



The Reformation
Messenger

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WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth,

and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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ABOUT THE COVER

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SUNDAY LAW!

Where On The Table Is It?

For years, the Sunday Law is purported to be on the table of the United States legislature. Yet it seems to lay latent in a nondescript file, waiting perhaps for the remaining States to make this blueprint legal across the board. One thing for sure is that it will one day be the first item on the agenda, since America, presently the land of freedom, is slated to fulfill prophecy. No great sign yet, so we who have a vested interest in it put on our dark lenses and go back to rest, waiting for the alarm clock to go off.

Strategy never sounds an alarm. It just stealthily comes upon us. But those who are watching are seeing the "abomination of desolation" making inroads. They see the frothy water coming ahead of the ship heading for the United States of America where once landed the "Mayflower" as it previously carried newly minted true-hearted Protestants. Now they watch the movement of sold-out false Protestants, resolved to bring back the system that once caused sorrow, to finish a conflict that will see them speaking in dragon-like tones. They watch it; coasting, seeing the undercurrent building and building. Alliances forming and systems put in place for a smooth transition. It is therefore now, not *if* the Sunday Law will ever be enforced, but *when* and where on the table it is today.

For example, the West is now experiencing a type of relationship with a system that was once a foe. As recently as March 2014, the Papal Head and the Head of the United States of America is purported to have sat together to make plans for such things as Trade Union Ratification. Indeed the Spirit of Prophecy spoke of this joint like-mindedness—world peace. It is not far-fetched as it is nicely fitting together like a cog in a wheel. It must. A transfer of power according to Revelation 13 is inevitable.

Looking on the other side through the view-master of trusted world news is shown the Pope's recent lament that the Sunday Tradition needs to be brought back in, as it has a positive impact on families. He is quoted to have said as recently as July 2014 that "No-Work Sundays are good for all People, not just Christians." This has pleased the Lord's Day Alliance who is presently working hard to bring this about and is music to their ears.

What we don't see is the undercurrent, the slow buildup of alliances across the West and through the European Nations as a strong current flowing steadily along the path to fulfillment where the enemy of God's true Rest Day is driving it to a course that will ultimately flow into the Banks of America onto the table of the US Congress.

Of course the critical thinker will immediately think that unless the American Constitution is changed it is futile to think of such a change. However, given the pace in which Congress can work if they are pushed to legislate, especially if it suits their political "image of the beast" as found in Revelation 13: 11–17 it is prophesied to fulfill his calling namely:

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

The Arch-deceiver does not forget and seeks to ultimately work through the very instrumentality that once championed truths that brought liberty to the shores of America when they sailed the high seas as they fled from persecution. But it is an old strategy, done previously, and is about to be used again as affirmed by Inspiration, namely: Of course behind all of this is the Arch-deceiver "even now He is at work," states the Spirit of Prophecy, "And now, as in former ages, he has worked through the church to further his designs." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 403. This work, though, is a two-fold confederacy, designed to accomplish the same objective as previously successfully done where the long arm of the law is given the task of bringing to justice what the church could not sanction or legally do.

To set the stage, convincing evidences will first have to be displayed. This is where the third member of the alliance comes in—Satan—says the Spirit of Prophecy: "As Spiritualism assimilates more closely to the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. . . . miracles will be wrought. . . . their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power." —*Ibid.*, p. 405–406. And more, He will bring about "accidents and calamities by sea and by land. . . . tidal waves and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms. . . . famine and distress follow. . . . And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. . . . It will be declared that the nation is offending God by the violation of the Sunday-Sabbath, that

this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced, and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the nation, preventing its restoration to divine favour and temporal prosperity." —*Ibid.*, p. 407–408. "The fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called 'Christian Sabbath,' and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society." —*Ibid.*, p. 404

"With rapid steps are we already approaching this period," (*Ibid.*, p. 410) concludes the Pen of Inspiration? This was stated in 1884. The last ordinance, as it were, decree, will be prompted by the deluded false Protestantism and groups like the Lord's Day Alliance to bring about a law and the conviction of those who refuse to abide accordingly. At that time the issue will be between those who serve God in spirit and truth and those who serve Him not.

Prophecy must be fulfilled. A view to the future through the lens of inspiration affirms: "When Protestant churches shall seek the support of the secular power, thus following the example of that apostate church, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fieriest persecution, then will there be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin." —*Ibid.*, p. 410. It is at the height of this that "the decree will go forth that they must disregard the fourth commandment, and honor the first day, or lose their lives; but they will not yield, and trample under their feet the Sabbath of The Lord." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4b, p. 113

Ironically it will be the law of God that will be the standard of the judgment where the 4th Commandment will have been shown to have been binding on man till heaven and earth pass away, and that the spurious rest day, Sunday was not recognized by Heavens standard; and so when the enforcement makes it mandatory, as it were, legal, all who are alive and have not embraced this law of liberty will be brought to the Bar of God where the cup of His indignation will be poured out without mercy. Until then the hearers of the law have time to make their calling and election sure, before the door of mercy forever closes. Prior to His final ruling even now a warning is issued: "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 for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast or his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Revelation 14:9–11

—*Rose Powell*

Today



“To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.” Hebrews 3:15

Our time is short, the end of the world is upon us. We need to hurry to get ready for the end, and also warn the people in the church and also outside to get ready.

A great company of people left Egypt with Moses, with a purpose to go to their own land. They had religious instruction, they kept Sabbath, they were taught to pray, and they participated in religious ceremonies. But then came the day of provocation and they rebelled against God, and refused to enter the Promised Land. They hardened their hearts and therefore only two of the adult men were allowed to enter into Canaan’s land. They heard the voice of God, but did not obey it.

A similar experience happened to the Millerite movement in 1844. About 50,000 people in the United States believed the message of the coming of Jesus. Many left their homes, businesses, and their farms and started to proclaim the message that Jesus will come on October 22, 1844. People listened to their message and many believed and came to church, and confessed their sins. Why did they do it? It was because the time was short, soon they would be in heaven, they believed.

But then came the disappointment, Jesus did not come. Then out of every thousand believers, one remained in the message. Others went back to the world, to other

world they were happier and it gave them greater enjoyment.

Young people often think that when they get older, then they will come to church and obey God and keep His commandments. Meanwhile, they enjoy the pleasure of the world. Such people often leave their obedience too long, until salvation is too late for them.

Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give

me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.” John 4:10

She did not know what the gift of God was. She did not know what the living water was. If she would have known, she would have asked for it.

David wrote, “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Psalm 16:11

If we know all the blessings that religion gives us, we

would not delay our obedience even for one day. “Today” is the key word. When God is calling us, we must hasten to obey Him immediately.

Abraham was told by God to sacrifice his son, Isaac. He did not delay his obedience even for one hour. Early in the morning he got up and started the three-day journey to the land of Moriah to sacrifice his son. Someone else may have delayed his obedience and asked of God,



“is it really necessary to sacrifice my son?”

To some believers religion is so precious that they are willing to sacrifice their lives for a martyr’s death, whereas others rather give up their faith. One person said that, after he had all the necessary Bible studies, he would like to be baptized into the church except that he did not want to pay tithes. He did not think that heaven and eternal life were worth that great a sacrifice.

In South America some people told us that they walk two to three hours to get to Sabbath School, and then back home again. So important was it for them to be in a religious meeting. Sister White writes that to miss the religious meetings, which are God’s mediums for our salvation, means that we will lose our faith.

Felix received Bible studies from Paul, and he trembled, “And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.” Acts 24:25. “He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God.” –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 427

Today is the acceptable time to respond to God’s call. Tomorrow may be too late. In our missionary work, delay is dangerous. “There is danger in delay. That soul whom you might have found, that soul to whom you might have opened the Scriptures, passes beyond your reach. Satan has prepared some net for his feet, and tomorrow he may be working out the plans of the arch-enemy of God. Why delay one day? Why not go to work at once?” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 443

“Industry in a God-appointed duty is an important part of true religion. Men should seize circumstances as God’s instruments with which to work His will. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect result in failure and

dishonor to God. If the leaders in the cause of truth show no zeal, if they are indifferent and purposeless, the church will be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving; but if they are filled with a holy purpose to serve God and Him alone, the people will be united, hopeful, eager.” –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 676

“Again I call for the help that we ought to have had, the means that we must have, if anything is accomplished in this country. Let your hearts be drawn out in love for perishing souls. Obey the impulse given by High Heaven. Grieve not the Holy Spirit by delay. Resist not God’s methods of recovering souls from the thralldom of sin. To every man, according to his several ability, is given his work. Do your best, and God will accept your efforts.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 56

Delay can be dangerous, it grieves the Holy Spirit, it can even defeat our own salvation.

“‘The last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so.’ Said Jesus, ‘shall it be also unto this wicked generation.’ There are none so hardened as those who have slighted the invitation of mercy, and done despite to the Spirit of grace. The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven’s invitation to repent. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324

Many times God has to put us in a crisis situation in order to help us realize how much we need His help; also, to realize our weaknesses.

Today is our time; today is our opportunity. Tomorrow is not in our hands and yesterday is gone. Do not delay your obedience. Even one day’s delay can be dangerous. Amen.

Timo Martin

LOOKING FOR YOU...

If you are interested in submitting an item for publication in *The Reformation Messenger*, please submit by email or mail.

SUBMIT: DRAWINGS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, REPORTS, ARTICLES, POEMS, PHOTOS, PERSONAL TESTIMONIES AND EXPERIENCES.



It's Not About You

I once read a short article about a man who was about to be married to the love of his life. As the day approached he was having a few anxious thoughts and on the eve of his wedding he came and shared his thoughts with his father. The young man was thinking that his father would give him some nice marriage counsel and encouragement; would tell him how happy he is that his son was getting married to a wonderful woman and hoped that their marital bliss will last for a very long time—until “death do us part.”

Instead the father began his talk by saying, “Son, I just want to tell you that marriage is not for you.”

He had hoped his father would give him some reassurance, however, he was mystified at these words because this was the eve of his wedding and now, just now, his father is telling him that marriage is not for him? How could this be? Why did he not have this conversation with him a half a year ago before all this money was spent for the wedding preparations? Surely his father was making a mistake. He had known his fiancée since they were in high school 10 years earlier and they loved each other very much. Surely this was the right woman for him, however, here was his father telling him that marriage was not for him. There must be some mistake.

But no, his father saw the surprised look on the face of his son and repeated, “Son, marriage is not for you.”

He then continued by saying, “You don’t marry to make yourself happy, you marry to make someone else happy. More than that, your marriage isn’t for yourself, you’re marrying for a family. Not just for the in-laws and all of that nonsense, but for your future children. Who do you want to help you raise them? Who do you want to influence them? Marriage isn’t for you. It’s not about you. Marriage is about the person you married.”

A year and a half later, the young man realized his father’s

words were very true. Marriage was not for him, the young woman had been the right person to marry. He still loved her so much that he enjoyed making her happy; seeing her smile every day, and making her laugh. He was happy to be a part of her family, and his family was happy to have her to be a part of theirs. And, thinking back on all the times he had seen her play with his nieces, he knew that he had made the right decision and was married not for himself, but for others.

A true marriage (and true love) is never about you. It’s about the person you love—their wants, their needs, their hopes, and their dreams. Selfishness demands, “What’s in it for me?”, while Love asks, “What can I give?”

In the Bible the relationship between God and His church is compared to marriage. “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body.” Ephesians 5:23

The Bible also speaks of how the individual believers is married to Christ. “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Romans 7:1–4

Being married to Christ, we can apply the same principles that the father shared with his son, to the church and to each Christian individually.

RELIGION IS NOT ABOUT YOU

What is religion? By definition it is: something one believes in and follows devotedly; a point or matter of ethics or conscience; a specific fundamental set of beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects. We have different religions. We have the Christian religion, Buddhist religion, Muslim religion and so on.

And therefore Christianity is: conformity to the Christian religion; to its beliefs or practices.

So why do people conform to the Christian beliefs or practices? Comparing our story at the beginning to Christianity, we hear many people who are contemplating Christianity having selfish motives, asking, "What's in it for me?" They do it for the blessings that they can receive. Others do so only to escape hell fire. Some keep their religion to themselves and live quiet lives, looking forward to the time when they can be in heaven and enjoy the riches and glory in heaven; little caring for their fellow man.

The many who are looking only for rewards—the ultimate reward being salvation and eternal life—there are temporal rewards they are hoping for also on this earth such as miracles of healing, financial security, peace and safety. Even faith that God will carry us through in this life can be derived from selfish motives. The religion of these people is for themselves. Also when doing missionary work—they do it for the purpose of merit; something that must be done for one to enter the pearly gates, or to receive praise and recognition on this earth. People often choose a religion then that suits their lifestyle—that has the most benefits for themselves.

There are "Christian" preachers who make a lot of money from their followers and have a good living while on this earth and the sad truth is that "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:22–23. Imagine the sorrow of these people who seemingly devoted their entire lives to the service of the Lord, but in the end found themselves outside the kingdom. Will they really honestly be deceived, thinking they should be in the kingdom and not understanding why they are not? No, they have been given opportunity to give up their sins—perhaps secret

sins—but they chose to hang on to them. Their religion had been from purely selfish motives—"What's in it for me?" If they have to sacrifice all to enter heaven they will, not for the good of humanity, not because they love Jesus, but because they love themselves and this is one step they must do in order to enter in. So what if we lose all on this earth because we will have wealth in heaven.

However, if you consider the father's advice to his son in your religious experience, remember, true religion and true Christianity is not about you at all.

Let's take that quote above where the father gave his son advice about marriage and substitute the word Religion or Christianity in its place and then it will read like this.

"You don't become a Christian to make yourself happy, you become a Christian to make someone else happy.

More than that, your Christianity isn't for yourself, you're becoming a Christian for Jesus and for a family [the family of God]. Not just for the in-laws and all of that nonsense [your own family and friends], but for your future children [new converts to the faith and interested souls]. Who do you want to help you raise them? Who do you want to influence them? [What influence are you on your associates?] Christianity isn't about you. Christianity is about the people you are friends with and related to, and who you meet every day."

The man had already won the love of the woman. He was already prepared to marry her. She was his. He

promised on his wedding day to love and to cherish her until "death do us part."

You have already been promised the gift of God which, "is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. All true Christians are looking forward with longing for the day when Jesus will return and take the faithful to heaven. This is not a selfish longing. We long to see the end of the misery and sorrow in this world. And we love the Lord for providing a way out. On your baptism day did you promise to love and to cherish Jesus until "death do us part"?

How do we show our love to Jesus? For the great gift He gave to us of His sacrifice and His promise of eternal life?

"For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then



shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Matthew 25:35-40

Is it possible to do humanitarian work from selfish motives? "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:3. Yes, it is. As in marriage, some do good expecting to reap rewards for themselves.

As with marriage vows, on our baptism day we make certain vows to the Lord. We vow to adhere to specific health laws, we vow to attend church services, we vow to give a certain portion of our money to the Lord; to keep His commandments; study His word and so on. Why do we do this? We vow to keep the health laws, not only so that we can live a healthier life for ourselves, but that we can be healthier and give better service to Jesus through our fellow man. We vow to give a portion of our money to the Lord because we delight to see the gospel being furthered and thus, because we love the Lord so much, we want to see the gospel reach as many people as possible. Therefore, we seek to give as much as we can spare, rather than as little as possible to retain our church membership. Our heart is in heaven. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Psalm 62:10. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:21

We read our Bibles not only to enlighten ourselves but so that we can share the light contained therein with others; and so as we read and are excited about our discoveries, we seek to share them as soon as there is opportunity. And we will be looking for opportunities every day. We keep the commandments joyfully because in doing so, we build a better society for those around us and hope that they catch the vision also and desire to keep the commandments.

And then there is church attendance. Some go to see what they can receive. I have heard it said by some that they got nothing out of the services that week. Do we attend church only to receive a blessing? That is very selfish—and then often we will not receive it. We go to church to be a

blessing for others. To have something to say in the lessons, in the social meetings, in the afternoon meetings. We have something to share about our experiences with the Lord during the week, about what we learned from our private devotions during the week. As we seek to be a blessing for others, the blessing will return upon us. We do reap benefits from being faithful to the Lord's requirements. We do live happier, healthier and more peaceful live. And then in turn we want others to also reap the benefits there are in following the Lord. We go to church, not only for ourselves, but for others because we love Jesus. We go to meet the love of our life.

Love is what the Lord is looking for—service with love.



"Pure love is simple in its operations, and separate from every other principle of action. When combined with earthly motives and selfish interests, it ceases to be pure. God considers more with how much love we work, than the amount we do. Love is a heavenly attribute. The natural heart cannot originate it. This heavenly plant only flourishes where Christ reigns supreme. Where love exists, there is power and truth in the life. Love does good, and nothing but good. Those who have love bear fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life. 'By

this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.'" —*The Youth's Instructor*, January 13, 1898

Ask yourself whether you enjoy working for the Lord. Is it your greatest joy to go out and share the truth with others? What do you use your spare time for? Just taking time out for yourself and relaxing? Or working for the Lord? What is the most common subject of your conversation? "The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation." —*The Review and Herald*, November 15, 1887

How can we develop this loving work ethic for Jesus?

True love is not natural in human nature. It is a plant of heavenly origin that will grow as it is watered. As we keep always in mind that our religion is not about us, it will grow.

"Many are longing to grow in grace; they pray over the matter, and are surprised that their prayers are not answered. The Master has given them a work to do whereby they shall grow. Of what value is it to pray when there is

need of work? The question is, Are they seeking to save souls for whom Christ died? Spiritual growth depends upon giving to others the light that God has given to you. You are to put forth your best thoughts in active labor to do good, and only good, in your family, in your church, and in your neighborhood. In place of growing anxious with the thought that you are not growing in grace, just do every duty that presents itself, carry the burden of souls on your heart, and by every conceivable means seek to save the lost. Be kind, be courteous, be pitiful; speak in humility of the blessed hope; talk of the love of Jesus; tell of His goodness, His mercy, and His righteousness; and cease to worry as to whether or not you are growing. Plants do not grow through any conscious effort. Jesus said, 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.' The plant is not in continual worry about its growth; it just grows under the supervision of God. The children of God are to cease worrying, cease looking at themselves; they are to take an earnest interest in others, and seek to lead the feet of the straying in the narrow path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. In this kind of work they will gain breadth of thought, tact, and skill. They will realize that they are to become agencies through which God will convey the truth to other minds, and that they are never to be left alone in their efforts; for heavenly angels will work with them, and impress the hearts of those who hear." —*The Youth's Instructor*, February 3, 1898

"Go to work, whether you feel like it or not. Engage in personal effort to bring souls to Jesus and the knowledge of the truth. In such labor you will find both a stimulus and a tonic; it will both arouse and strengthen. By exercise your spiritual powers will become more vigorous, so that you can with better success work out your own salvation. The stupor of death is upon many who profess Christ. Make every effort to arouse them. Warn, entreat, expostulate. Pray that the melting love of God may warm and soften their icebound natures. Though they may refuse to hear, your labor will not be lost. *In the effort to bless others your own souls will be blessed.*

"We have the theory of the truth, and now we need to seek most earnestly for its sanctifying power. I dare not hold my peace in this time of peril. It is a time of temptation, of despondency. Everyone is beset by the wiles of Satan, and we should press together to resist his power. We should be of one mind, speaking the same things, and with one mouth glorifying God. Then may we successfully enlarge our plans and by vigilant missionary effort take advantage of every talent we can use in the various de-

partments of the work."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 387–388

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians. 15:58

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:9

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." Colossians 3:23–24

Unfortunately there are many divorces in the world. This is mainly because people entered marriage with the attitude of "What's in it for me?" and then they find out that their spouse did not live up to their expectations. They were not getting out of the marriage what they expected. So they divorce and try to find someone else who will fulfill their needs. It is the same with religion. Many go to church with certain expectations and when their expectations are not fulfilled, they leave and go find some other church where they feel their needs will be met. All this is selfishness. These people will never be happy. They are seeking to "get" not to "give".

Our prayer should always be, "But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand." Isaiah 64:8. And "not my will, but Thine, be done." Luke 22:42

Jesus has promised, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." Ezekiel 11:19. Do you believe this promise? If so, then Jesus will give you a new heart of flesh and you will go to work for Him with true love—not from selfish motives. You will love Jesus so much that you want to give, and give and give some more to Him; give of your time, your means, all your talents.

You can never give enough. Your whole life will be filled with His spirit and whatever you say, think, or do, it will be "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:26. With Christ in you, you will not be seeking to do "as little as possible" to gain entrance to the eternal kingdom, but the gift has been given and you will be seeking to do "as much as possible" in appreciation for all that the Lord has done for you. Selfishness will die, It's not about you—it's about Jesus and others. Amen.

Wendy Eaton





Awaiting the Bridegroom

through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. The important point here is not only how to get ready for Jesus' second coming but especially how to stay ready until He comes.

Today is the time to build a righteous character by the enabling grace of God that will stand the test. This is the time to appropri-

The story is told of a woman who frantically called her insurance agent and said, "Sir, I need to increase the insurance coverage on my house." The agent responded to her request by saying, "Well Madam. . . come down to the office this week and we can sign the appropriate documents and make it happen." She continued by saying, "Sir, you don't understand, I need to increase the insurance coverage now, this is urgent." The agent repeated, "Madam, there are some documents that need to be signed and it cannot be done over the phone. Madam. . . I will come out to your house tomorrow." "Sir you don't understand—my house is on fire. I need to increase the coverage right now."

There are some things you can put off in life until tomorrow, however, there are other things that must be done today, or there may be catastrophic consequences. There are some things in life that do not matter very much if they are put off for awhile. And other things if they are put off we may be eternally lost. Preparation for the second coming of Christ is one of those things we cannot put off. The choices we make today will reveal our future; our destiny either for Christ or against. This is why one of the most important decisions in life is to choose Jesus today.

But making this decision only is not enough. Many people in the world made this decision at one moment in their lives, but then the love of this world attracted them more than the love of God shown on the cross

ate to ourselves God's offers of mercy and pardon, while there is still a door of probation open to us. Isaiah 55:6 "Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." Isaiah 55:6. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2, last part

Jesus said in Matthew 24:42, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Jesus encourages the church to watch. In Matthew chapter 25 there are recorded three parables: The parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the talents and the parable of the sheep and the goats. These parables explain what it means to watch and prepare for Christ coming. In Matthew's gospel there are about 20 parables and most of them are "kingdom of God" parables. They are parables that specifically address the nature of the spiritual condition within the Church. The reason why Matthew chapter 25 is so significant is because it describes the spiritual condition of the Church awaiting the second coming of Christ. Now is the time to make sure that we have on hand an abundant supply of the oil of the grace of Christ.

Reading from the Spirit of Prophecy, "I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins. Five of whom were wise and five of whom were foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter." —*The Review and Herald*, August 19, 1890. Heaven realizes that the parable of the ten virgins is so important, so significant and so vital for the Church today that God

brought it to the end-time prophet's mind again and again. Today is no time for an easy-going, empty religion. God is calling you to make earnest preparation.

The kingdom of heaven in this parable refers to the Church. Every time you see a "kingdom of heaven" parable—Christ is addressing the Church. In Matthew 25:1 it says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." Why ten? Why not seven, the perfect number? Why not 12, the number of completeness? Why not 4—universality? Why not 3? Ten. Ten was a significant number in Judaism. Ten was the smallest number of Jewish men that could compose a Synagogue and establish it. So, the number ten is a Church number. Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins. The number ten in reference to this parable spoken by Jesus is very important. Why? Because Jesus is addressing the Church.

The Bible shows us that virgins are represented by the Church which has a pure and uncorrupted doctrine, the true Church, God's remnant people. In Revelation 12 the pure woman represents God's Church, and in Revelation 17 the harlot represents the fallen Church. So, in this parable in Matthew 25 Jesus addressed the true Church that teaches sound doctrine.

Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins who took their lamps. Regarding the lamps, we read in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

So here is depicted God's Church at the time of the end with the word of God in its hand, going out to enlighten the way for the coming of the Bridegroom. Here is God's Church, anxiously awaiting something. In the last part of Matthew 25:1 we see that they went out to meet the Bridegroom. Here is represented God's remnant people who anticipate the coming of Christ. They believe Jesus is coming. This parable is relating to God's Church at the end-time who enlighten the way for the coming of the Bridegroom with pure undefiled doctrine. The Bible tells us in Matthew 25:2 something very significant. "And five of them were wise, and five were foolish." Notice that the story does not contrast the righteous and unrighteous virgins, it does not contrast the holy and unholy virgins, it does not contrast the righteous and the unrighteous virgins. The Bible simply calls them wise and foolish virgins.

"While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Matthew 25:5. The true Church is pictured as spiritually sleeping just prior of the coming of Jesus. This is the message of the parable.

The question then is, what makes a wise virgin wise? And what makes a foolish virgin foolish? As I reflect on the parable and read it again and again I ask myself, "God, could I ever unknowingly, unwittingly be a foolish virgin myself?"

Let us look at the characteristics of the foolish virgins and then at the characteristics of the wise virgins and the contrasts between them.

What makes the foolish virgins foolish and the wise virgins wise? "They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them." Matthew 25:3. When you look at the ancient world, often in ancient weddings the bride and her bridesmaids would be in a home. Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives and He saw a wedding like this taking place; He used it as an illustration for the preparation for His return. The bridegroom would come to the bride's home unexpectedly, at night, and the word would go out—the cry that the bridegroom is coming—and the bridesmaids would light the way before the bride to go the bridegroom's home. The wedding feast may last a week and if you did not enter in when the feast started the door would be shut and you could not enter in.

In Matthew chapter 25:3 it says that those who were foolish took their lamps but took no extra oil with them. It does not say that they did not have oil in their lamps. In the ancient world oil was placed in the lamp. But a flask of oil was taken along with the lamp so that when the oil in the lamp ran out, the flask of oil would be used to replenish the oil that had been used up in the lamp. The fact that the foolish virgins had some oil is significant. Reading further in Matthew 25:5–8 it records that the foolish virgins had some oil but they did not have a sufficient supply of oil and because of the delay the small amount of oil that they had was not sufficient to take them on the journey from the bride's home to the bridegroom's home, and their lamps had gone out. Now, they lack this indispensable oil. In the Scripture, oil is used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The wise virgins are those who have faith and love and patience, whose experience day by day is nourished by the Holy Spirit.

But there are many symbols of the Holy Spirit in the Bible. For example, fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Why did they not have a candle of fire? Wind is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Why does God take the symbolism of the oil and use this as an illustration of what the foolish virgins did not have? If you look throughout the Old Testament oil is associated with three things. First:

consecration; second: healing; and, third: illumination. When the Sanctuary was inaugurated, the priests and the sacred vessels were anointed with oil. So oil represents consecration; the setting apart. Oil represents total commitment to the kingdom of God. Oil in the Bible also represents healing. In the New Testament when the Good Samaritan found the bruised broken bloody traveler, he anointed the body of this man with oil. Oil symbolises healing. It represents consecration, healing and illumination. Oil provides the basis for the lamps. God will have a people at the end of time consecrated to Him whose inner attitudes are healed. They will be healed from attitudes that would keep them from being the power for witnessing that God wants them to be for the world. They will hold the torch of truth high to lighten the way for the coming of the Bridegroom. God longs to have a group of people filled with the Spirit who are consecrated to Him; healed from bitterness, envy, jealousy, competition, pride, arrogance, a people who are not interested in what they do but in what Jesus does.

The foolish virgins had some oil but not enough. They thought that the limited supply of oil they had brought was sufficient, however, it was not sufficient for the unexpected delay. Here are some questions you should consider: are you depending on an experience with God that you had in the past and not the present? How is your devotional life? Do you know Jesus? Is Jesus living in your soul and moving in your life today? The foolish virgins trusted that the past experience they once had would be sufficient to take them to the wedding feast. The foolish virgins were superficial and conservative. But the fool-



ish virgins lacked something deep inside. We read:

“The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old nature to be broken up. . . . The Spirit works upon man's heart, according to his desire and consent implanting in him a new nature; but the class represented the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work.” – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 411 (emphasis mine)

In outward appearance everything was fine. They have lamps in their hands—what more do they need? They thought that they were ready for the coming of the bridegroom, but there is a difference between having the word of God in our hand and able to defend the truth and having the word of God in our heart to live by the truth. The foolish virgins were informed but not transformed. They were instructed by the word but not changed through the word. They were convicted of the truth but not changed by the truth. Here is the important question; has the truth which you believe—the truth which you share with others—radically impacted and transformed your life so that you are a different man or woman today?

May God help us deep within our hearts to search for the truth and live by it is my wish and prayer. Amen.

Nicholas Anca

“Truthfulness and frankness should be ever cherished by all who claim to be followers of Christ. God and the right should be the motto. Deal honestly and righteously in this present evil world. Some will be honest when they see that honesty will not endanger their worldly interests; but all who act from this principle will have their names blotted out of the book of life.

“Strict honesty must be cultivated. We can go through the world but once; we cannot come back to rectify any mistakes; therefore every move made should be with godly fear and careful consideration. . . . When God makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be His chosen ones, His treasures. Angels are preparing crowns for such, and light from the throne of God will be reflected in its splendor from these star-gemmed diadems.” – *Our High Calling*, p. 226

History of the Reform In Estonia



During the First World War, 300 members were disfellowshipped from the Seventh-day Adventist church in Estonia, which, at that time was about half of the church membership. The reason that they were disfellowshipped was that they did not accept the fact that their offerings were being sent to Germany to help pay for military installations and the war effort. The members took their concerns to the leadership. The Adventist leader of Estonia at that time, Brother Sprook, answered them, "It is none of your business how the money is used and where it is sent. Your duty is to pay and you have done your duty."

In 1922, two brothers from Germany came and brought the Reformation message to Estonia. The 300 were immediately accepted into the church and the Reform church was organized. Among the 300 were two young men, Brother Korpman, who was a member in Canada in his later life, and Brother Holmstroem, whose grandchildren are alive still today, were soon chosen to be ordained ministers. During that time the church grew to 500 members.

When the Second World War started many members were killed; many escaped to other countries. Some, sadly gave up their faith. After some time Brother Korpman got separated from his friend, Brother Holmstroem; he looked for him but could not find him. The church members also looked for him and they eventually found him. He had been killed for his faith and was buried in a shallow grave, part of his body left uncovered.

Approximately 40 years or so after the war, Teuvo Marttinen, who lived in Sweden, met a man who was a minister in the Estonian government. This man had come

to Sweden on holidays and did not speak Swedish. Brother Marttinen, who could speak Estonian, helped translate for him. This man invited Brother Marttinen to visit him whenever he came to Estonia. He gave his business card to Brother Marttinen, who later gave it to his sister, Sister Leila McTavish.

Shortly after, Brother Henry Dering went to Estonia with Sister Leila accompanying

him. They went to the government ministry offices to meet this same minister. This man was very good to them. He took them to see the different parts of the government. He also took them to see the minister in charge of churches and schools in Estonia. He introduced Brother Dering and Sister Leila to this man and then he left. They asked if they could officially register the Reform church in Estonia. The minister of churches told them that the law says that no new churches are allowed to be registered in Estonia now, but if you existed before the war, bring us your members to show them to us. They replied, "We will be back tomorrow with the members."

By that time, there were only three members left in Estonia; three old women, one walking with a cane, one who was able to walk on her own, and one that had to be held by Brother Dering and Sister Leila so that she could stand. The next day they returned to the government office with the three elderly sisters and said to the minister, "This the church of Estonia". The minister of churches looked at those old, crippled women and said, "Your church will be registered." Praise God!

Later Sister Leila went back to Estonia with Brother Schmidt and kept meetings there. Six new souls were found.

Afterwards, Sister Leila called Brother Gutknecht, the General Conference president at the time and told him to purchase land for a headquarters in Estonia, which he did. The headquarters was purchased for a very reasonable price before the Euro came to Estonia and land became more costly. The church in Estonia is now growing and they have a small established church in Tallinn, the capital city. Amen.



Five Keys for Financial Success

1) Give back to God what belongs to Him

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now here-with, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Malachi 3:10

The wise family invests in the bank of God:

“In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. . . Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.” Proverbs 3:6, 9

To pay our tithes is to invest part of our income in the bank of heaven.

Regardless of our circumstances, tithes are “holy unto the LORD.” Leviticus 27:30

“Not only does the Lord claim the tithe as His own, but He tells us how it should be reserved for Him. He says, ‘Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase.’ This does not teach that we are to spend our means on ourselves and bring to the Lord the remnant, even though it should be otherwise an honest tithe. **Let God’s portion be first set apart.**” – *The Adventist Home*, p. 389 (emphasis mine)

Robert Leourneau, a famous inventor of machines that remove soil who gave God 90% of his earnings, said:

“It is not how much of my money I give to God, but rather how much of **His money I keep.**”

2) Build up a reserve fund

“Wise people save the nice things they have. Fools use up everything as soon as they get it.” Proverbs 21:20

“Every week you should lay by in some secure place five or ten dollars not to be used up unless in case of sickness. With economy you may place something at interest.” –*The Adventist Home*, p. 396

After you pay your tithes and offerings, saving some money aside should be a priority.

How much should I save?

Only you can determine the amount. Everyone can save something. If you are wondering how much to save, pray about it and God will lead you. “With every step you take, think about what He wants, and He will help you go the right way.” Proverbs 3:6

Can we expect God’s blessings when we neglect to follow His plan to build up a reserve fund? “Everyone should take care of all their own people. Most important, they should take care of their own family. If they do not do that, then they do not accept what we believe. They are worse than someone who does not even believe in God.” 1 Timothy 5:8

A goal could be to save the equivalent of two months of salary in an account, and have the money ready for any unexpected necessity that may arise.

God blesses the family that has a saving plan.

3) Make a budget

“If you wanted to build a building, you would first sit down and decide how much it would cost. You must see if you have enough money to finish the job.” Luke 14: 28

“**Sit Down and Count the Cost**—God’s people are not to

go forward blindly in the investment of means that they have not and know not where to obtain. We must show wisdom in the movements that we make. Christ has laid before us the plan upon which His work is to be conducted. Those who desire to build must first sit down and count the cost, to see whether they are able to carry the building to completion.” —*Evangelism*, p. 85

A budget used properly does not enslave you, it will free you. It does not take money away from you, it gives you more money to use where you need it most. It helps you to know where you are financially and what progress you are making with your goals.

Some reasons to have a family budget are: it gives direction to family goals. It controls the expenses. Provides necessary discipline. Helps establish a system of offerings to God. Provides for the unexpected. Connects the family to make decisions together. It helps you to manage what God has given to you.

“All should learn how to keep accounts. Some neglect this work as nonessential, but this is wrong. All expenses should be accurately stated.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 374

Keep a register of all your expenses. Talk to your family regularly about family expenses and make family goals like: pay debts, buy a new car, a family trip, etc.

The key for financial success is to **direct your money where you want it to go and not try to guess where it disappeared.**

4) Pay your debts

“The Bible definition of a debt is the inability to pay your obligations.”

“You need to cut down your expenses and strive to supply this deficiency in your character. You can and should make determined efforts to bring under control your disposition to spend means beyond your income.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 393

“When one becomes involved in debt, he is in one of Satan’s nets, which he sets for souls. . . . Be determined never to incur another debt. Deny yourself a thousand things rather than run in debt.” —*The Adventist Home*, p.

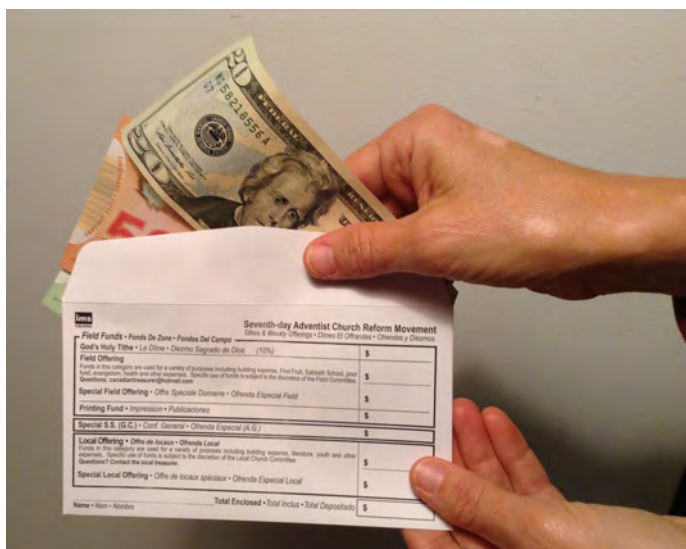
392–393

The Bible tells us that if we have debts, God wants us to make a definite plan to pay them as soon as possible.

“You should owe nothing to anyone, except that you will always owe love to each other.” Romans 13: 8. “This has been the curse of your life, getting into debt. Avoid it as you would the smallpox. Make a solemn covenant with God that by His blessing you will pay your debts and then owe no man anything if you live on porridge and bread.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 393

God wants you to live free of debt. If you have debts make a plan to pay them and determine not to incur new ones.

5) Be happy with your salary and learn to live with it



“I am telling you this, but not because I need something. I have learned to be satisfied with what I have and with whatever happens.” Philippians 4: 11–12

“Be happy with the pay you get.” Luke 3:14. John the Baptist spoke these words to the Roman soldiers.

A very important principle is not to spend more than what you earn.

With all the comforts that we enjoy today, there is still a problem with many people not being satisfied with their income! This leads us to spend more than what we earn.

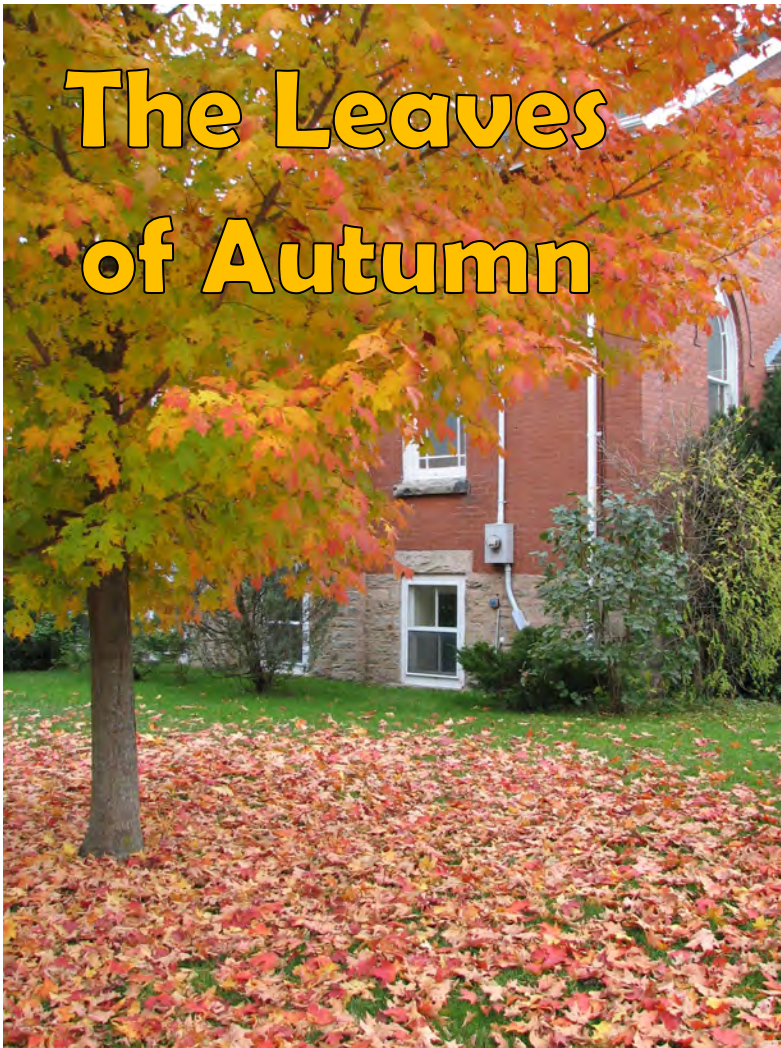
Learn to keep your expenses within your income.

“Many, very many, have not so educated themselves that they can keep their expenditures within the limit of their income. They do not learn to adapt themselves to circumstances, and they borrow and borrow again and again and become overwhelmed in debt, and consequently they become discouraged and disheartened.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 374

“Don’t save treasures for yourselves here on earth. . . . Instead, save your treasures in heaven. . . . Your heart will be where your treasure is.” Matthew 6: 19–21

All verses from Easy-to-Read Version (ERV) Bible

Raquel Hernandez



The Leaves of Autumn

“The message of truth is to go to all nations, tongues, and people; its publications, printed in many different languages, are to be scattered abroad like the leaves of autumn.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 79

“These small tracts of four, eight, or sixteen pages can be furnished for a trifle from a fund raised by the donations of those who have the cause at heart. When you write to a friend you can enclose one or more without increasing postage. When you meet persons in the cars, on the boat, or in the stage who seem to have an ear to hear, you can hand them a tract. These tracts should not at present be scattered promiscuously like the autumn leaves, but should be judiciously and freely handed to those who would be likely to prize them. Thus our publications and the Publishing Association will be advertised in a manner that will result in much good.

“Let all be fully prepared to disseminate the light by word and by pamphlet. There should be hundreds of little tracts scattered as the leaves of autumn. . . .

“There is a great need of leaflets and tracts, some containing short articles, others presenting the messages

of warning, the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Sabbath, treated in brief, and its relation to the truth of the doctrines substantiated by the Scriptures should be circulated. . . . There is a world to be warned. Health subjects in clear, forcible, spirited articles, health and temperance principles, and experiences of faith and hope—all should be presented to the world. The branch office in the city may do a good work in this line. These silent words will make impressions on minds and will awaken an interest in the truth of God.

“Light! Light! Let it shine forth everywhere. It is to be diffused in jots and tittles, here a little and there a little. It is to be diffused in contrast with error. There is a dense darkness upon human minds, and everything possible should be done to rend it away and let the true Light shine forth.” —*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 227

“Church members, ask God to give you a burden to open the Scriptures to others and to do missionary work for those who need help. Some will be rescued in one way and some in another, but the work must always be done as the Lord shall lead. . . . Let the publications containing Bible truth be scattered like the leaves of autumn. Lift Him up, the Saviour of souls, lift Him up higher and still higher. . .

“Catch the spirit of the great Master Worker. Learn from the Friend of sinners how to minister to sin-sick souls. Remember that in the lives of His followers must be seen the same devotion, the same subjection to God's work of every social claim, every earthly affection, that was seen in His life. God's claims must always be made paramount. Christ's example is to inspire us to put forth unceasing effort for the good of others.

“You have neighbors. Will you give them the message? You may never have had the hands of ordination laid upon you, but you can humbly carry the message. You can testify that . . . all for whom Christ died shall have everlasting life if they believe on Him.

“Let no one remain in idleness because he cannot do the same class of work that the most experienced servants of God are doing. . . . It is not alone by men in high places of responsibility in the ministry, not alone by men holding positions on boards or committees, not alone by the managers of our sanitariums and publishing houses, that the work is to be done which will cause the earth to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. This work can be accomplished only by the whole church acting their part un-

der guidance and in the power of God.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 323

“Church members, awake to the importance of the circulation of our literature, and devote more time to this work. Place in the homes of the people papers, tracts, and books that will preach the gospel in its several lines. There is no time to be lost. Let many give themselves willingly and unselfishly to the canvassing work, and thus help to sound a warning that is greatly needed. When the church takes up her appointed work, she will go forth ‘fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.’” —*Christian Service*, p. 147

“We are fast approaching the end. The printing and circulation of the books and papers that contain the truth for this time are to be our work.” —*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 4–5

“The light of truth is shedding its bright beams upon the world through missionary effort. The press is an instrumentality by which many are reached whom it would be impossible to reach by ministerial effort.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 388



“Canvassers are needed to take up the work of carrying these silent messengers of truth to the people,—canvassers who feel a burden for souls, and who can speak words in season to those who are seeking for light. Some may say, ‘I am not a minister; I cannot preach to the people,’ You may not be able to preach, but you can be an evangelist, ministering to the needs of those with whom you come in contact; you can be God’s helping hand, working as the disciples worked; you can ask those you meet if they love the Lord Jesus.” —*Christian Service*, p. 147

“The night of trial is nearly spent. Satan is bringing in his masterly power because he knoweth that his time is short. The chastisement of God is upon the world to call all who know the truth to hide in the cleft of the Rock and view the glory of God. The truth must not be muffled now. Plain statements must be made. Unvarnished truth must be spoken in leaflets and pamphlets, and these must be scattered like the leaves of autumn.” —*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 324–325

Ellen G. White

“Do not think that because you do not manifest decided hostility to Christ you are doing Him service. We thus deceive our own souls. By withholding that which God has given us to use in His service, be it time or means or any other of His entrusted gifts, we work against Him.

“Satan uses the listless, sleepy indolence of professed Christians to strengthen his forces and win souls to his side. Many, who think that though they are doing no actual work for Christ, they are yet on His side, are enabling the enemy to pre-occupy ground and gain advantages. By their failure to be diligent workers for the Master, by leaving duties undone and words unspoken, they have allowed Satan to gain control of souls who might have been won for Christ.

“We can never be saved in indolence and inactivity. There is no such thing as a truly converted person living a helpless, useless life. It is not possible for us to drift into heaven. No sluggard can enter there. If we do not strive to gain an entrance into the kingdom, if we do not seek earnestly to learn what constitutes its laws, we are not fitted for a part in it. Those who refuse to co-operate with God on earth would not co-operate with Him in heaven. It would not be safe to take them to heaven.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 279–280

We Are Fearfully And Wonderfully Made

Lecture given at Hamilton Health Fair, October 5, 2014

Are you confused by all the nutrition advice you find on the Internet, in bookstores, from doctors, nutritionists, even helpful family and friends? These people all promote one diet or another, with a rationale as to why their diet is the best one. Let us look at some of the most recent, best-diet claims. We have heard of the paleo diet, the zone diet, the low protein diet, the high protein diet, the low-carb diet, the low-fat diet, the raw food diet. We have the blood type diet. We have diets within diets. We have vegetarian diets of numerous types—lacto vegetarians, ovo vegetarians, and lacto-ovo vegetarians, we have the flexitarians, the pescatarians, and the vegans. We have diets specific to certain medical conditions—the diabetic diet, the gluten-free diet, the DASH diet. The list could go on forever. With so many diet choices out there, which one is the best for us? Where do we go to find out what is the truth about what we should be eating? What is the most health-promoting, and healing diet, that benefits all mankind, no matter our age, gender, race, blood type, or medical condition?

Before we decide on this, let us take a minute to consider something that we all are familiar with: the car. It is a complex piece of machinery, with many systems that work smoothly together, in order for it to function as a whole. In order for these various systems to function in top running order, it needs to be maintained. Part of the maintenance requires that various fluids be used, from oil for the engine, coolant for the radiator, fluid for the transmission, and gasoline to provide fuel for the car.

Who do you think would be the most knowledgeable about such a complex machine with all of its hundreds of working parts as to what type of maintenance is needed (e.g., which are the best type of fluids to use), in order to maintain the car in the best working condition, to ensure that you have a car that works efficiently, without breaking down, and to have it last for many years? Would it not be the one who actually designed the car?

So, whenever we have a question about the care of our car, we likely do not have the car's designer on our phone's speed dial, so what has the designer of the car provided us with so that we have all these answers at our finger tips? Is it not an owner's manual? And the owner's manual is, what? It is the instruction book on the maintenance requirements of the car, to keep it in the best working order and to have it last for many years. It tells us which oil the car needs, how often it needs changing, it tells us when to service specific parts, it tells us how often maintenance is required, which type of gas is best suited for the car in order for the engine to run efficiently and to get the best mileage. . . all that is in the owner's manual. Now, what would happen if we deviated from the guidelines in the manual? For example, if we do not change the oil at regular intervals, or do not add oil at all, eventually the engine would seize up and would have to be replaced. This would be a very costly deviation from the instructions in the manual. If we put in the wrong gasoline, the gas mileage would drop, and we develop problems with the engine. In avoiding regular maintenance, the car may break down sooner. So, to get the best use out of our car, the owner's manual is the place to go.

If we take the analogy of the car and compare it to the human body, who would be the most knowledgeable, to provide us with all the information that is needed for us to maintain our bodies in the best working condition, and to get the best “mileage”, as it were, from our bodies? Would it not *also* be from the One who actually designed us? The One Who created us? Would that not make the most sense? So, instead of trying to decide which expert to believe, we need to consult the One who actually knows our body more intimately than any scientist, nutritionist, medical professional, or health guru. And who is this Creator? Who designed us?

Charles Darwin developed a theory, which most scientists believe, that, over millions, and even billions of years, all life on earth evolved from a single-celled creature, in a random sequence of evolutions stages, until the very complex and very finely-tuned creature, known as the human or homo sapien, came into existence. The theory is constantly changing, with the time span increasing from the birth of the single-celled creature to the time in which we live, where thousands of animal and plant species exist. As science develops and they learn new things, they feel that this evolution had to happen over even more years. So, what was once millions of years is now being talked about in billions of years. This theory is determined to deny the fact that man could have been created by a superior being. However, logically, with the complexity of the universe, our solar system, earth, and all its various systems that work in fine tune with each other, to suggest that someone created all of it, instead of it all happening by chance, makes more logical and rational sense.

With all the sources of information available to us in the world, where do we find the evidence that man is a created being? The Bible. Let us read in Genesis 1:26, 27: “And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness. . . God created man in His own image, in the image of God, created He him; male and female created He them.” So, who created us? God. And not only did He create us but He did it in His own image, therefore He would know His creation as well as He knew His own body.

Knowing that God created man, would He not also want to take care of His creation? Would He not want His creation to thrive, to reach its highest potential?



And, if we take the car analogy again, to run efficiently and have it last as long as possible, even for eternity? He would not wish to create something that would be damaged from misuse, or from taking care of it incorrectly. So, like the car manufacturer, what would God want to have in place? Would He not also want to create a set of instructions, an owner’s manual for the human body?

Where would we go to find this owner’s manual? It would have to be a source that was written by God, by our designer, our Creator. Which book do we know that was written by God, by men who were inspired to write, with God as the author? “All scripture is given by inspiration of God.” 2 Timothy 3:16. The answer again is the Bible. *This* is the owner’s manual that God has provided for us. Knowing this, when you consider all of the books and websites, all the expert and not-so-expert advice, as to how to take care of our body, . . . to actually know which of these sources could be of benefit to us, we need to compare them to the original owner’s manual. If the source is in agreement with the original owner’s manual, then it can contain valuable information for us. But, if the source is promoting something that goes against the original instruction manual, then that book is not one to consider. Put it away.



As well as creating us, and providing us with an owner’s manual, what else did God do for us? From the Bible, we know that not only did God create man, but he also created the world that we live in, all the structures, systems, all the living organisms. We are also told that everything that God created was for man’s benefit.

Let us look at a few of these structures. For example, God created the world in six days, and then He rested on the 7th day. He instructs us to do the same. From creation on, we have had a weekly 7-day cycle, with six

days of work and one day of rest to rejuvenate us and to take time to be with our Creator. He created light and darkness, day and night, and created our body's sleep/wake cycles to be dependent on the hours of light and darkness. We have the continuous water cycle, which provides the earth with moisture that is vital to all living things. He gave us the sun that provides us with heat, that nourishes our crops. He provided a growing cycle for all living plants. There is not one thing created that was not for the benefit of God's crowning glory of creation, which was man.

And what also did He include besides the cycles that ruled the seasons, years, weeks, and days? In Genesis 1:28, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. . . Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Man was to procreate, to fill the earth with his progeny. Every creature that God created was to be under man's dominion and for his use and enjoyment. Even the flowers in the field were created to fill the senses with beauty, the colours, the smells, all for man's enjoyment. He gave us the ideal environment for promoting the health of body and soul.

And after this, what instruction did God give to man? We read in Genesis 1:29, "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

And then what did God do? "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden." Genesis 2:8, 10. Then we read in verse 15, "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." Not only did God give man explicit instructions on what he should eat, but God knew that man would be most happy if he could work. So, he was given the task of tending to the garden, to provide food for himself.

He gave man everything he needed in order to be happy, healthy, and to provide him with the diet that would allow man to be useful, productive, and industrious. God did not create man, only to have man destroy himself from unhealthy habits and eating the wrong foods. So, He Himself created the food that man should eat.

We know also that there many other things that God

gave man for him to be spiritually and physically healthy, such as our connection with God, our relationships with others, our respect for our parents, the marriage relationship, He gave us the Sabbath, He also gave us laws. These we will not address in this article, but are of equal importance.

If man had continued to obey God, He would have had eternal happiness and eternal life. However, man did not obey God's instructions. Man fell into sin, and paradise was lost to him. But, God did not forsake man. He created a plan in which man could be saved; He gave man a new set of instructions, on how to regain the paradise which once had been lost.

Man would have to continue to provide for his physical needs. However that which before sin was a joy, now became difficult. "In the sweat of thy face thou eat bread." Genesis 3:19. Also, after sin, God added another item to man's diet. "Thou shalt eat the herb of the field." Genesis 3:18

Therefore, the only conclusion that we can reach from these instructions given to man, was that, before sin and after sin, the diet that God provided for man was plant based.

Would God have overlooked anything that could provide us with good health and strong bodies? Of course not. Then, what does this tell us? The natural world and its resources and bounties are where we need to go to for our health and strength. This includes the food that God provided for us to eat to sustain our bodies.

We do not have space in this article to go into detail about the various foods and their specific health benefits, but, if we take a close look at the diet given to man, I think we can all agree that God's instructions were for man to live solely on a plant-based diet.

A plant-based, or a vegan diet as it is also called, is able to provide us with all the nutrients our body needs. Our body system functions best when it consumes plants. Our digestive system was designed by God to absorb and use plant-based nutrients for fuel, for energy, for metabolism, to supply our cells with the balanced diet in order for the body to function at its peak ability. Our bodies were never intended to consume animal-based foods. In fact, many of the diseases that man suffers from are ones that man has brought on himself, from eating an animal-based diet. These diseases are also the most deadly, such as cancers, heart disease, and strokes; most of these have been scientifically proven to be directly related to one's diet. Studies show that

vegetarians and vegans have a lower incidence of the age-related illnesses that occur from a lifetime of bad eating habits, which slowly break down the body and bring on disease.

The proper balance of nutrients is best supplied from plants. People who eat meat consume up to twice as much protein and fats than the body requires on a daily basis. Plants also contain protein, but in much smaller quantities than animal products, yet sufficient for our needs. A vegan diet with a wide variety of foods will provide a complete source of protein; meat is not necessary. The fats in a vegan diet are healthy fats. Saturated fats and trans-fats, which are harmful to the body, and promote inflammation and free-radicals, which cause premature aging and disease, are missing from a vegan diet. Carbohydrates, which should provide the bulk of our diet are the basis of all plant foods. Most plant foods contain all three of the necessary macronutrients—fats, carbohydrates and proteins—the food which provides the bulk of our body's needs.

The micronutrients, the substances that our

body needs in smaller amounts, which include all the vitamins and minerals are also well supplied from a plant-based diet. Many of the vitamins and minerals are also considered antioxidants. Our bodies age and develop damage as a result of free radicals, which is a byproduct of our metabolism. Antioxidants fight free radical damage, by neutralizing them. We do not need animal-based foods to supply any lack from a plant-based diet.

Not only do plants provide us with complete nutrition, they also contain valuable phytochemicals which actually promote health and fight disease. Phytochemicals are a group of chemical compounds contained in plants, many of them are responsible for the colour of the fruit or the vegetable. The different colours signify specific phytochemicals, i.e. lycopene provides tomatoes with the colour red, cyanins provide blueberries with the colour blue, beta carotene provides carrots with the colour orange. There are approximately 4,000 phytochemicals in plant life, and each of these phyto-

chemicals has a different role to play in health promotion and healing, and to affect disease. Many of these phytochemicals are also antioxidants.

Current science has a lot of information on the various healing properties of plants, and have been able to determine which specific plants help to treat or prevent the various ailments that afflict mankind. Even many of the drugs that are used to treat disease have been derived from natural sources. But, long before scientists were able to manipulate information in laboratories and make conclusions on which ingredient of which plant would fight which disease, the knowledge of the healing properties of plants has been passed down through generations, from the time that man first fell into sin and our bodies began to decay. We can use the information that is available to us, from current research, from folk knowledge, and from the books that were written by God's prophet, Ellen White, to treat and to cure illness.

For those who are skeptical that the writings of Ellen White were inspired by God, go to her health books. They contain information about the human body that was not

even known by the scientists of her day. Many of her statements on health and the human body, on the use of natural remedies vs drugs, were confirmed by science and research in the years after her death. Adherence to the diet given to man by God in the Garden of Eden, and using what God gave us in nature is able to treat everything from age-related illnesses such as arthritis and diabetes, to basic first aid such as how to heal a wound, or to relieve pain, such as ridding ourselves of a headache. Nature is our pharmacy; nature is our source of healing.

The Bible tells us, we are “fearfully and wonderfully made. . .” Psalm 139:14. Let us use the Bible as our owner's manual, and adhere to the diet given to us by the One who created us, to keep ourselves healthy, productive and functioning as God designed us to do, is my prayer, Amen.

Helen Marttinen



CHILDREN'S CORNER



The Vanishing Black Smudge

Many years ago a boy named Davy lived on a farm. It was a big farm, and there was lots to do to care for the animals and grow food for his family. Davy had a big sister Angie, a big brother Joe, and a sister Mary who was just a bit older than he was.

One day Davy's parents announced that they had to go away for a few days, but they were sure the children were old enough to manage the farm work by themselves while they were gone. They put Angie in charge because she was getting quite grown-up. Davy didn't think she was really grown up. He just thought she was bossy, and he really didn't like to be bossed around by his own sister.

But after Mom and Dad drove off, Angie wasn't so bossy after all. Wow! They were free to do anything they wanted! Go to bed when they wanted, get up when they wanted. Eat anything they liked, whenever they liked. Play when they liked, work when they liked. This was great!

The children had a great week. They made delicious desserts for themselves every day. They made popcorn and pancakes dripping with maple syrup. Of course they did their usual chores—milking the cows, feeding the animals, collecting eggs, and chopping wood. But mostly they just had lots of fun.

Then one morning Angie suddenly realized that Mom and Dad would be coming home the very next day. The children looked around at the house. There were dirty dishes on the table. There were toys on the floor. The beds were unmade. There were towels and dirty clothes on the floor. There were blocks and a wagon in the yard outside, and they still hadn't cleaned up the garden tools in the barn for Dad.

Angie looked worried. She wanted everything to look perfect for Mom and Dad when they got home. They

had left her in charge and she wanted them to be proud of her.

Suddenly Angie got bossy again. She ordered Joe to clean up the garden tools in the barn. She sent Mary to clean up the dishes and scrub the kitchen floor. Davy was to hurry up and dust the house from top to bottom, except for the parlor. Everyone knew the things Mom had in the parlor were too fragile for Davy to dust! When he was done with that, he could help Angie change the beds and do the laundry. Davy hated dusting. He hated changing beds and doing the laundry. He wanted to be outside helping Joe do grown up jobs. But Angie was in charge, so he followed her instructions feeling grumpy and angry inside.

Angie was so busy she had no time to cook lunch, so they all ate cold leftovers. Davy was hot and tired. He wanted to make popcorn and have fun again, but Angie wasn't through bossing.

"You have to help again this afternoon, Davy," she said. "First I want you to polish all the shoes and boots with this black polish and brush. Then you can shake all the rugs. Mary has to go pick the beans in the garden, and Joe has to straighten the yard." Davy was feeling more and more angry inside. The worst job in the world was polishing shoes and boots. It was so messy, and so easy to get big black smudges all over you and everything else.

While Davy was polishing shoes, Angie decided to dust and sweep the parlor so the whole house would be just perfect. The parlor was a beautiful room full of their mother's best things. They weren't allowed to play in there. They only went in there when there were visitors. While Angie was in the parlor she noticed Davy was not working very hard. She told him to hurry up because she had more work for him to do. By this time Davy was so mad that everything bubbled up inside

him. Before he knew what he'd done, he had thrown a brush full of shoe polish at Angie. The brush sailed right past Angie's head and landed smack in the middle of the parlor wall. He stared in horror at the big black mark on the expensive white and gold wallpaper. Then he ran out of the house and hid in the barn.

Davy stayed in the barn a very long time. He thought about how proud his mother was of their beautiful parlor, and how dreadful she would feel when she saw the mess he'd made of it. He thought about what his punishment might be. He was so mad at Angie. "It's all her fault," he thought. "I would never have done such a terrible thing if she hadn't been so bossy and made me so mad!"

It was dark by the time Joe found him. Joe knew what had happened. But he didn't say anything. He just took Davy into the house for a bite of supper before bedtime. Davy didn't sleep very well. He knew Mom and Dad would be back in the morning. He wanted to run away, but there was nowhere he could go. He cried big tears into his pillow.

When Mom and Dad got home, they were very pleased with how well the children had managed the chores and how neat and clean everything was. They thought Davy was a bit quiet, and they did notice that he didn't eat much lunch. Mom even gave him a huge spoonful of nasty tasting medicine, just in case he was getting sick. Davy knew she hadn't looked in the parlor, but he wasn't brave enough to tell her what had happened. He was just miserable.

Then the worst thing possible happened. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson from across the town came to visit. Davy heard his mother welcome them, and invite them into the parlor. Oh, no! She would take them in there and see the mess, and she would be so embarrassed! He expected to hear his mother scream, but instead he heard Mrs. Johnson exclaim, "My, what a lovely parlor this is!"

Davy couldn't believe his ears! What had happened? The black smudge was on the wall opposite the door. There was no way anyone could go in there without seeing that awful mark, spoiling everything else. Davy

crept close to the door, and peeped in. He was so shocked by what he saw, he just stood there with his mouth open and stared. The wall looked exactly as it had before he threw the shoe polish brush. The wall paper where the black smudge had been was perfectly white and trimmed in gold like the pattern on the rest of the wall. His mom saw him in the doorway and invited him in. He sat on a slippery chair and stared at the wall most of the afternoon, his mind racing with what might have happened. After tea and cakes, the Johnsons finally went home. Davy lingered in the parlor so he would be the last to leave. When everyone had gone, he went up to the wall and stared at it closely. Someone had cut a piece of wallpaper to fit perfectly over the nasty mess. The paper had been cut ever so carefully to follow the edges of the pattern all around the little scrolls of gold. Then the edges of the paper had been sanded very thin so that there would not be a bump where the new paper was added.

Davy ate twice as much food at supper time to make up for all he had missed. He started to laugh and joke again, and Mom was pleased to see that her medicine had made him better! After supper Davy found Angie. He gave her a great big enormous hug. "Thank you," he whispered in her ear. "I'm sorry I threw the brush at you, and made that awful mess. You fixed it, didn't you?"

"Yes, I found some of the paper in the attic, and I cut it all out, smoothed the edges, and stuck it on with flour paste. I'm sorry too, it was mostly my fault. I shouldn't have been so bossy. No wonder you felt like throwing something at me!"

If they noticed, Mom and Dad never said anything about the mark on the parlor wall. And Davy never forgot how special it was to discover that someone loves you enough to cover your mistake and save you from the consequences you deserve.

Does that sound like another Person you know? Yes! Jesus loves us enough to cover our mistakes with His perfect life. He saved us from the death we deserve because of our sin and gave us another chance to have the best life possible, now and forever.



News from BAMI

Mission School, Kenya



The Kenya Union office would like to take this privilege and give thanks to the Lord Almighty for His grace upon us and for bringing Pastor Petkov and his wife, Sister Raquel to visit us. The duo landed in Kenya while in transit to Uganda and Rwanda before coming back officially to Kenya on September 15.

They immediately began teaching in The Berea Adventist Missionary college, (BAMI) alternating on a daily basis. The college classes during the week were attended by the Union executive officers and BAMI staff, as well as church members within Nairobi. The Sabbath services were attended by over 200 members, with uncounted children and visitors. The BAMI classes ended on September 22, 2014.

On September 23, Pastor Petkov, his wife, Sister Orce, the Union executive and BAMI staff, all left the union headquarters in a bus. The students were going for a missionary tour in Rachuonyo College and Homabay town. The rest headed for the second worker's and minister's seminar in Kisii County in Suneka Town at Nyangena Churchma, a seven hour ride from Nairobi.

When we arrived at Nyangena, we found that the Ugandan Bible workers had already arrived a day before under the leadership of Pastor Ntabarisha Daniel. There was eight of them.

The Tanzanian team also had arrived under Pastor Mathew Malata who is the union Secretary, and Sister Koreso the Dorcas Samaritan Leader, and some others.

Kenya, the host union, had all who could attend, under Pastor James Mbaka. The Bible workers, church elders and leaders, heads of Departments, members, young

and old, mothers and fathers.

The subjects that were taught included:

1. Marriage and Divorce/Marriage in the Bible;
2. Counselling;
3. Canvassing;
4. Family/Guidelines/Categories/Family and prayer;
5. Missionary/Missionary work plan;
6. Project Preparation/development;
7. Doctrine.

Sister Raquel devoted one afternoon for mothers and it will remain in her memory. It was very informative, providing us with great lessons.

The Kisii Kenya Nyangena East Africa Seminar ended on Monday, September 29. Brother Petkov and Sister Orce enjoyed staying in the Blue Nile Hotel near the highway, where Pastor Pablo Hunger, Pastor Shirima, and Sister Leila McTavish once stayed.

We greatly thank Sister Leila McTavish and Sister Edda Tedford of the Canadian Field, who assisted in the building of the Nyangena church which was a great blessing for the seminar.

We give further thanks to the General Conference for sponsoring Sister Raquel Orce to come to Africa.

We further salute and thank the American Union for sponsoring Brother Petkov to come to Africa; the American Union, you have become a blessing for us.

Last but not least, we thank the African Divisional Office

under the leadership of Pastor Shirima and Pastor Se-
with Moyo for organising this spiritual event. We salute
all the Kenyan brethren for their total unwavering sup-
port, participation, material and moral support. To Pas-
tor Petkov and Sister Orce, may you visit us again, ac-

ording to the will of the Lord. Amen.

***Your servant in the Lord,
Nashon Ouma Ojuok
Kenya Union, Secretary***



PRAYER REQUEST

We would like to request the prayers for a dear sister, Araminta Munoz who is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Araminta is a sincere soul who loves Jesus and His truth. Since we came to London, Canada she attended our Church services almost every Sabbath. I have worked with her giving her Bible studies. She has made good progress in her spiritual life.

Not ago she was diagnosed with lung cancer. We prayed with her and encouraged her to surrender her life to Jesus completely. Although she is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I explained the differences to her between the Reform Church and the mainstream SDA Church. I have encouraged her to be baptized into God's Church while waiting faithfully for Jesus' second coming. Praise the Lord that she has agreed and promised to do everything necessary to be a part of God's remnant Church.

For her medical intervention she moved to Vancouver where her two sons live. She will have surgery at the end of November this year. Brother Oscar will continue her preparation for baptism there and help her to fulfill her commitment to the Lord through Biblical baptism. Let us pray for this sister in the Lord.

Nicholas Anca

Bible Seminar, London, Canada

Dear Brothers and Sisters, with God's help and your prayers and support we were able to hold a Bible Seminar in London. The theme studied was the Sanctuary Message. The seminar was divided into two sessions. The first one was held on Sabbath afternoon, October 4th, 2014. The messages presented were, "How can the atonement of Jesus benefit us?" and, "Why are you saved by grace through faith but judged by works?"



The second session was held in the afternoon of the following Sabbath. The presentation was entitled "How does the judgement affect our personal experience with Christ?"

The people who participated in these lectures were strongly encouraged to remain faithful in their Christian experience because there is a great reward if we not only get ready today but also stay ready until Christ

returns. We were blessed to have a few visitors present. I hope to have Bible Studies with these visitors as the Lord opens up the way. Let us pray for meetings like this and pray that we can have more presentations about the present truth and its application in our Christian life in the future.

Nicholas Anca

Western Conference, Calgary, Canada

With God's help we held the Western Conference in Calgary, Alberta on October 11–12, 2014. The motto of the conference was "Families for Eternity". The speakers were Brother Oscar Oviedo, Brother Renzo Suarez, Brother Elder Hernandez and Sister Raquel Hernandez.

The topics were related to families and interpersonal relationships like communication and conflict resolution; emotional wellness; life project; love and discipline at home; money and finances.

We had many visitors and these topics were a blessing for each one of us. We thank God for the opportunity to participate. We thank all the families who attended.

Please pray for the work in Calgary. God bless His work in Calgary, in Canada and in the whole world. Amen

Raquel Hernandez

See photos next page.

Western Conference, Calgary, Canada



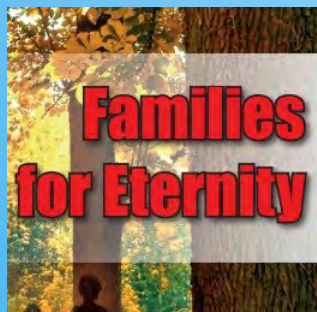
**RIGHT:
OSCAR
OVIEDO**



**LEFT: SISTER
RAQUEL AND
CHILDREN**



**RENZO
SUAREZ**



**ELDER
HERNANDEZ**

He Leadeth Me

In pastures green and fair and bright?—O no,
Not always so;
Sometimes in paths of gloom and deepest night
He bids me go.

O'er desert wastes where no sweet flowers are nigh
Laden with dew;
And trackless wilds, where deepening shadows lie,
He leads me through.

And when in weariness I sometimes pray,
“Father, how long?”
He answers still, with smile as sweet as day,
Trust and be strong.

Thy God commands thy strength—let faith embrace
The promise true;
Thou mayest not know why life in shady place
Is cast for you.

O give me strength and faith to count each loss
Good in disguise;
If from the conflict nearer to the cross
I may arise.

D. A. Grant