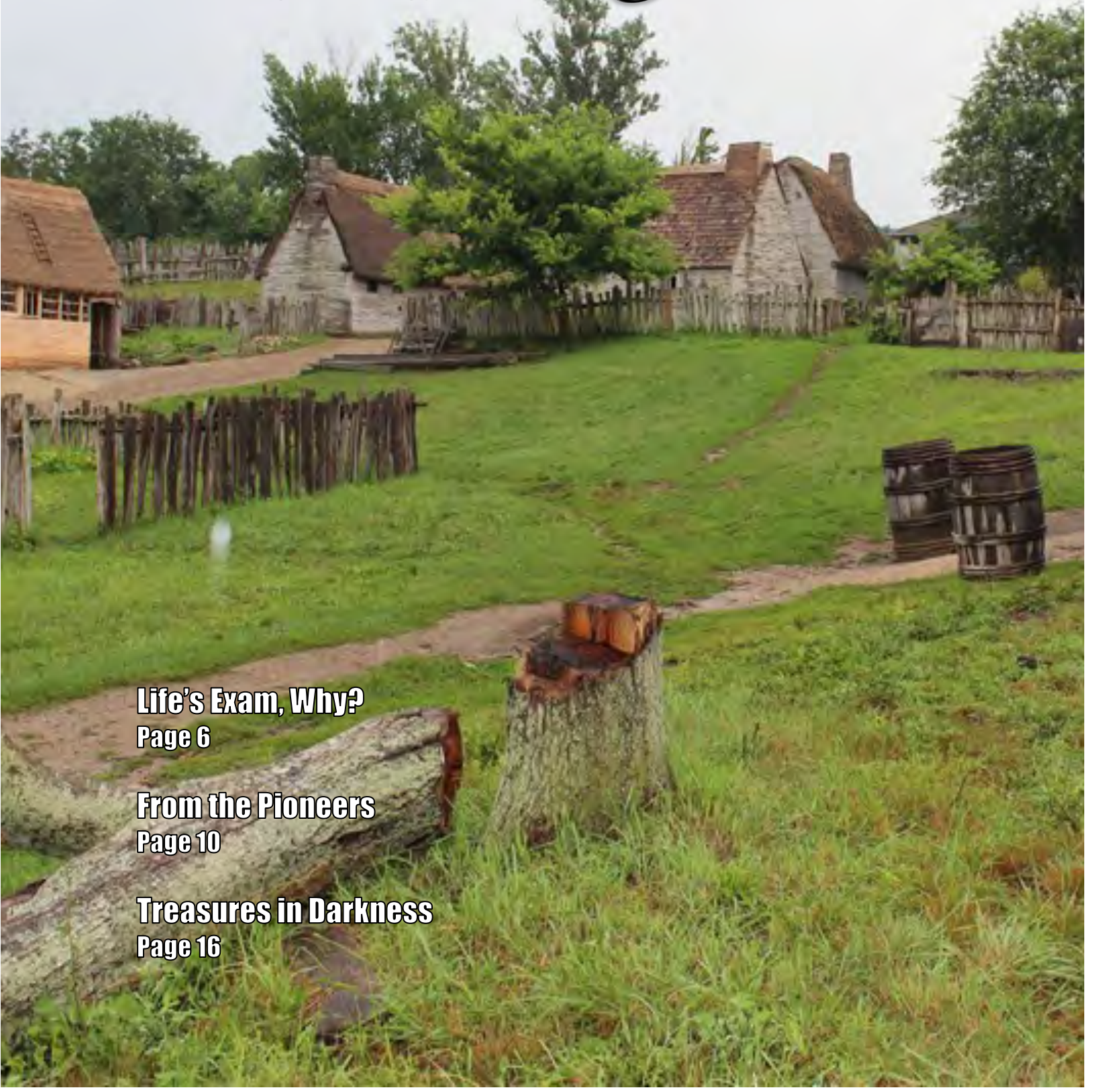


The Reformation
Messenger
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WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself 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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New Year's Resolution-Is it a carnal aspiration by itself?

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." Proverbs 29:18

2015, a brand new year, new aspirations, a time when many well-meaning people make resolutions, determined to make some positive changes but, according to Richard Wiseman of the University of Bristol who, in 2007, did a study involving 3000 subjects, 88% of those who make New Year's resolution fail, even though 52% of the participants felt at the beginning that they would find success.

The question is, why was it not sustainable over the long run; why not a greater degree of success? What essential element was missing? On what was it founded? Finally, where did this concept originate?

Firstly, when we understand its origin it allows us to understand that it was not founded on any biblical principles but a pre-Christianity relic of Babylonian-descent. A custom, previously set in March but changed to the month of January by the Romans to honour Janus, their two faced god, who is purported to look backwards into the old year and forward into the new year—the god of beginnings and protection. As Christianity was incorporated into the Roman Empire down through the ages, many serious Christians, like the Puritans, were cautious of New Year's reveling and began instead to use that time to reflect on the year past and on the year to come and to seek to overcome sinful practices. Ironically, it went back to its original foundation. Today, as followers of Christ we somehow continue to use January, Rome's statute, for that time when we look back and look forward—in effect, make resolutions.

From looking at the previously mentioned survey, why was it not sustainable over the long run and why did it not have a greater degree of success? E.G. White expressively answers it. "Your resolutions may be good and sincere, but," she continues, "They will prove a failure unless you make God your strength and move forward with a firm determination of purpose." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 262. In other words, it goes beyond human ambition and therefore according to this statement in *Steps to Christ*: "Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behaviour, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life." – *Steps to Christ*, p.18. Is this not a direct contrast to God's ideal for success to what tends to be a set of man-made intentions?

It is a sad reality that man does not have the wherewithal to bring himself out of the ashes of the legacy of his fallen nature—the carnal nature. "I am carnal," Paul once said, "sold under sin." A closer look at the word "carnal" indicates the natural human inclination with a bent to evil. It is inconceivable, therefore, to think that we can achieve success of our own accord, considering who we really are. Indeed the question continues to hold true, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that is accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23. But is this not a long-standing deception contrived by the evil one?

While Christians consider it an opportunity to change certain behaviours, and seek to "work" hard in accomplishing it, it becomes work-righteousness. The following attest to the fact that it is a widespread experience within Christendom: "Many," states the author of *Steps to Christ*, "have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' Our growth in grace, our joy, and our usefulness—all depend upon our union with Christ." – *Ibid.*, p. 69

Since therefore, it is not in man to perfect his character, no matter the amount of determination, the seeker of change must obtain it otherwise. "There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties

of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness," so says the voice of inspiration. – *Ibid.*, p. 18

Does the human agent then not have a part in its sanctification? Very much so; it is cooperating with Christ—mindfully and purposefully that that union brings about success. Thus you "give and take." "This is a daily matter," Ellen White declares, "Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ." – *Ibid.*, p. 70. A far-reaching question then is, Is there a set time in the year to do this? Definitely not—we may just have been victims of traditions because the word of God clearly states: "To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." Hebrews 3:15

How? She counsels: "Consecrate yourself to God in the morning: make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, 'Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me and let all my work be wrought in Thee.'" Here is the clincher: "Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection of His character. Christ in His self-denial in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love. . . . It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are transformed into His likeness." – *Ibid.*, p. 70

What aspiration, what possibility, a model built on Christ that promises success, rightly followed with the aid of the Holy Spirit, all else will follow in its train and our carnal resolutions will have been put to rest, and the words: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13), becomes the reality, not for just 365 days, but essentially for a lifetime where He, our advocate, is pleading for us to Jehovah God, the only true and living God, the beginning and the end; the Alpha and the Omega.

Rose Powell

The Power of Example

Jesus was in the temple with His disciples, and in comes a poor widow. Silently, almost ashamed, she goes to the offering box and drops in two mites, hoping that no one would notice her little gift. Yet Someone did see her gift, and it was Jesus. He said to His disciples, "Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Mark 12:43-44

The story of the widow's two mites has touched the hearts of many Christians which resulted in many men and women donating millions to charity, and to God's work. The silent influence of this poor widow has done more than eloquent appeals of many ministers. She was an influence for good.

It is possible, that we also can be an example for wrongdoing and sin, leading others to follow our mistakes. Adam was influenced by his wife to eat the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Because of this sin they had to die and their children had to die; even Jesus had to die. If Eve had not eaten this forbidden fruit then Adam would not have eaten of it either.

Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper, and quietly, without saying one word, a woman enters in and stoops down at the feet of Jesus. No one pays attention to her, until she opens an alabaster box of precious ointment and started to anoint the feet of Jesus. Now suddenly she is noticed, and she becomes the centre of attention. As the sweet smell of the ointment fills the room everyone notices her. The act that she thought to do in secret has become an inspiration to Christians to make similar sacrifices. She spoke a sermon without uttering one word.

Satan, by his example, was able to lead one third of the angels in heaven to turn against God. Later, all these angels were disappointed and sorry that they had followed Satan in his rebellion against God. This shows the great power that example has. Today almost the whole world follows Satan, without realizing the results that will follow.

We may be terrified of Satan, the enemy of our soul, but we may not see the potential danger in our friends, relatives, associates, and even in professing Christians. They may come to us like Eve came to her husband Adam. She professed to love him, and yet at the same time she tempted him to sin, which resulted in Adam losing his life and his removal from paradise.

Your friend may be a faithful Christian in many points except in one, and that is the one point where he will tempt you to sin also. If he does not like someone, he will put him down, and soon you do not like this person either.



Satan has many helpers, even among professed Christians. We must never underestimate the power of example.

If a stone is dropped into a lake, immediately it is no longer visible, but the waves caused by the stone continue in every direction. If evil is spoken of someone, this will be spread out to others, and those who hear it will tell it again to others.

The history of Ancient Israel shows us the power of example. "So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel." 2 Chronicles 33:9

Israel's people had a knowledge of God—could they do worse than the heathen? Yet they did, because of the example of their ruler.

A little later they had a different king. "And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers." 2 Chronicles 34:33

The leaders and the officers in the churches have a great responsibility to the members, to show them correct examples. If the leaders do not attend every meeting in the church, soon the members stop coming, thinking that church meetings are not important. Yet Sister White writes that if we neglect to attend church meetings, we will lose our faith.

One man, Balaam, caused the death of 24,000 Israelites. What the king of the Moabites could not do with his army, the counsel of Balaam did. The enmity of the Moabites was not as dangerous as was their friendship. They led Israel's people to worship idols and into immorality.

Is it not the same today? The enmity of the world is not as dangerous as is its friendship. When there is open persecution of God's people, and they are hated and cast into prisons, this is not as dangerous as when the world comes to us, as God's people, as a friend, and flatters us and offers their entertainments to us. Then we must watch out because we are in great danger. This shows how much stronger the power of example is than is the power of knowledge. When Christians are in the company of worldly people, often better knowledge is overthrown and they join with others in wrongdoing. One time the people shouted, "Hosanna

to the son of David," and the next time they cried out, "crucify Him," because it was popular to do so.

In the church the power of example is clearly seen. In the hairdos and in the dress, if worldly fashions are followed by one, soon others will follow. Television, worldly movies, competitive sports and worldly books and magazines turn our minds away from God and into the world.

Therefore God gave us the warning: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth at his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high." Isaiah 33:15–16

If it would be possible to resist the evil that surrounds us, the Bible would not be so specific and clear in these things. We need to stop our ears and our eyes from evil, that they would not separate us from God. Paul writes to us, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17

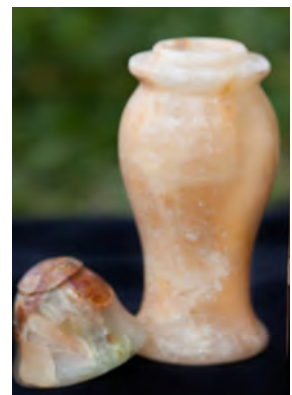
It may be your best friend, your relatives, and your family members who keep you out of heaven and out of eternal life.

Now the important fact is that our lives are not our own. We are responsible for others. Our example can influence others to do right or wrong. This especially lays great responsibility upon parents. One day God will ask of the parents, "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" Jeremiah 13:20. How many parents destroy their children by their wrong example?

This is the work of our Reform Church; not only to give knowledge to the people, but by our example we can influence others to follow our faith. Only eternity will reveal the far-reaching effects of our example upon others.

A friend who is led by the Holy Spirit is a savour of life to us (2 Corinthians 2:16). In his company we are inspired to do what is right and we will find peace to our souls. Make Jesus your best friend. He will help you and He will never leave you. Amen.

Timo Martin





Life's Exam, Why?

A MIND BOGGLING QUESTION

Today we hear of wars and rumors of wars, pestilences like Ebola are on the rise. Various forms of storms are sweeping away crops and homes leaving thousands dead and other thousands, if not millions, homeless and starving; what remains is shattered by earthquakes or consumed by ravaging flames and “Men's hearts” are “failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” Luke 21:26. The world is enveloped in violence, destruction and protest making it evident that the triumph of the everlasting gospel is near and that the Kingdoms of this world are soon to become the Kingdoms of our God and of His Christ (Revelation 11:15). But one question that vexes the mind of both common man and Philosopher alike is, Why the suffering and the death? The Preacher man would stand with his Bible and say, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 5:12

Ok, so if sin brought suffering and death, and sin came through Adam, just how did he do it? Oh! He ate from the forbidden tree—the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But, wait a minute! Who made Adam? It was God. Who planted the Garden of Eden? It was God. Who put the forbidden tree in the garden? It was God. But God, in Isaiah 46:9–10 says, “I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done;” so if God knows the end of everything before its very beginning, why would He put a tree in a beautiful garden that would lead man to sin and then bring suffering and death? Just how do we reconcile God's love as revealed in His actions after man's fall, with His actions from the very infancy of this world



before man's fall?

God created this world in six literal days and Genesis 1:31 gives the account that “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was [not just good but] very good.” In chapter 2:7–9 we are told of how man was created, the beautiful garden of Eden he was given and the two special trees that were planted in the garden—the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. These two trees were not in the garden to merely provide nutrition for man's survival but each of them had a significant impact on his life and existence; one would perpetuate his life, the other would end it forever—make him extinct. The tree of life was to perpetuate

life and give man immortality while “The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be a test of the obedience, faith, and love of our parents” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 46, 48. And this is what the question is: Why the “test”? Why should man's life be an exam?

To answer this seemingly complex question, we must divide and conquer it. First we must understand why there should even be a test in the first place, second we must understand why Adam and Eve (or the human race in general) must be tested; and I am certain that after these two, a third question shall arise, but we shall deal with it when we get to it.

WHY SHOULD THERE BE A TEST?

The Bible teaches us that before God created this world, He created angels. Heaven, and the universe in general, had lived in peace and harmony until Lucifer rebelled against God's government. Lucifer challenged God's authority and was especially jealous of the right of Jesus to be equal with God, because he also wanted to be equal

with God, and perhaps rule the universe just like God (Isaiah 14:12–14). He also claimed that Angels needed no law but should be left to follow their own intelligent will which would ever guide them aright (*The Story of Redemption*, p.18). Exactly how this sin of pride, jealousy and rebellion began within him is a mystery, that is why it is called the mystery of iniquity—how could one be that wicked in spite of such love and glory!

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.” Revelation 12:7–9

What was the cause of this war in heaven? It was Satan’s rebellion against God’s government and it broke out because, for the very first time, someone challenged God’s law and His rule. But what type of war was this? Well, I do not think that it was a war involving the use of violence, though we learn that Satan was ready to defend his position by force of might (*The Story of Redemption*, p. 18); it was a war in the sense that there was contention and commotion in heaven (*Ibid.*, p. 15, 17). There was a war in the minds of the angels; should they sympathize with Lucifer or should they accept God’s government? Jesus and the loyal angels were defending God’s justice and pleading with the rebels, while the Chief rebel was defending his rebellion.

“The great God could at once have hurled this archdeceiver from heaven; but this was not His purpose. He would give the rebellious an equal chance to measure strength and might with His own Son and His loyal angels. *In this battle every angel would choose his own side and be manifested to all.*” –*The Story of Redemption*, p.17 (emphasis mine)

Notice what the battle was about, “*In this battle every angel would **choose** his own side and be manifested to all.*” This was the very first moment a test was needed to prove whose side every created being in the universe was on, because heretofore there had been only one side—God’s side—but now there were two sides. And we are told that one third of the angels (Revelation 12:4) took the side of Satan and there was no place for them in heaven so they were cast out.

“When Satan became disaffected in heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him one third of

the angels lost their innocence, their high estate, and their happy home.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 291

Therefore, in answer to the question, why there should be a test in the first place, we have seen that a test was necessary because of Lucifer’s rebellion. The very first beings in the Universe who were tested were the angels, and only two thirds passed the test.

WHY SHOULD ADAM AND EVE BE TESTED?

Revelation 12:9 states that Satan was cast into the earth after he lost the war; but we need to know that it was not *immediately* after being cast out of heaven, because at that time the earth was not yet in existence.

“Then there was war in heaven. The Son of God, the Prince of heaven, and His loyal angels engaged in conflict with the archrebel and those who united with him. The Son of God and true, loyal angels prevailed; and Satan and his sympathizers were expelled from heaven. All the heavenly host acknowledged and adored the God of justice. Not a taint of rebellion was left in heaven. All was again peaceful and harmonious as before. . . . The Father consulted His Son in regard to at once carrying out their purpose to make man to inhabit the earth. . . . The Father and the Son engaged in the mighty, wondrous work they had contemplated--of creating the world.” –*The Story of Redemption*, p.19–20

From the above quote we learn that this earth, and man in particular, was created after the fall of Lucifer. Remember that Satan’s rebellion necessitated the need for each and every created intelligent being in the universe to choose sides between God and Satan and there was no way that Adam and Eve could have been left out of this. If God had made them like robots that had no free will to choose, it would have meant Satan was right in asserting that God is a tyrant who gives no free will to His creatures.

Therefore, God “would place man upon probation to test his loyalty before he could be rendered eternally secure. If he endured the test wherewith God saw fit to prove him, he should eventually be equal with the angels. He was to have the favor of God, and he was to converse with angels, and they with him. He did not see fit to place them beyond the power of disobedience.” –*Ibid.*, p. 19

This is why God placed the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden; but we must remember that this test was not only for our world, but for all created beings even in other worlds. Sister White speaks of her experience in one of her visions where she

visited another world where she found people who bore the express image of Jesus and looked more lovely than those on earth. "I asked one of them why they were so much more lovely than those on the earth. The reply was, 'We have lived in strict obedience to the commandments of God, and have not fallen by disobedience, like those on the earth.' Then I saw two trees, one looked much like the tree of life in the city. The fruit of both looked beautiful, but of one they could not eat. They had power to eat of both, but were forbidden to eat of one. Then my attending angel said to me, 'None in this place have tasted of the forbidden tree; but if they should eat, they would fall.'" —*Early Writings*, p. 40

POSITIONS OF TRUST

Let me refer back to the statement, "*In this battle every angel would **choose** his own side and be **manifested to all**."* While this was true for all the angels, this statement is now true for every person on earth because this is where that battle has continued to take place; "for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" 1 Corinthians 4:9. Every person's decision is manifested unto all—God, men (including inhabitants of other worlds) and angels.

Why do different kinds of schools such as high schools, colleges and universities offer examinations to students? Well, many people may give different reasons for this, but I tend to think the main reason is that life, and society in general, offers several positions of trust to which each and every individual can be entrusted *if* they prove themselves worthy of such trusts. Take for instance a bus driver, i.e. a public transportation service vehicle driver; would you entrust someone who has failed a PSV driving test with the lives of people that he would transport every day? Likely not. Every profession is a position of trust, be it a doctor, engineer, pilot, etc. Society needs to have confidence and trust in a person's ability to hold that position of trust. This is why students get tested. The purpose of the examination is not to fail the student but to establish society's trust and confidence in the student and in the institutions of learning. While it is true that there are people who failed examinations in school but became successful in some other lines of business, the fact still remains that in one way or another they have *proved* themselves worthy of such trusts. This is why over the years there have been tremendous improvements in learning systems, introduction of re-examinations, etc., all aimed at helping the student to achieve those positions of trust.

Similarly, the purpose for life's exam—man's test in the great controversy—is not only to let man choose his side

between God and Satan, but if he passes the test, God has prepared positions of trust for him. In order to do this God has provided every facility necessary to help man achieve this goal. The test is aimed at establishing the universe's (men, angels, world—1 Corinthians 4:9) trust in us and God's government.

"Every opportunity, every advantage, every privilege, has been given to us to gain a rich Christian experience; but we do not learn everything all at once. There must be a growth. Many, having learned a little in school, think they are ready to graduate. They think they know about all that is worth knowing. We are not to think that as soon as we are baptized we are ready to graduate from the school of Christ. When we have accepted Christ, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit have pledged ourselves to serve God, the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit—the three dignitaries and powers of heaven—pledge themselves that every facility shall be given to us if we carry out our baptismal vows to 'come out from among them, and be . . . separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing.' When we are true to our vows, He says, I will receive you' (MS 85, 1901)." —*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6 p. 1075

Man was made a little lower than the angels (Psalm 8:4–5); God put him under probation to prove his loyalty and "if he endured the test wherewith God saw fit to prove him, he should eventually be equal with the angels." —*The Story of Redemption*, p.19

When Satan and his angels were expelled from heaven, a void was made which has never been filled (*Ibid.*, p. 18). "God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. It was God's purpose to repopulate heaven with the human family, if they would show themselves obedient to His every word" —*God's Amazing Grace*, p.344

Is not this wonderful news? Many young people today aspire to be great Engineers, Doctors, Pilots, Lawyers, etc., but here is presented something that surpasses all these aspirations—to be like the angels! To fill the positions that Lucifer and his angels forfeited. Those are the positions for which we are being tested. Imagine how students stress themselves to pass their examinations because they just cannot wait to hold those coveted titles of their choice in various sectors of industry and society! Now, think of the heavenly title awaiting you and "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

WHY THEN WAS LUCIFER CREATED IN THE FIRST PLACE?

Excellent question, but allow me to answer that question by posing another. If you are married and you knew that if you bear a son, he would rebel against you and possibly seek to destroy you, would you go ahead and give birth to such a son? Humanly speaking, you would answer, "No sir!" Well, that's what separates us from God. Think about King Herod in the days when Jesus was born. When he heard that a King of the Jews had been born, he unleashed all his cunning strategies and armies just to destroy this little babe who could not even do him any harm (Matthew 2:16). Herod was already old but he still did not want anybody to become King apart from him. That is Satan's nature and that is what every human being without the spirit of God would do.

"Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages—a perpetual testimony to the nature of sin and its terrible results. The working out of

Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of

God's government is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy beings, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its penalty." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 59

God is teaching us that no good comes out of setting aside His law in order to benefit ourselves. One may work on the Sabbath to make ends meet for his family, or withhold tithe, thinking to have more income, or cheat in business, thinking to make more money, or commit adultery, thinking to have more pleasure, but all must remember that this is the very reason why God went ahead and created Lucifer—to teach us this lesson that NO good comes out of setting aside God's law in our lives. It is a lesson we must learn and practice every day in order to truthfully and innocently enjoy life. That is why the Bible says, "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life,

and may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14. Without obedience to God's commandments, you cannot be happy, for there is no peace to the wicked (Isaiah 57:21). Though people promote the so-called human rights, they are using some of that as a cloak for wickedness. Some religious bodies even go as far as to grant "liberty of conscience" to their members to transgress God's commandments. Revelation 22:14 states that when you transgress God's law you do not even have the right to live! Every day that we live we give evidence to the universe, either of God's goodness, mercy and His saving grace in our lives or of Satan's work in and through us. Therefore, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Corinthians 13:5

WHEN WILL THE EXAM END?

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. . . . An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.' Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, 'It is done;' and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' Revelation 22:11. Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 613

The examination ends individually when one ceases to exist on earth either through death or translation to heaven (as in the case of Enoch and Elijah). Generally speaking, it will end when probation closes and probation closes when the Third Angel's message has finished its work. The Third Angel's message finishes when the sealing is completed. The sealing is completed after the final test has been brought upon all, which is the National Sunday Law! How far are we from this time? Just watch the news and you will know that it is very near, even at the door.

Mukelabai Mukelabai

From the Pioneers:



Two Parties

“There is going to be another company there that day—a great multitude that no man can number—all nations and kindreds and tongues and people, and they will come up to enter in. And if anyone should ask them that question, ‘What have you done that you should enter here? What claim have you here?’ The answer would be:

“‘Oh, I have not done anything at all to deserve it. I am a sinner, dependent only on the grace of the Lord. Oh I was so wretched, so completely a captive and in such a bondage that nobody could deliver me but the Lord Himself; so miserable that all I could ever do was to have the Lord constantly to comfort me, so poor that I had constantly to beg from the Lord; so blind that no one but the Lord could cause me to see; so naked that no one could clothe me but the Lord Himself. All the claim that I have is what Jesus has done for me. But the Lord has loved me. When in my

“And in that day there are going to be two parties there. There are going to be some there when the door is shut, and they will want to go in, and they say, ‘Lord, open to us. We want to come in.’ And Someone comes and asks, ‘What have you done that you should come in? What right have you to enter the inheritance here? What claim have you upon that?’ ‘Oh, we are acquainted with You. We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. Yes, besides that we have prophesied in Thy name. In Thy name we have cast out devils and in Thy name we have done many wonderful works. Why, we have done many wonderful things. Lord, is not that evidence enough? Open the door.’

“What is the answer? ‘Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.’ What did they say? ‘We have done many wonderful works. We have done them. We are all right. We are righteous. We are just. Exactly right. Therefore we have a right to be there. Open the door.’ But ‘we’ does not count there, does it?

wretchedness I cried, He delivered me. When in my misery I wanted comfort, He comforted me all the way. When in my poverty I begged, He gave me riches. When in my blindness I asked Him to show me the way, that I might know the way, He led me all the way and made me to see. When I was so naked that no one could clothe me, why, He gave me this garment that I have on, and so all I can present, all that I have to present as that upon which I can enter, any claim that would cause me to enter, is just what He has done for me. If that will not pass me, then I am left out, and that will be just too. If I am left out, I have no complaint to make. But, oh, will not this entitle me to enter and possess the inheritance?’

“But he says, ‘Well, there are some very particular persons here. They want to be fully satisfied with everybody that goes by here. We have ten examiners here. When they look into a man’s case and say that he is all right, why then he can pass. Are you willing that these shall be called to examine into your case?’ And we shall

answer, 'Yes, yes, because I want to enter in, and I am willing to submit to any examination, because even if I am left out I have no complaint to make. I am lost anyway when I am left to myself.

"'Well,' says he, 'we will call them then.' And so those ten are brought up and they say, 'Why, yes, we are perfectly satisfied with him. Why, yes, the deliverance that he obtained from his wretchedness is that which our Lord wrought; the comfort that he had all the way and that he needed so much is that which our Lord gave. The wealth that he has, whatever he has, poor as he was, the Lord gave it, and blind, whatever he sees, it is the Lord that gave it to him. And he sees only what is the Lord's. And naked as he was, that garment that he has on, the Lord gave it to him. The Lord wove it, and it is all divine. It is only Christ. Why, yes, he can come in.'

'Jesus paid it all,
All to him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain:
He washed it white as snow.'

"And then, brethren, there will come over the gates a voice of sweetest music, full of the gentleness and compassion of my Saviour—the voice will come from within, 'Come in, thou blessed of the Lord.' . . . 'Why standest thou without?' And the gate will be swung wide open, and we shall have 'an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'

"Oh, He is a complete Saviour. He is my Saviour. My



soul doth magnify the Lord. My soul shall rejoice in the Lord, brethren, tonight. Oh, I say with David, come and magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together. He has made complete satisfaction. There is not anything against us, brethren. The way is clear. The road is open. The righteousness of Christ satisfies. That is light and love and joy and eternal excellence.

"Isn't it true, then, of Isaiah 60:1: 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon thee and His glory shall be seen upon thee.' Brethren, He can do it. He wants to. Let us let Him. . . . And let us praise Him while He is doing it.

"Now can't we praise the Lord. Then everybody in this house that wants to do it, you just go right ahead now. I will say amen to every word of it, for my soul magnifies Him, too, brethren. My soul praises Him, too brethren, because He is my Saviour. He has completed the work. He has done His gracious work. He has saved me. He saves all. Let us thank Him forevermore.

"Professor Prescott: 'The times of refreshing are here, brethren. The Spirit of God is here. Open the heart, open the heart. Open the heart in praise and thanksgiving.'"

General Conference Bulletin, February 27, 1893

A.T. Jones

**"Are you in Christ? Not if you do not acknowledge yourselves erring, helpless, condemned sinners. Not if you are exalting and glorifying self. If there is any good in you, it is wholly attributable to the mercy of a compassionate Saviour. Your birth, your reputation, your wealth, your talents, your virtues, your piety, your philanthropy, or anything else in you or connected with you, will not form a bond of union between your soul and Christ. Your connection with the church, the manner in which your brethren regard you, will be of no avail unless you believe in Christ. It is not enough to believe *about* Him; you must believe *in* Him. You must rely wholly upon His saving grace."
— *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 48–49**



The Problem of Being Alone

“And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me. And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him. As He spake these words, many believed on Him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:16, 29–32

So many people are really afraid of being alone in this life. Jesus acknowledged the problem Himself, as we see from the opening text. Every child, and every youth must learn to stand singly and alone for the truth’s sake, if they would win precious victories over self, sin and Satan. Without this ability to be alone, and depend upon God, we are bound to fail. Satan keeps thousands enslaved by peer pressure.

The fear of standing out, of being different, rules thousands and millions of young people—and even a lot of older people, as well. No one wants to be rejected. I remember being a young person, and how I so desperately wanted to fit in and be respected for who and what I was. My family moved a lot when I was young so I experienced being the new child, at school regularly. Unfortunately, I did not have any kind of truth to guide, help and comfort me—only my parents telling me, “Be a good boy, Jerry.” I did not want to be alone, I did not want to have the disapproval of my peers. God created us as social creatures, and we desire to have the approval of people, quite naturally. So it can be a problem when it comes to serving God, because quite often people choose the approval of man, over the approval of God.

“For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of

all men, specially of those that believe. These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.” 1 Timothy 4:10–13

Jesus was quite young when He had to suffer misrepresentation and abuse for His stand for truth. “Jesus was misunderstood by His brothers because He was not like them. His standard was not their standard. In looking to men they had turned away from God, and they had not His power in their lives. The forms of religion which they observed could not transform the character. They paid ‘tithes of mint and anise and cummin,’ but omitted ‘the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith.’ Matthew 23:23. The example of Jesus was to them a continual irritation. He hated but one thing in the world, and that was sin. He could not witness a wrong act without pain which it was impossible to disguise. Between the formalists, whose sanctity of appearance concealed the love of sin, and a character in which zeal for God’s glory was always paramount, the contrast was unmistakable. Because the life of Jesus condemned evil, He was opposed, both at home and abroad. His unselfishness and integrity were commented on with a sneer. His forbearance and kindness were termed cowardice.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 88. Ask yourself, has your character been maligned, as well, for your stand on truth?

“Of the bitterness that falls to the lot of humanity, there was no part which Christ did not taste. There were those who tried to cast contempt upon Him because of His birth, and even in His childhood He had to meet their scornful looks and evil whisperings. If He had responded by an impatient word or look, if He had

conceded to His brothers by even one wrong act, He would have failed of being a perfect example. Thus He would have failed of carrying out the plan for our redemption. Had He even admitted that there could be an excuse for sin, Satan would have triumphed, and the world would have been lost. This is why the tempter worked to make His life as trying as possible, that He might be led to sin.

“But to every temptation He had one answer, ‘It is written.’ He rarely rebuked any wrongdoing of His brothers, but He had a word from God to speak to them. Often He was accused of cowardice for refusing to unite with them in some forbidden act; but His answer was, It is written, ‘The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.’ Job 28:28

“There were some who sought His society, feeling at peace in His presence; but many avoided Him, because they were rebuked by His stainless life. Young companions urged Him to do as they did. He was bright and cheerful; they enjoyed His presence, and welcomed His ready suggestions; but they were impatient at His scruples, and pronounced Him narrow and strait-laced. Jesus answered, It is written, ‘Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word.’ ‘Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.’ Psalm 119:9, 11.” —*Ibid.*, p. 88–89

His lot was not easy in life—but then, learning to like your own company is a whole lot better than not being happy in your own company.

This fear of being alone probably rises to a crescendo for the typical young person in their teens or early twenties—why? Because there is a biological urge to mate and also there are social needs. We have man’s inherent selfishness and this is seen when many youth are mostly focused on themselves, rather than God. The more they study their own emotions, their own desires, the more they think that they have to be with someone else, or they *will not*, they *cannot*, be happy. But, please remember: Was Jesus ever married?

The more we study our own emotions, the more we

entangle ourselves in perplexity.

It is true, the Bible is full of promises about how the Lord will take the solitary and put them into families, but the primary family He wants to put us in, is His own family—the church (Psalm 68:6).

“Love is a sentiment so sacred that but few know what it is. It is a term used, but not understood. The warm glow of impulse, the fascination of one young person for another is not love; it does not deserve the name. True love has an intellectual basis, a deep, thorough knowledge of the object loved. But this catching up with objects and bestowing on them the thoughts and affections, is without reason, without judgment, and is excessive, temporary, and sensual.

“Remember that impulsive love is perfectly blind. It will as soon be placed on unworthy objects as worthy. Command such love to stand still and cool. Give place to genuine thought and deep, earnest reflection. Is this object of your affection, in the scale of intelligence and moral excellence, in deportment and cultivated manners, such that you will feel a pride in presenting her to your father’s family, to acknowledge her in all society as the object of your choice, one whose society, conversational powers, and manners will interest and satisfy your most grand expectations? Will Nellie fill this bill? I answer decidedly, No, she will not.

“Let time teach you discretion, and what the genuine claims of love are, before it is allowed to step one inch further. Ruin, fearful ruin, is before you in this life and the next, if you pursue the course you have been following. Look to the family history. Two families are to be brought into close and sacred connection. Perfection in all these relations is not, of course, to be expected, but you would make a most cruel move to marry a girl whose ancestry and relatives would degrade and mortify you, or tempt you to slight and ignore them.

“It is safe to make haste slowly in these matters. Give yourself sufficient time for observation on every point, and then do not trust to your own judgment, but let



the mother who loves you, and your father, and confidential friends, make critical observation of the one you feel inclined to favor. Trust not to your own judgment, and marry no one whom you feel will not be an honor to your father and mother, [but] one who has intelligence and moral worth. The girl who gives over her affections to a man, and invites his attention by her advances, hanging around where she will be noticed of him unless he shall appear rude, is not the girl you want to associate with. Her conversation is cheap and frequently without depth.” —*Testimonies on Sexual Behaviour, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 21–22

This kind of love, they must let cool, and learn to be happy with themselves, with the love of God flowing constantly to them. Then they can be truly spiritual and truly happy.

In many theological circles, Muslim, Jewish, and others—people try to tell us that God is alone, but the evidence, right from the beginning, says otherwise:

“And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.” Genesis 1: 26–27. “The LORD possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” “Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.” Proverbs 8: 22–23, 30. “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2

It seems that many people in the world feel that God has to be alone, and they are afraid of Him sharing His glory with another. But, apparently God is so unselfish that He has no problem with the other members of the Godhead sharing His glory.

In Adventist history many of the pioneers taught that God was initially alone, and Jesus came later, with the Holy Spirit just being the power, or active force of God.

Uriah Smith, E.J. Waggoner and many others held to this opinion at first. Ellen G. White though, said, from the very beginning of her writings, that God was *echad*, or plural in His oneness.

For example, Ellen G. White often referred to John 14:16 and the Comforter bringing the presence of Jesus to the believer. She continued this theme as she presented the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Godhead. She wrote, “Although our Lord ascended from earth to heaven, the Holy Spirit was appointed as His representative among men.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, p. 23. She then quoted John 14:15–18 and continued, “Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in

every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His Father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth.” —*Ibid.*, p. 23. Ellen G. White was in agreement with the teaching of the Holy Spirit being a Person and also representing Jesus. One characteristic of the Biblical Godhead is that they represent or point to Each Other.



1) The Holy Spirit represented Jesus.

2) Jesus, throughout His life on earth, represented the Father. “Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” John 14:9

3) The Father pointed to and exalted the Son. “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:17. “While He yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.” Mathew 17:5. See also Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35.

In 1891, Ellen G. White wrote in response to a man who believed that the Holy Spirit was really the angel Gabriel and that the 144,000 will be Jews that acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. After giving important principles

of biblical interpretation, she directly addressed his positions. “Your ideas of the two subjects you mention do not harmonize with the light which God has given me. The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery not clearly revealed, and you will never be able to explain it to others because the Lord has not revealed it to you.” She then quoted John 14:16 and continued, “This refers to the omnipresence of the Spirit of Christ, called the Comforter.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 14, p. 179. Ellen G. White then confessed the limits of her own understanding: “There are many mysteries which I do not seek to understand or to explain; they are too high for me, and too high for you. On some of these points, silence is golden.” —*Ibid*, p. 179. In the absence of special insight on the nature and personality of the Holy Spirit, Ellen G. White stayed close to Scripture and, unlike the other Adventist writers previously cited, left the personality of the Holy Spirit undefined.

Perhaps you have seen, as I have, R.A. Underwood, a Seventh-day Adventist pioneer’s statement on the Holy Spirit being a person—which makes perfect sense to me—and how he came to this, over time. “The Holy Spirit is Christ’s personal representative in the field; and He is charged with the work of meeting Satan, and defeating this personal enemy of God and his government. It seems strange to me, now, that I ever believed that the Holy Spirit was *only* an influence, in view of the work He does.”

An active force cannot actually dwell with us and be in us, like a person can. Of all the people on this Earth—true Christians should be the most happy. Why do I say that? Because, if we have the approval of our Heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit to personally dwell with us, why do we ever have to feel lonely? What and who do we have to fear?

We have been promised the best and most powerful of

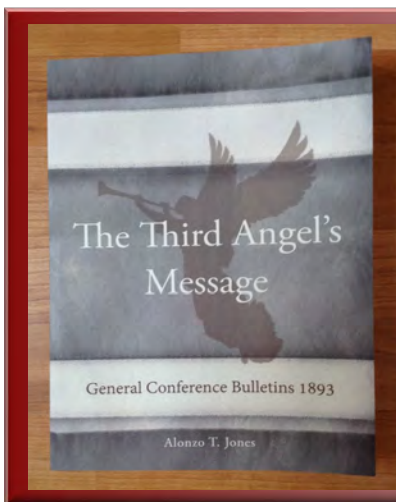
all gifts—the personal representative of God—His Spirit, to be with us. “The Father cannot be described by the things of earth. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight. The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The Word of God declares Him to be ‘the express image of His person.’ ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Here is shown the personality of the Father.” —*Evangelism*, p. 614

“The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” —*Evangelism*, p. 614–615

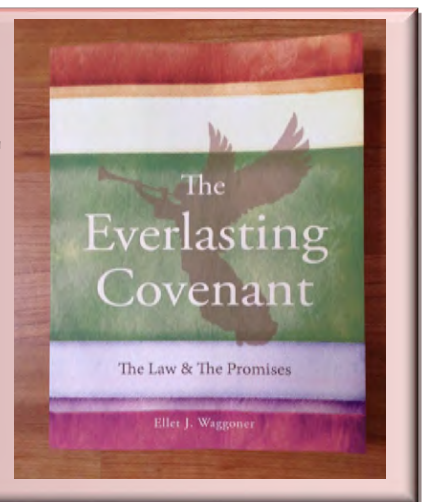
In conclusion: We are never alone, as long as we have God’s Spirit with us—we do not have to fear being alone, as long as He is with us. The problem of being alone is not really a problem, as long as we allow the Holy Spirit to be our comforter, stay and support. We do not have to be lonely, as we go forward by faith.

May God help His people to always walk so close to Him, seeking for His approval and allow Him to walk with us, that we will continue walking, and walk into heaven. I am very thankful for the truth that guides us through all the dark maze of this life. Amen.

Jerry Eaton



The writings of E. J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones in the years shortly after 1888 are now available in easy to read volumes. Enquire by email.



Treasures in Darkness



We serve an awesome God, who is full of light, peace and truth. “For thou art my lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness.” 2 Samuel 22:29

Yet sometimes His ways are mysterious and we do not understand them. Sometimes things in life do not go as we planned; life seems to spiral out of control; darkness seems to surround us; opposition is fierce. At these times we cannot give up in despair but trust that He is working out His purpose in our lives, such as in the case of the Patriarch Job. Through all his trials, Job recognized God’s leading when he said, “shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” Job 2:10. The Apostle Paul said, “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” 1 Corinthians 12:10. And we find him singing in prison with Silas (Acts 16:25). The Lord sometimes allows times of darkness to come into our lives for several reasons. One of the main reasons is that He sometimes needs to eliminate other distractions so that we can hear His voice more clearly. Whatever His reason may be, we know that He is in control and working all things together for good, for our salvation. We need to trust Him fully and not complain in the dark times. After the darkness we have a greater appreciation for the light.

There will be dark times, on occasion, in the personal lives of each true and faithful Christian. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23. In these times, despair can take hold of the Christian as they struggle to overcome sin and see they are failing miserably (Romans 7:15–20).

Yet this is not a sign that God has left the believer. Sister White often felt the powers of darkness oppress her to despair. Early on in her experience, after receiving her first two visions, she faced trials and thought they would be more than she could endure. She was in despair. “I feared that God had taken His favor from me forever. As I thought of the light that had formerly blessed my soul, it seemed doubly precious in contrast with the darkness that now enveloped me. Meetings were held at my fa-

ther’s house, but my distress of mind was so great that I did not attend them for some time. My burden grew heavier until the agony of my spirit seemed more than I could bear.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 64

Can any of us relate to this experience? However, the Lord did not forsake His servant, and neither will He forsake you. The powers of darkness of this world are on the war-path with God’s faithful followers. We may have many struggles and many disappointments, however, “a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.” Proverbs 24:16. It does not read that a wicked man falls, as he is already fallen, but a just man falls.

This verse has a dual application. Literally it states that when the wicked seek to overthrow the righteous, they may seemingly have gained a victory, but in the end the righteous will rise again. As often as His people are brought into poverty and woe, God intervenes to save them, whereas the sinner is literally overthrown by calamity and cannot rise up again.

In a spiritual sense this verse brings comfort to the struggling Christian who is discouraged by his failure in his struggles against sin. “Falleth seven times” is same as saying “whenever he falls” as it may be more than seven times. If we rise up in fresh hope after each failure, if we lay hold again upon the saving strength so feely offered to us, then we are classed as just men, and the Lord will complete in us the work that He has begun. The desire to become righteous and the strength to carry out the desire both come from Him. Hence, none need ever despair, however weak he may think himself to be, as long as he is willing to be made willing to do the right. The Lord will pick up His penitent children and give them strength to overcome and live a righteous life.

“The pen of inspiration, true to its task, tells us of the sins that overcame Noah, Lot, Moses, Abraham, David, and Solomon, and that even Elijah’s strong spirit sank under temptation during his fearful trial. Jonah’s disobedience and Israel’s idolatry are faithfully recorded. Peter’s denial of Christ, the sharp contention of Paul and Barnabas, the

failings and infirmities of the prophets and apostles, are all laid bare. . . . There before us lie the lives of the believers, with all their faults and follies, which are intended as a lesson to all the generations following them. If they had been without foible they would have been more than human, and our sinful natures would despair of ever reaching such a point of excellence. But seeing where they struggled and fell, where they took heart again and conquered through the grace of God, we are encouraged, and led to press over the obstacles that degenerate nature places in our way. . . .

“We need just such lessons as the Bible gives us, for with the revelation of sin is recorded the retribution which follows. The sorrow and penitence of the guilty, and the wailing of the sin-sick soul, come to us from the past, telling us that man was then, as now, in need of the pardoning mercy of God.

“Bible history stays the fainting heart with the hope of God’s mercy. We need not despair when we see that others have struggled through discouragements like our own, have fallen into temptations even as we have done, and yet have recovered their ground and been blessed of God. The words of inspiration comfort and cheer the erring soul. Although the patriarchs and apostles were subject to human frailties, yet through faith they obtained a good report, fought their battles in the strength of the Lord, and conquered gloriously. Thus may we trust in the virtue of the atoning sacrifice and be overcomers in the name of Jesus.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 368

The Lord also may allow us to go through difficult times so that we can learn by experience what it feels like to be in distress in order to be able to help others who are going through similar experiences. Our darkness may be intended, not only for us, but so that we can learn to help others. “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3–4. “Let us remember that everyone has some dark spot in his experience. Let us do all we can to bring cheerfulness and hope into the lives of others. What a blessing this will be to them. In their turn they will speak words of good cheer to others to bring sunshine into their hearts.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 185

“Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.” Micah 7:8. In our lowest times, the Lord will be with us; a light to us. He said He will be with us until the end of the world (Matthew 28:20). He also says, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Hebrews 13:5

TREASURES IN DARKNESS

Can there be treasure in darkness? Is not darkness something to be feared and dreaded? Truthfully, there can be much treasures that the Lord reveals in darkness. When the Lord reveals His presence, He must be clouded in darkness, or His glory would be too much for sinful, mortal man to bear. Mankind would be consumed by the presence of God. We see how The Lord veiled His glory in a cloud when He spoke the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai. “These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and He added no more.” Deuteronomy 5:22. When Solomon dedicated the temple he also recognized God’s presence in the darkness that shrouded the temple. “Then said Solomon, The LORD hath said that He would dwell in the thick darkness.” 2 Chronicles 6:1

“And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.” Isaiah 45:3. Treasures can be hidden in darkness.

A famous song reads like this:

“Holy holy holy, though darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of man Thy great glory may not see.
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.”

The dark times should not be depressing times. The Lord often speaks through darkness, bringing treasures of truth.

Take heart. If you seem to be shrouded in darkness, the Lord is perhaps trying to tell you something. Seek the treasures He has for you in the darkness. Your darkness may be of the Lord’s doing, like on Mount Sinai, or it may be His permissive will caused by your own missteps that have taken you away from the Lord of light when you have fallen and made a mess of your life. Do not despair. We can say like David, “I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.” Psalm 40:1–3

The Lord is good, a God of light, although sometimes He shrouds His brightness in darkness in order to communicate His light to His children. There can be great treasures in the darkness. It is my prayer that each one of us would listen to Him as He speaks to us in our dark times as He will lead us to His eternal light when He comes in the clouds of glory. Praise His worthy name. Amen. **W. Eaton**



The charismatic movement is rapidly growing, and both Protestants and Catholics have fallen under its influence. Many Catholic worship services are very similar to those of the Pentecostal movement. Are these spirit-filled meetings from God or from Satan? Has the Holy Spirit already been poured out in its fullness? The prophet Joel wrote about such things: "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My spirit." Joel 2:23, 28–29

The Scriptures indicate that there will be counterfeit movements in the last days. People will rely upon their emotions rather than trusting in God's Word. And, as can only be expected, many will be deceived as a result of what they have seen or heard. "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew 24:24

"So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested." *—The Great Controversy*, p. 593

According to two Old Testament prophets—Hosea and Zechariah—the Holy Spirit will be poured out with great power shortly before probation closes for this planet which has fallen under the power of the wicked one. This special outpouring is called the latter rain. It has

been promised, and it will be the last gift to God's remnant church.

Perhaps you have wondered what the purpose of the latter rain is. Why will God bestow this special gift at the very end of history?

1. The latter rain does not transform character.

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." Ephesians 1:13.

"The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ." *—The Faith I Live By*, p. 287

The latter rain will not be imparted to enable us to overcome sin or have our characters transformed. This must be done before the final work of God's Spirit. "We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. . . . When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions." *—Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 355

2. The latter rain will finish God's work on earth.

"For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Romans 9:28. How will the work be finished? "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Zechariah 4:6

God wants His people to receive the power of the Holy Spirit, so they will be able to spread the gospel throughout the world. The time will come when billions of people will all be urged for the last time to accept

the gracious offer of redemption. Everyone who is alive will then hear the final warning found in Revelation 14. "The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 612. "The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and, as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lighted with the glory of the Lord." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 46

3. The latter rain will strengthen all who choose to be God's children so they are able to pass through the time of trouble and meet Jesus.

"It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 353

"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man." –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 506

CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING THE LATTER RAIN

1. Having the 'early rain' experience.

A born-again Christian who has fully accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour is in a position to receive the latter rain. Repenting, confessing, and forsaking all sin, the sinner has the promise of forgiveness through the atoning blood of Jesus. This unique process of conversion comes about through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Actually, being born again is the early rain experience that is necessary in order to be redeemed. Without the new birth, no one can possibly receive the showers of the latter rain.

2. Being dedicated to God's work.

Isn't the church commanded to "go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news [the

Gospel] to every creature [of the whole human race]"? Mark 16:15, Amplified Bible. Those who receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit not only know the present truth but also faithfully share it with others. God wants every child of His to be involved in some sort of active soul winning. This work is not just for ordained ministers or Bible workers. Every believer is to have a part in the wonderful work of leading sinners to the Saviour.

3. Removing dissension and misunderstanding.

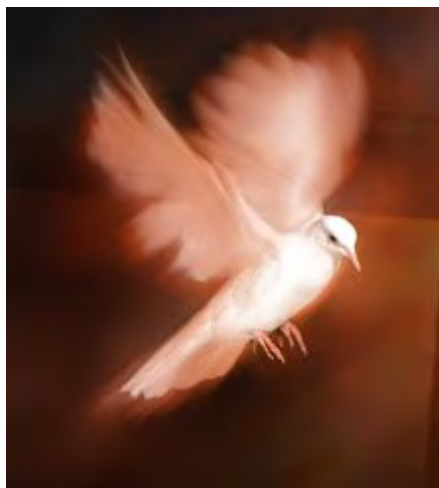
"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." Acts 2:1. "Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship." –*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37

WHY HAS THE LATTER RAIN NOT YET FALLEN?

Could it be that our sins and stubborn attitudes are hindering the showers of the Spirit of God from descending? Are we still striving to sit in the highest place of honor? Are we still in conflict with a brother or sister over an issue that really is not important for our salvation? Is it not high time to settle our trivial problems and come into harmony with our brethren? TODAY is the time to reach out in love to those whom we have hurt and humiliated. Spiritual walls of separation need to come down. Let us work together as a team for the ushering in of the latter rain. Let everyone strive today to prepare his heart for one of the greatest events that will ever

occur in history—the showers of the latter rain. What a grand hope for the future!

Henry Dering



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.



Saved By Grace, Judged By Works

In the fifteenth century the motto of the Spanish Empire was *ne plus ultra*—no more beyond. With their vast empire, the Spanish kings and queens assumed there was no more to conquer. They believed their explorers had gone the ultimate distance, discovering everything that there was to be discovered. Then came Columbus. In 1492 he discovered a new world, and the old motto was outdated. The great explorer had discovered there was more beyond what they originally thought.

Some people's lives become stagnant. They have stopped growing. They no longer stretch themselves and they live within the narrow circle of their thoughts. Their minds are closed to anything but their own opinions. We should consider Caleb and Joshua, who were motivated by the positive spirit of faith rather than the negative emotion of fear. They were awed with a God who was much, much bigger than their problems were. With this thought in mind we can be steadfast, and say, "oh this mighty God is more than I can imagine with my finite mind."

I would like to express some thoughts regarding our salvation provided by Jesus on Calvary's cross. Followers of Jesus believe that there is no other book like the Bible, written by men, inspired by God, and preserved during the centuries. We have today the most important love letter from a loving Father who longs for His children to come back home. For this reason Jesus came in to this darkened world to give His life as a ransom for those faithful people who acknowledge Jesus as their personal and individual Savior. Is not this amazing news?

From Genesis 3 to Revelation 20 the Bible pictures a great conflict between the rebellious forces of evil and the kingdom of God. That conflict is demonstrated from the very beginning, when the serpent (Satan) tempted humans to sin against God, and God promised restoration through a Saviour, who will destroy Satan and sin. The conflict con-

tinues all throughout the Bible. Genesis 1 and 2 present to us a picture of God's perfectly created world. That is why God proclaimed it to be "very good" Genesis 1:31

We can sum up the above statement with these words: God created everything beautiful and perfect but Adam and Eve disobeyed their Creator and brought misery, sin and death. In spite of this God did not forsake them in their condition, but rather provided a way out to restore and bridge the abyss that resulted from sin. The question is, how would God do it? How would He remain a loving Father, and be just, at the same time. Is there any relationship between love and justice? Most of the Christians today believe they are saved, no matter what condition their lives are in or regardless of their obedience to God. Just believe and that is all that is required. Is this true? Can we expect salvation in sin?

In Ephesians 2:8 we read: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Being saved by grace is a wonderful thing, is it not? It is a gift from God. If we were to look up the word "grace" in the dictionary we would find many definitions. One definition that I especially like is, "the freely given, unmerited favour and love of God." There are others also that I like, "mercy; pardon." From these definitions, we can see that grace is unmerited favour from God to man. We cannot earn grace, mercy or pardon; it is a free gift. Praise God for that! For this reason in the very next verse, it says that we would boast if we could work our way to heaven, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:9. God's servant Ellen G. White gives us some clues about faith and grace.

"Many hold **faith** as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction, by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which, through the

grace of Christ, the soul becomes a conquering power.” – *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 62 (emphasis mine)

“It is our own character and experience that determine our influence upon others. In order to convince others of the power of Christ’s **grace**, we must know its power in our own hearts and lives. The gospel we present for the saving of souls must be the gospel by which our own souls are saved. Only through a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour is it possible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 469 (emphasis mine)

Now that we have looked at grace, let us look into this word, “works”. What is works? Will anyone ever be saved by works? Can we work our way to heaven by works? I do not for one minute believe that we will be saved by our works or can work our way to heaven. According to the Bible, we will be judged by our works. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” Revelation 20:12. So, we cannot work our way to heaven by our good works, but we must have good works. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16. Jesus goes further by saying, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48

The Bible tells us that God is love but He is also just. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” Psalm 85:10. “Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other.” –*The General Conference Bulletin*, April 1, 1899

According to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy the love of God manifested in the Christian life begins when the believer realizes how he or she has been loved. Access to God does not originate by our human efforts but it is the initiative of God. God made the first advance step. When Adam and Eve sinned they hid themselves but God came looking for them and said, “Where are you?” So, Christ teaches us that salvation does not come through our seeking after God but through God seeking after us. “We do not repent in order that God may love us, but He re-

veals to us His love in order that we may repent.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 189. In other words, we do not keep the Law of God in order to be saved, but because we are saved we keep His commandments.

I remember the first time I discovered Jesus’ love for me and what He has done in my behalf. My heart melted by His love. I said, “How could it be? How can a sinner like me receive such love? I don’t deserve it.” The beloved disciple said, “We love Him, because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19. Salvation comes by God’s grace and grace alone when someone repents of his or her sin. We cannot repent of ourselves unless Christ gives us the gift of repentance. God knows our hearts; He reads our minds, and if we allow Him to work in us He will gladly give us the gift of repentance. Do you want this gift?

It is the work of the devil to deceive people into thinking of God as a God of justice only. The enemy blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear.

They thought of Him as a severe and unforgiving God. This is how I felt like before my conversion. I looked upon God as an arbitrary God, far distant from sinners, and that people in this world are doomed to death without any possibility of being saved. We can only wonder how many people in this world feel like this, who say, I cannot be saved because God does not love me. If you and I have received the gift of eternal life let us tell others that they can receive it too. Will you and I go and tell people how much God loves them? Will we show from the Scripture that there is a way out of the pit of sin? Remember



how Jacob stole the birthright from his brother Esau, lied to his father, Isaac and ran for his life? In his agony and despair he was shown in a dream how God provides restoration. There is need for cooperation. If we are not doing our part God will not do His part.

Faith. What is genuine faith? The Bible tells us about faith in Hebrews 11:1, 6; “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” “But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Genuine faith is the Christian’s response to God’s grace, and its quality depends on a correct view of the character of God. Because faith is the key element in righteousness by faith, a limited or false understanding of faith leads to erroneous doctrines

regarding how men and women are saved. The Bible clearly tells us that the only way in which we can attain to righteousness is through faith in Christ. This is how faith is accounted for righteousness.

“Faith in Christ as the world’s Redeemer calls for an acknowledgment of the enlightened intellect controlled by a heart that can discern and appreciate the heavenly treasure. This faith is inseparable from repentance and transformation of character. To have faith means to find and accept the gospel treasure, with all the obligations which it imposes.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 112

Now let us have a look at the fact that we are “judged by works”. We have read that we are not saved by works. Isaiah tells us the condition of our best works. “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.” Isaiah 64:6

When your name comes up in the judgment, will there be evidence that you permitted God’s love to penetrate your heart? This is the question we must ask ourselves. “The character is revealed, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 57

There is also such a thing as false evidence of righteousness. This is seen by legalistic works done for the glory of self and the Judge can see right through it. Yet a faith that works by love is the exact evidence that will convince the Judge that we have received His amazing grace. A smoking furnace is evidence that it has been in action. Good works are evidence of grace put into action. Where you find smoke you find fire. Where you find grace you find good works.

Good works, done out of love, are evidence that we have been saved by God’s amazing grace. Good works have been prepared by God, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10. Where do good works come from? They come from God, who is the author and the finisher of our salvation, if we allow Him to do so. May God help us understand how we are saved by grace through faith in Christ our Lord is my wish and prayer. Amen!

Nicolas Anca

Revival of “Old” Truth

In the year 1888, two young men, A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner presented the message of *Christ our Righteousness* at the General Conference session in Minneapolis. Ellen G. White described the condition of the church at the time like this, “As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither rain nor dew.” —*The Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890. The rest of the world described Adventism by saying, “Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.” —*Evangelism*, p. 19

The truths that Jones and Waggoner brought were termed “heresy” by many of the leading brethren however, it was simply a revival of the plain simple truth of justification by faith in Christ which had been presented by many leading Protestants of the Great Reformation. It is true that the message of Righteousness by faith is an old message, beginning in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve. It was repressed for many years and revived beginning with Martin Luther, John Bunyan, Charles Spurgeon, and was now brought out prominently by Ellen White, Jones, and Waggoner in 1888.

To have a true understanding of Righteousness (right doing) by faith will prepare a people for Christ’s second coming. It will produce a people who have faith in Jesus, and it is only those that have true faith in Jesus that will be fitted in His righteousness to obey all the commandments of God and go through the time of trouble in the last days without an intercessor.

The winds of strife will not let loose until Christ has accomplished His redemptive work in His people. Christ promises to do a complete restorative work in His people and save them *from* their sins, not *in* their sins. The power to continually obey can only come through Christ our Righteousness which the Bible says is imputed to us as a free gift, by faith. It is this message of Christ our Righteousness that will bring the outpouring of the Latter Rain and accomplish the sealing work.

In his spoken and written works, A.T. Jones plunges deep into the revelation of Christ as our righteousness and the insufficiency of our own works. The pioneers in the Advent Message (Jones and Waggoner) had much to say about this subject and we can all be blessed to study deeply into this very important subject. The majority of the Christian world does not fully understand it, however, God in His great mercy, sent startling messages to His people to help them to have a full understanding of the subject.

May we all yearn for a fuller understanding and deeper experience with Christ.



Tomatoes

kept in a paper bag until ripening. Storing tomatoes stem down can prolong shelf life.

Eating just a single serving of tomatoes increases the lycopene level in the bloodstream. When tomatoes are cooked, their lycopene content becomes more available to the body. The body also uses lycopene better when tomato products are prepared with fats such as oil. Therefore, to obtain the most health benefits from

There probably is not one person reading this article that has not eaten a tomato at some point in time in their life. Its bright red colour enhances the look of any dish it is added to, the taste of a just-picked ripe tomato is like nothing else in the world. The red colour not only makes it appealing to look at but it also contains many healthy benefits. The colour of fruits and vegetables are due to the type of phytochemicals they contain, each colour having a specific health benefit. Phytochemicals protect plants from oxidation (free radical damage), pests, and disease. The same applies to humans who ingest the plants. The red colour of a tomato is produced by a phytochemical known as lycopene. Tomatoes also contain beta-carotene, Vitamin C, A, K, potassium, magnesium, and fibre. They are also low in calories. The combination of substances in tomatoes have an anti-oxidant effect, protecting humans from chronic diseases caused by oxidative stress.

The tomato is actually classified as a fruit, however, in cooking it is considered a vegetable because of its savoury flavour. It is part of the nightshade family and was originally thought to be poisonous. Although the fruit is edible, the leaves, stems, and green unripe fruit of the tomato plant contain small amounts of the toxic substances, tomatine and solanine. Solanine is the substance that makes plants in the nightshade family so deadly. However, the amount of these toxins in the leaves and raw fruit is low; you would have to ingest large amounts for it to be dangerous.

In winter months, tomatoes are grown in greenhouses to provide us with this well-loved fruit year round. However, most tomatoes are picked unripe from greenhouses and ripened with ethylene. A fruit naturally produces ethylene as a trigger to ripen, but forced ripening by introducing ethylene will produce fruit that is mealy in character and often lacks flavour. Thus, the fresh-picked, summer tomato is superior in taste and texture. Tomatoes keep best unwashed at room temperature and out of direct sunlight. It is not recommended to refrigerate tomatoes as this can harm the flavour. Tomatoes that are not yet ripe can be

tomatoes, make them into a paste, sauce, juice or salsa. Eating a regular supply of tomato products has been linked with a reduced rate of chronic diseases.

Scientists have observed that among people with high levels of lycopene in their bloodstream, there is a tendency for lower rates of cardiovascular disease, and improved heart health. Tomatoes have been shown to help lower total cholesterol, LDL (the bad cholesterol), and triglycerides, while raising levels of good cholesterol (HDL). In addition, tomato extracts have been shown to help prevent unwanted clumping together of platelet cells in the blood, which lowers risk of plaque build-up in the arteries, which causes atherosclerosis.

New studies have come out that shows further benefits of tomatoes. A study was done with a number of menopausal women. They removed all food sources containing lycopene from their diet. After four weeks, the women who did not eat any lycopene-rich foods, had bones that were showing signs of oxidative stress and other negative changes, compared to the women who continued to eat lycopene-rich foods. The conclusion was that lycopene can assist in preventing osteoporosis.

Tomato products may protect against inflammation, a significant underlying cause of cardiovascular disease, as well as cancer, obesity, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, periodontal disease, rheumatoid arthritis, neurological degenerative disorders, and inflammatory bowel disorders. Lycopene has also been shown to improve the skin's ability to protect against harmful UV rays.

Tomato products are the second highest vegetable contributor of potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure. Because potassium and sodium work in opposition to one another, increasing potassium intake can help flush sodium from the body in order to decrease blood pressure.

So with all the health benefits that tomatoes contain, consider it as a staple in your diet, and not only as a food that enhances your kitchen table's beauty.



The Forest Fire

Jeff leaned on his hoe. Another row and a half of string beans, and he would have the garden weeded for a couple of weeks at least. He then heard the roar of a plane overhead. He looked at the billowing cloud of smoke rising, hot and glowing. It was the ridge only five kilometers away.

The wind puffed up, blowing dust across the dry garden. Jeff knew such breezes fanned the fire and blew it across roads and rivers that should have stopped it. Twenty-four thousand acres of pear and apple orchards had already been burned.

The sun beat down on Jeff's back as he worked. He wiped the back of his hand across his forehead and finished up the last few feet of the row. Then he dragged out the hose and gave the struggling plants a drink of cool water.

Well, that's that, Jeff thought to himself. He went into the house for supper. He washed his hands at the kitchen sink. Then, leaning over the faucet, he splashed water on his face and neck.

The fire was on everyone's mind at the dinner table. Jeff's little brother, Eric, looked at Dad with wide, frightened eyes and asked if it was getting any closer.

"Hard to tell, son," Dad answered. "But if it does, someone will warn us before it gets

too dangerous." He ruffled Eric's brown hair. "Don't worry, Son. God will take care of us."

"Well, we may be able to get away from the fire," Jeff said, "but if it comes up our hill, there won't be much we can do to stop it from burning the house down."

"That's true, Jeff, but there's no use worrying about it. Remember, 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' "

At worship that evening, just before they went to bed, the family prayed that God would protect them from the fire. Jeff lay awake in bed for longer than usual, thinking about the flames raging through the brittle undergrowth only five kilometers away.

It seemed to him that he had just floated off to sleep when Dad was shaking his shoulder. "The fire's getting too close," he said. "We have to leave."

Jeff scrambled out of bed and slipped a pair of jeans over his pajamas. He grabbed his jacket and followed Dad down the hall to the living room, where Mother

was helping Eric button his sweater. Dad opened the front door. The sleepy family went out to the car. Farther up the hill Jeff could see the first line of the fire beginning to burn bushes, little more than two city blocks away.

"Is it going to burn the house down, Dad?" he asked as his father got in beside him.

"We've cleared away most of



the weeds around the place," Dad said, "but if the big oak tree next to the house catches fire, we may be in trouble."

Dad started up the motor and drove down the hill toward town. "Where will we go?" Eric asked.

"The Red Cross has arranged for people to stay in the high-school gym," Dad said. "We'll have to stay there the rest of the night at least."

When they arrived at the school, other families were filing into the gym. A woman stood at the door, writing names on a clipboard. Inside, cots stood in neat rows, and at the far end of the gym, volunteers served fruit juice and sandwiches.

The family found four empty cots and got ready to spend the rest of the night. "Dad," Jeff asked, "God will take care of the house, won't He?"

"He will if it's for the best, Jeff."

"Well, how could it ever be for the best to lose your home and everything in it?"

Dad smiled. "It isn't always easy for us to understand, son, but we have to remember that God can make good things come out of bad."

"Why don't we pray that God will watch over our house tonight," Mother suggested. So the family bowed their heads together right there in the high-school



gym, and each took a turn talking to God.

When Dad finished the last prayer, Jeff slipped under the blanket of his cot. Just then, he noticed another boy about his own age lying wide awake only three cots away. The boy looked frightened. He was watching Jeff as if he wanted to ask him a question but was afraid to.

Jeff threw his blanket back, got up and went over to the boy's cot. "Hi," he said. "I'm Jeff. What's your name?"

"Kevin," the boy mumbled. "I didn't mean to stare. What were you and your family doing just now?"

"Oh, do you mean when we were praying? We were asking God to watch over our house tonight and to

keep it safe from the fire."

"Do you really think praying does any good?"

"Sure," Jeff said. "Well, would you pray to God for me and ask Him to protect my house too?"

"Sure, but there's no trick to it. You can do it yourself, you know."

"I'd rather have you do it."

The two boys bowed their heads together, and Jeff prayed for the protection of Kevin's home.

When the prayer was over, Jeff's new friend smiled shyly. "Thanks," he said. "I've never really prayed before."

"Well, listen," Jeff said. "Would you like to go to church with me sometime? I think you'd like it."

"I'll have to ask Dad," Kevin said, pointing to his father sleeping on the next cot. "But I don't think he'd mind."

Finally both boys lay back down on their cots. The clock

on the gym wall showed 3:00 a.m. Jeff's eyes got very heavy, and he was soon asleep.

When Jeff awoke in the morning, Kevin was already up and was folding his blanket. Seeing Jeff awake, he came over and said, "Dad says it's OK for

me to go to church with you sometime."

"Great," Jeff grinned. They gave each other their phone numbers. Just then Jeff's dad called for them to leave.

As they were walking out to the car, Jeff was thinking about Kevin. "You know, Dad," he said, "I think I understand now what the Bible means when it says, 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' I was worried about our house burning down, but if it hadn't been for the fire, I'd have never met Kevin. I made a new friend and had a chance to tell him about Jesus."

BAMI Mission School, Kenya



“Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.” Luke 10:2

After two long years of study, a group of dedicated young people have completed their study and are ready to enter the harvest. Pictured above is the 2014 graduating class of the Berea Adventist Mission Institute (BAMI). The students are pictured in the back and the teachers in the front. Some of the students will return to their own country to be a blessing there, while others begin a new life in the mission field in a new country. They need our prayers as they begin to work in the harvest field.

We are all called to cooperate in the work of the Lord in some capacity, whether a full-time worker in the Lord’s vineyard or a volunteer. Some give of their means, others pray, others write, others serve in their local churches, some preach, some teach and some give Bible Studies and canvass as lay members. All have talents to be used of the Lord and we need to work together in preparation for the receiving of the Latter Rain.

“There is no release in this warfare. The work is to be done, and while the angels hold the four winds, we are to work with all our capabilities. We must bear our message without any delay. We must give evidence to the universe of Heaven, and to men in this degenerate age, that our religion is a faith and a power of which Christ is the Author and His word the divine oracle. Human souls are hanging in the balance. They will be subjects for the kingdom of God, or slaves to the despotism of Satan. All are to have the privilege of laying hold of the hope set before them in the gospel, and how can they hear without a preacher? The human family is in need of a moral renovation and a preparation of character. There are souls ready to perish because of the theoretical errors that are prevailing, and which are calculated to counteract the gospel message. Who will now fully consecrate themselves to become labourers together with God?

“Let all awake to their God-given responsibilities. Let none suppose that they can live a life of selfishness, and then, having served their own selfish interests, enter into the joy of their Lord.” —*Australasian Union Conference Record*, October 15, 1898

From Around the World



Above: Believers in Vancouver with Sandy and Christian Nelson and children, and Art and Gretchen Schendel from California

Right: (from Left) Michael Mitov, Norbert Gutknecht, Yonka Mitov, Oscar Oviedo



Left: David, son of Joe Mensah, Ghana

Amazing Love

**That amazing love that sets us free,
That with its last breath would say,
"I forgive you and love you anyway,"
To those that try to kill love.**

**And come back triumphant again!
Because Love is as strong as death.
Many waters cannot quench it;
The floods cannot drown it,
Neither can fire burn it.**

**Love is, and always will be,
Going against the natural urge to hate;
Loving in the face of brutal hatred.
That is the definition of true strength.**

**To love like this,
Means to look beyond the things seen,
Human behaviour, attitudes, words. . .
To decide to love regardless of these.**

**The rebellious child, who we so shun,
Will never come to us again,
Unless we fight the battle with love,
In the place of sacrifice for wrong.
True love given when undeserved,
Breaks the heart of every soul alive.**

**If you have a love like this,
It has the greatest reward.
You will set prisoners free;
Make the blind to see;
Heal the brokenhearted,
And save the unsaveable.**

**And if you have love like this,
You will never truly die,
There is nothing that can kill love.**

**Hate may win a battle;
Love will win the war.**

Sharon Eaton