 years later, that it was actually both laws that were mentioned in Galatians). “ I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments. . . . 'The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith' (Galatians 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

"An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world." — *Selected Messages*, book 1, p.233– 234

2. The Covenants. Most of the leaders were trying to say that the promises and requirements of both covenants were the same, but they were wrong. The New Covenant is founded upon better promises, from a better sanctuary and a better priesthood. Something better is the theme of the book of Hebrews, and the better promises are that God's can fulfill in us that which we could not fulfill ourselves—righteousness and obedience to His law.

3. The Nature of Christ. Again many of the leaders had a completely wrong concept of the nature of Christ—with both extremes being represented—either as totally human, or totally God, but not a perfect balance between the two— 100% man and 100% God.

In the Old Covenant, what did that covenant rest upon? Upon what was it based? "Now therefore, if ye will

obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord." Exodus 19:5–8. "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and be obedient." Were they obedient? Who can say that they have been perfectly obedient?

But what did the New Covenant rest upon? "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. " Hebrews 8:6. Upon better promises—upon God's promises.

If we love God, we must keep the Ten Commandments; it is righteousness to keep them.

God said, "Whom I love I rebuke and chasten." God has promised to give us power to move mountains, and nothing will be impossible to us (Matthew 17:20). Alone we can do nothing.

"It was this that proved the ruin of the Jews, and it will prove the ruin of many souls in our own day. Thousands are making the same mistake as did the Pharisees whom Christ reprov'd at Matthew's feast. Rather than give up some cherished idea, or discard some idol of opinion, many refuse the truth which comes down from the Father of light. They trust in self, and depend upon their own wisdom, and do not realize their spiritual poverty. They insist on being saved in some way by which they may perform some important work. When they see that there is no way of weaving self into the work, they reject the salvation provided.

"A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation.

"As it was in the days of Christ, so it is now; the Phari-

sees do not know their spiritual destitution. To them comes the message, 'Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear.' Revelation 3:17, 18. Faith and love are the gold tried in the fire. But with many the gold has become dim, and the rich treasure has been lost. The righteousness of Christ is to them as a robe unworn, a fountain untouched. To them it is said, 'I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.' Revelation 2:4, 5." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 280

So what is the sacrifice that the Lord is looking for? "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.' Psalm 51:17. Man must be emptied of self before he can be, in the fullest sense, a believer in Jesus. When self is renounced, then the Lord can make man a new creature. New bottles can contain the new wine. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. In him who looks unto the Author and Finisher of our faith the character of Christ will be manifest." —*Ibid.*, p. 280

But the gracious God whom we serve, can He perfect that which concerns us? "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands." Psalm 138:8

What are some of the ways that we can tell that we are still looking upon God as being a hard person?

By dwelling upon all the threatenings of the Scripture, but ignoring the love of God.

By dwelling upon all the rules and regulations of the Bible but neglecting the real motivation to obey—love!

Do we really appreciate the love of God? If we did, we

would show much more love than we do. We would tell others of the love of God much more than the dos and don'ts.

If we did this, the word of God would melt its way to people's hearts. What would be the result for the church? Would we see the heathen converted and the standards of God's word embraced? Would the church be revived and reformed?

Would we have a new and brighter experience ourselves? Yes, because salvation is a gift.

How do you feel when you receive a gift? Very happy, right? But in contrast, how do you feel when you receive wages for which you have worked? "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. Just like you were entitled to it; after all, didn't you work for it?

When Jesus puts the crowns on the righteous people's heads, do they say that they have deserve the crown because they have worked for it?

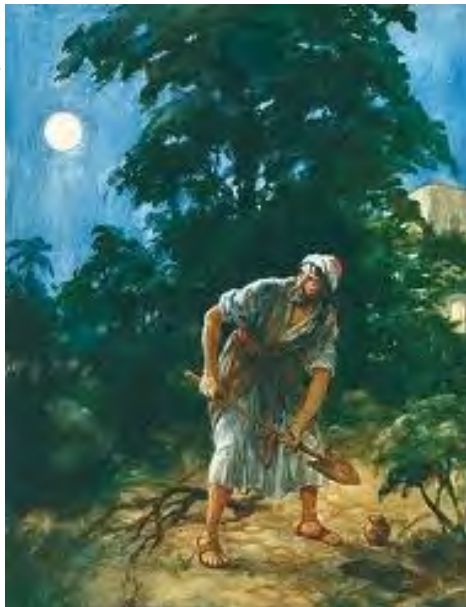
"Then the righteous will receive their reward. Their lives will run parallel with the life of Jehovah. They will cast their crowns at the Redeemer's feet, touch the golden harps, and fill all Heaven with rich music." —*The Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1889

If we merely look upon God as being a hard person, it shows that we have not known Him as we ought. We have

been satisfied with only a superficial knowledge of our gracious God. Of course, when we only see Him as a hard person, we can only present Him to others as being a hard person. And how will people serve a hard person? Out of love, or out of fear?

Unfortunately, fear is not enough to sustain our faith. It is only love that begets love.

"Jesus did not come to men with commands and threatenings, but with love that is without a parallel. Love begets love; and thus the love of Christ displayed upon the cross woos and wins the sinner, and binds him repenting to the cross, believing and adoring the matchless depths of a Saviour's love. Christ came to the world to perfect a righteous character for many and to elevate the fallen race. But only a few of the millions in our world will accept the righteousness and excellency



of His character and fulfill the requirements given to secure their happiness." –*Confrontation*, p. 72

"Love begets love. . . . Our hard hearts need to be broken. We need to come together in perfect unity, and we need to realize that we are the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Let each one say, He gave His life for me, and He wants me, as I go through this world, to reveal the love that He revealed in giving Himself for us. Christ bore our sins in His own body on the cross, that God might be just, and yet the justifier of those who believe in Him. There is life, eternal life, for all who will surrender to Christ." –*Testimonies for the Church Regarding the Spirit of Unity*, p. 27–28

"The unfaithful servant was a poor, deceived, dishonest soul. He said, 'I knew thee that thou art a hard man.' But was this accusation true? He makes it manifest by his charge that he was not acquainted with God, and judged God to be one altogether like himself. Had he made a diligent use of his Lord's entrusted goods, had he been thankful for the trust the Lord had reposed in him, had he qualified himself to make the best use possible of what God had given him, he would never have uttered the words, 'Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed.' How deceived the sinner shows himself to be! He thinks he has a perfect knowledge of God, and that he knows his own heart, when he neither knows himself nor God. His supposed knowledge is only deception. He knows nothing as he ought to know it." –*The Youth's Instructor*, December 14, 1893

May our gracious and merciful God, who is anything but a hard man, help us to know and show something of that wondrous love that He is constantly showering you and I and all the world with; that we may not deceive ourselves or others about who and what He is. And then we will represent Him as a God of love, who truly wants to save us, much more than we want to be saved. Amen.



Jerry Eaton

PLEASE FORGIVE

*As I lay me down to sleep
And ask the Lord my soul to keep
He reminds me, "If you sow you reap,"
On my heavy heart coals of fire did heap.*

*The tongue is like a two-edged sword.
Too often it spits out an angry word
Of impatience and anger—a heart is gored.
I fear this does not represent my Lord.*

*I ponder how a tender heart has fright
And must be saddened by such an ugly sight.
I'm deeply sorry, cause I love you with all
my might.
We know heaven is for peace, the loving and
contrite.*

*Now when we get to the pearly gate
We don't want our heart burdened with hate
Accused of assault with a deadly slate.
Too often we seal our fate with unthinkable
spate.*

*So in your heart of hearts I hope you can see
Your poor old dad asks that you forgive me.
From chains of hurt, and fear, let's be free.
Heaven's our home, with Jesus we want to
be.*

*So forgive me now as I digress
More often than not we must confess
That our unthinkable words make a mess.
With love I seal this with a kiss to bless.*

*To forgive is good
Jesus said we should
To forgive is kind
It purifies the mind.*

~Love, Dad Webber



Paul's Canary

"I don't see why God made me this way. I was such a sickly baby, everyone thought I would die. I wish I had—", Paul paused when he thought of his weary mother and how happy he would be when she came home.

He was crouching on a seat by the one window in the room, looking out at the tall buildings and the wet boards of the nearby houses. Sometimes, leaning out far enough, he could see the paved yard with its pile of boxes and rubbish.

Paul was far from strong. His deformed legs could hardly carry him about.

"I'm of no use at all," cried Paul. "I'm only a trouble to mother. I don't believe there is another creature in the world as helpless as I am."

As he spoke, a gust of wind shook the loose sash and blew the rain furiously against the panes. The blinds next door rattled as the storm seemed to gather force and beat against the window. Then Paul started forward with breathless curiosity to examine a little dripping object that the wind had blown onto the ledge by the window. It was a bird, apparently helpless, scarcely fluttering as it clung feebly to the stone.

"Oh, poor bird, I'll bring you in!" cried Paul. Opening the window he gently reached out his hand. In his haste he forgot to fasten up the sash and it pressed heavily on his shoulders. The wind blew his hair into his eyes and the rain drenched him; but he did not worry about this, his only thought was for the weak creature he hoped to rescue. The storm seemed determined to snatch the bird away before he could reach it. At last, however, he gathered the wet bird in his hands and drew it into the room. Before he thought of changing his clothes, he wiped, stroked, and blew the bird's

feathers, trying to fan the spark of life.

The bird lay in Paul's hands hardly moving. Slowly it began to revive and to pick at its feathers. Then Paul considered himself. He had no other pants and jacket, so he wrapped himself in a blanket, taking his new pet under its folds. In the warmth and darkness, it slept. Paul, with a new feeling of content, watched it until he, too, fell asleep. When his mother came home, she feared he was sick; but on turning back the blanket, she was greeted by a lively chirp from the bird, which was now dry and comfortable. The little fellow displayed a handsome suit of black and yellow. One of his wings was injured, and parts of two toes were gone; but he was bright and chirpy and very hungry.

"Why, Paul, where did this come from?"

Paul related the rescue, and ended by asking: "Isn't he pretty?"

"Yes; but he must have some seed. I'll see if they won't give me a bit downstairs," said mother.

Soon she returned with some birdseed, and, to Paul's satisfaction, the bird began to eat. A little water in a cup served him for drink, and he slept on a stick that Paul balanced between two chairs.

In the days that followed, Paul no longer complained or felt discouraged while his mother was absent earning their living. Pet, as he named the bird, was his playmate. Paul taught the canary to take seed from his lips, to lie dead at a word of command, and to pull his master's hair or eyebrows to get attention.

Now the birdseed that mother had borrowed soon disappeared, and Paul wondered how to get more. It would not be fair to use mother's money. Could he not earn some? He thought and thought.

The window next to his room jutted out so that he often saw Mary sitting at her work. She was sorry for the lame boy, and spoke to him. He made up his mind that she might help him. One day, as she sat plying her nimble fingers, he called: "Mary, please. What do you call your work?"

She looked up and smiled. "Knitting."

"Is it hard to do?"

"Oh, no! It's easy; you could learn it."

"Could I make enough to buy Pet some seed?"

"Why, yes; do you want me to teach you?"

"Oh, do!" cried Paul eagerly.

"I'll come in tonight."

So she did. Paul's fingers were straight and strong and he had a will to learn. Pet tried to investigate the process, pulling the thread; but Paul sent him to bed, and worked away until he could make the stitches as Mary did.

"I'll sell it for you at the same place I take mine; and if you are industrious, you'll more than buy Pet's seed."

After that, Paul sat in his window as busy as anyone. He was happy over his work; and when a few pennies were left over after buying the seed, and he could buy some fruit for mother's lunch, he was now as happy as any other child. Mother declared that her son was growing straighter, and someday he would be strong and would take care of her. Paul no longer thought of himself as a poor miserable, useless child.

Some months after Paul rescued Pet, he was wakened by feeling something on his face. As he opened his eyes, he felt Pet pulling his hair with such strong tugs that it was far from pleasant. The morning light was stealing into the room, its gray cold making everything look dim and strange. Pet pulled and tugged at his master's hair.

"It's not day," said Paul, trying to send Pet away; but the bird would not go. Finally, Paul had to get up and put the canary on his perch. As his hand touched the

wall, he noticed it was quite hot. Pet refused to stay on his perch, clinging instead to his master's shoulder.

"Mother," cried Paul, "mother, wake up!"

His mother was weary, and made no reply. As Paul listened, he heard the roar of fire and smelled the smoke. Springing on his mother's bed, he wakened her and told her of the danger. She ran to the hall and aroused their neighbours; and in a moment the large house, with its many families, was in confusion. The next room was in flames. The fire had started from some clothes that were hung too near the stove; and if it had not been for Pet's alarm it would have been serious. As it was, the firemen came and soon extinguished it, though Paul's room was badly burned and he was obliged to sit with Mary the next day.



Everyone in that house came to see the lame boy and the canary that had saved their property and perhaps their lives. Paul was praised; and so many people wanted Pet, that Paul was afraid they would carry him off. Then came the man who owned the house, and he told Paul that he had saved him many thousand dollars, and asked him what he would like to have. Paul's face flushed, and then he timidly said: "Some crutches, sir, so that I can go into the street."

"You shall have them," replied the man. Paul's mother re-

ceived a sewing machine, so that she did not need to go out to work; and Pet had a comfortable cage to sleep in, and all the seed he could eat.

God has a purpose for everyone. All people, whether old or young, have talents and can be a blessing for other people. There is no such thing as a useless person.

"I have been shown that much sin has resulted from idleness. Active hands and minds do not find time to heed every temptation which the enemy suggests, but idle hands and brains are all ready for Satan to control. The mind, when not properly occupied, dwells upon improper things. Parents should teach their children that idleness is sin." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 395



Health Seminar & Cooking Class in London, Canada

I want to first thank God and then also each one of you who made this event not only knowledgeable but also practical. I thank the Canadian Field Committee members for the financial support and the prayers they offered. What did we do? On two nights, October 16-17, 2013, we presented lectures about vitamins and their importance in the body. The topics that were addressed were, "What are the vitamins?" "The different kinds of vitamins." "Where do we get vitamins from?" The idea is that we should get them naturally, from fruits, vegetables and seeds. The way to combine them and the quantity is important also for their function in

the body. According to the feed back, the two hours of lectures were of great benefit to the participants. There were five newly interested people generated by this event.

On Sunday, October 20, 2013, we continued with a cooking class about healthy desserts. Various sisters and brothers participated in the presentation. I want, once again, to thank all of you, both for your prayers and support.

God bless you,

Alina Anca





**BATAAN
YOUTH CAMP
PHILIPPINES**



**ABOVE: ESTONIA
RIGHT: SWEDEN**



Regarding Martin Luther: “Firm and fearless at his post of duty is the great Reformer. Faithful among the faithless, unheeding the storms of malice and revenge, he stands a mighty cedar of Lebanon among the trees of the forest. While the passions and pollutions of the multitude surge around him like waves of the great deep, he stands, a Heaven-sent beacon, to warn the imperiled mariner of the hidden shoal and the rocky shore.” -*The Signs of the Times*, August 30, 1883. May God help us to follow his example.

