

The cover of 'The Reformation Messenger' magazine features a scenic photograph of a lake surrounded by trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of orange, red, and yellow. In the foreground, there are tall reeds and grasses. A white dove is perched on a branch in the upper right corner. The title 'The Reformation Messenger' is written in a large, elegant, golden-yellow script font. Below the title, the volume and issue information is printed in a smaller, bold, golden-yellow sans-serif font.

The Reformation
Messenger
VOLUME 22, NUMBER 12 DECEMBER 2015

Assessment of the Year 2015
Page 3

Displaced Plants
Page 8

The Road to Victory
Page 12

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.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 3 Assessment of the Year 2015**
- 5 What Should We Pray For?**
- 6 Why Should We Pray?**
- 8 Displaced Plants**
- 12 The Road to Victory**
- 14 Jesus Our Perfect Example in Prayer**
- 16 Children's Corner: Prayers**
- 18 Price for Heaven**
- 20 Prepare to Meet Thy God**
- 25 Health Matters: Pesticides in Foods**

The Reformation Messenger is published monthly. It is an Official Publication of the International Missionary Society the Seventh-Day Adventist Church Reform Movement, Canadian Field. Subscriptions can be paid online on the website or by mail.

- Telephone: 905-876-2518
- E-mail: ismessenger@yahoo.com
- Internet: www.ismessenger.org
- Mail: RR #3, 7899 15 Side Road
Milton, ON L9T 2X7, Canada

PHOTO CREDITS

Front Cover Photo:
Helen Marttinen, Canada

Back Cover Photo:
Wendy Eaton, USA

Inside Front Cover:
Helen Marttinen, Canada

COST:

Black & White x \$25.00 per year.

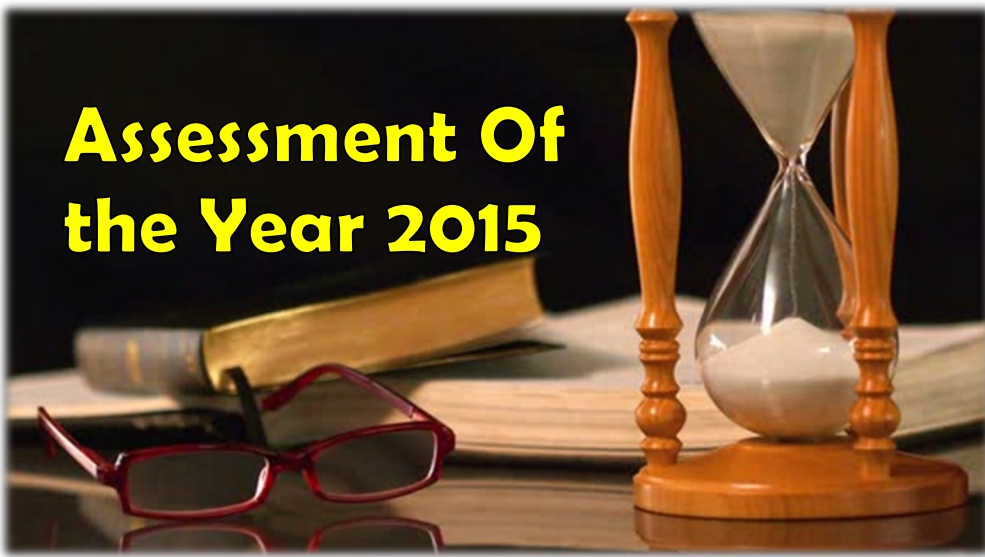
Colour x \$45.00 per year.

(Add \$10.00 North America and \$20.00 overseas shipping & handling)

Purchase all 21 years of the Messenger for \$200.00 (shipping included in price), Bound in books by year.

Catalogue is available upon request for all articles for 20 years.

Assessment Of the Year 2015



We are now winding down the year 2015. Soon it will pass into eternity and we begin the New Year, 2016. Time is fast running out. The world will soon come to an end! The year 2015 had been a year of mixed events. Both victories and defeats have been seen in our ranks. In view of this, before we enter another year, we need to ask ourselves how we have lived this past year. The Bible tells us, "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. God's people will come out triumphant in the struggle between the powers of good and evil.

FOUNDATION OF VICTORY

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57. In God there is victory. He has known no defeats. Since victory is in God only, sin creates a gulf between the Holy God and the guilty sinner. It is Christ only that can bridge this gulf so that we can be counted part of the family of God again. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12. Victory, therefore, is accomplished only through Christ. When we realize our sinfulness and how wretched we are, we understand that we need a Saviour. That Saviour is Jesus Christ. By faith we accept Him as a surety for our salvation and a propitiation for our sins. At that moment we have been forgiven all of our past sins that we have committed.

"Faith is the only condition upon which justification can be obtained, and faith includes not only belief but trust." —*Selected Messages*, book 1 p. 389. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Whom God hath set

forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." Romans 5:1; 3:25. A heavenly power takes control of the mind as soon as we accept Christ. Everything becomes changed. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

"Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into

the heart, have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal. . . . When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 388, 173

BUILDING THE VICTORY

The Christian life is not a life of idleness. It is a life of constant battle. After having obtained the victory explained above, the mind is changed but not the body. Its baser passions still strive for supremacy. Therefore, the next step is to continue to draw large supplies from the Source of power to overcome all temptations and the wiles of the evil one. It can sometimes be a fierce battle. Satan never wants to relent! It is then that we hear the encouraging words from the Source of life: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" John 16:33. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2

Christ overcame the world. The secret is ours—to keep constantly looking unto Jesus. If we lose sight of Him we will be defeated and will fall into the dark world below. "And Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water And He said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when

he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." Matthew 14:28–30

How do we look unto Him? It is by constantly exercising faith in Him, depending fully on Him, resting in Him and casting aside any trust in self. Strong faith helps us to remain standing. We are prevented from falling again into sin by faith. "Sanctification is the doing of all the commandments of God. Some of you have failed to do this, because you have taken your eyes away from Jesus, and have looked to yourselves. . . . We shall have to wage a constant battle with Satan, if we preserve our faith to the end amid the discouragements that will press upon us. We must look away from self, for Jesus is our only hope. The language of the soul must be, 'He is mine; I will never let go His arm. He will bless me; the cleansing blood will be applied to my soul.'" —*The Signs of the Times*, March 24, 1890

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O LORD God of hosts." Jeremiah 15:16. God's word is food. This food increases our faith in Him. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17. Bible study is life. Also, Jesus is the Word, and He said that we must eat His body and drink His blood. This is both for our justification and purification.

"To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins, and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in, that we are to become partakers of His nature. What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul. Food cannot benefit us unless we eat it, unless it becomes part of our being. So Christ has no value to us if we do not know Him as a personal Saviour. A theoretical knowledge will do us no good. We must feed upon Him, receive Him into the heart, so that His life becomes our life. His love, His grace, must be assimilated." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 389

When we pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17), we are constantly endowed with power to resist the devil so that he will flee from us (James 4:7); and as we meditate on His will, in the groves, mountains, and other silent places, we are in sweet communion with Him. Even in our daily business transactions we can feel His presence.

"In our association with one another, we should take heed lest we forget Jesus, and pass along unmindful

that He is not with us. When we become absorbed in worldly things so that we have no thought for Him in whom our hope of eternal life is centered, we separate ourselves from Jesus and from the heavenly angels. These holy beings cannot remain where the Saviour's presence is not desired, and His absence is not marked. This is why discouragement so often exists among the professed followers of Christ.

"Many attend religious services, and are refreshed and comforted by the word of God; but through neglect of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they lose the blessing, and find themselves more destitute than before they received it. Often they feel that God has dealt hardly with them. They do not see that the fault is their own. By separating themselves from Jesus, they have shut away the light of His presence.

"It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.

"As we associate together, we may be a blessing to one another. If we are Christ's, our sweetest thoughts will be of Him. We shall love to talk of Him; and as we speak to one another of His love, our hearts will be softened by divine influences. Beholding the beauty of His character, we shall be 'changed into the same image from glory to glory.' 2 Corinthians 3:18." —*Ibid*, p. 83

Then nothing can draw us away again and we find that we are like holy Enoch! We walk in the presence of the Lord! Others need this victory and we need to help them also before time comes to an end.

Now we conclude our assessment. Dear fellow pilgrim, what kind of life have you lived in the year 2015? We do not know what the coming year 2016 will bring. Jesus told us to watch for we do not know when He will come. We never know if this will be the year when the rest of the remaining few signs of the times come to pass, bringing us into eternity with the Lord. In the letters of Jesus to the seven churches (Revelation 2 and 3), all the promises are given only to the overcomers. So, rise, do not look back, save your life! With this solemn thought, I wish you a victorious year—2016. Amen.

Joel Msiska



What Should We Pray for?

The question “what should we pray for today?” is a very important question; one that can determine if our future would be eternal life or eternal death.

One of the most important things that we should pray for today is the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, God cannot work with us and make us better people. We must not wait to ask tomorrow, or the next day, or the next week, or even next month. This is one request that we must never put off.

“Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years.” Hebrews 3:7–9

“Harden not your hearts,” it says. Do not put your prayer for the Holy Spirit off for tomorrow. The Lord is calling you today, in this moment. We all need the Holy Spirit in our lives to guide us through this cruel and sinful world.

The Holy Spirit is often called the “Comforter” in many verses of the Bible. Often times we may feel down, or discouraged, or alone. But the Holy Spirit can relieve everything.

“And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave comfortless: I will come to you.” John 14:16–18

We are truly blessed to have this promise. Whenever life

gets difficult we can always trust that the Holy Ghost will bring us peace. “Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit. The presence of the Spirit with God’s workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honour or glory of the world can give.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50

As well as praying for the Holy Spirit, there are many other things we must pray for today. The Lord is not pleased if we ask for only material wealth. No, we must ask for strength to resist temptation. We must ask for wisdom, to see us through all the falsehoods in this world. We must also ask for help to remain humble as it is pride that destroys many.

In this time in which we live, we can clearly see the signs of the times fulfilling around us. Are we prepared? Are we watching? Or are we sleeping in this false sense of security, thinking that we will be alright.

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:34–36

Brothers and sisters, the time is shorter than we think. Everything is about to fall apart before our very eyes. We must wake up, pray and prepare ourselves for what is to come. As Christians we must understand that there is not a future for us on this earth. We cannot plan for things on this earth. We must plan for the things in heaven.

May God help us to pray for things that will bring us closer to Christ and prepare us for the trials ahead. With the help of the Holy Spirit we will not be lacking in anything. This way we can enjoy eternal life in heaven when Jesus comes again. Amen.

Michael C. Newby

Why Should We Pray?



When we pray we enter the presence of God—into the audience chamber of the Most High, to the throne room itself, the inmost sanctuary of God for a private audience with the Ruler of the universe.

Very few people fully appreciate this honour; and this honour is granted to the lowliest of men.

In private prayer, as well as in public prayer, many too often pray as a matter of duty or custom and repeat certain phrases without thought to their meaning. We should not use vain repetitions or take the Lord's name in vain.

The Apostle Paul writes, "With thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Philippians 4:6. Yet, too often we accept the blessings from God but forget to give thanks for them. Once Jesus healed ten lepers and sent them to show themselves to the priests. Of the ten, only one returned to give thanks to Jesus. When we pray we need to have an attitude that is humble and thankful.

The great men of the Bible, when they prayed they knelt down in private or public worship. Paul knelt down and so did Peter. Solomon knelt at the dedication of the temple. However, it is not always possible to kneel. We cannot kneel down if we are walking on the street, but we can pray in our minds and ask for God's help.

Martin Luther wrote, "Well prayed is half studied." All wisdom comes from God. When studying at school we can pray for wisdom to understand and to do well. God will give us wisdom.

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Hebrews 11:6

When we bring our petitions to God, we need faith that



God will hear our prayers. "Prayer and faith are closely allied." —*Education* p. 257

"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. It is plain that our asking must be according to God's will and then God will answer them.

We must pray for forgiveness of our sins, for the Holy Spirit, for wisdom and strength or any gift that God has promised. Then we are to believe that we will receive what we have asked for and thank God that we have received an answer to our prayers.

"By your fervent prayers of faith, you can move the arm that moves the world. . . . He that can do marvelous things, will regard the contrite prayer of faith from the humblest of His children. Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish." —*The Review and Herald*, April 23, 1889

When Hudson Taylor, the famous missionary who first went to China, was sailing his vessel very close to the shore of Cannibal Islands, the ship was slowly drifting to shore, unable to go further out; the inhabitants were eagerly anticipating a feast. The captain came to Mr. Taylor and asked him to pray so that God would help.

"I will," said Taylor, "provided you set your sails to catch a breeze." The captain declined to make himself a laughingstock by putting up the sails when the winds

were calm. Taylor then said, "I will not undertake to pray for the vessel unless you prepare the sails." So the sails were set up.

While praying in his cabin, there was a knock at the door. The captain called, "Are you still praying for the wind?" "Yes," said Taylor. "Well you better stop praying," said the captain, "for we have more wind than we can manage." "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

Prayer changes things. Prayer can move the arm of Omnipotence. Prayer can move mountains, clear away difficulties, heal the sick, change the entire course of a man's life and even change history.

Prayer is not primarily to get from God what a man wants, but rather to make man satisfied with what he has.

It is not necessary to relieve him from pain, but to give

him grace to bear the pain. It is not to attempt to have God change His mind, but to have man accept God's mind.

Paul prayed three times that God would take the thorn away from his flesh, but God did not take it away. Paul then accepted the will of God and said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Philippians 4:11

Before, Paul fretted, but now he was content. He had learned to trust God fully and all his prayers were answered for his best.

We must pray and work and believe the Lord will hear us and help us. We cannot always be on our knees in prayer, but our silent petitions may constantly rise to God for strength and guidance and He will listen to us up in heaven. Amen.

James Bessec

This year (2015) marked the 100th anniversary of the death of Ellen G. White, the messenger of the Lord to the remnant church. She was used by the Lord to write more than 100,000 pages of articles, letters, manuscripts, and sermons. Many thousands of pages had remained unpublished, being held in trust by the White Estate.

On July 16th of this year (the anniversary date of her death), the White Estate agreed to release all the materials. They are now available at this web site: egwwritings.org

Here you will find not only all her published works but the previously unpublished works.

Some of her last writings that were previously unpublished were recorded in 1915.

"When waking out of sleep, she called the nurse to her side and said, 'I want to tell you. I hate sin (repeated three times). I am charged to tell our people, that some do not realize, that the devil has device after device, and he carries them out in ways that they do not expect. Satan's agencies will invent ways to make sinners out of saints.

'I tell you now, that when I am laid to rest, great changes will take place.

'I do not know when I shall be taken; and I desire to warn all against the devices of the devil.

'I want the people to know that I warned them fully before my death.

'I do not know especially what changes will take place; but they should watch every conceivable sin that Satan will try to immortalize.'" –Ms1-1915 (February 24, 1915)

On April 3, 1915 she wrote to her Grandchildren:

"Remember the Lord will carry us through. I am guarding every moment, so that nothing may come between me and the Lord. I hope there will not. God grant that we may all prove faithful. There will be a glorious meeting soon." –Ms1-1915 (April 3, 1915)

Displaced Plants



When we think of the word “weed” what often comes to mind? It is natural to think of it as a noxious plant that invades our lawns and gardens. We want, however, a lot of nice green healthy grass to grow in our lawns, but if that same grass grows in our vegetable and flower gardens we get annoyed and pull it out as quickly as we can.

Many years ago, in my flower garden, I had some lovely marigolds growing. Then one day a friend visited me who was visiting from the South Pacific. When she saw them she asked why I grow marigolds in my garden. Where she comes from they are pests and weeds. In North America we consider dandelions in our lawns and vegetable gardens as troublesome weeds; however, these highly nutritious plants with healthy greens are purposely grown in gardens in different parts of the world.

A weed then is really a plant growing where we do not want it to grow—a displaced plant. It may be a perfectly good, healthy and edible plant, but we do not want it to grow in a particular area, so we pull it up. It is dissimilar to the plants around it. It invades areas where it is not wanted and stands out as different. It takes valuable nutrients away from the plants we *do* want growing in the area.

We tend to our lawns and our flower and vegetable gardens with care. We water them, we fertilize them, and we prune them. Even though we pull up the unwanted weeds they still keep coming up over and over again and need to be pulled out over and over again. If I would pull up a tomato plant, it would not regrow as would the weed that I pull up in the same garden. The weeds seem to be much more hardy. If left untended they would continue to grow rapidly, choking out the plants we want growing there. They often have lengthy root systems.

In the hot summer weather, during a drought, when the lawn does not receive adequate water, the grass goes dormant and turns a yellow colour. If there are any weeds in the lawn, they always remain a lovely green colour and continue to grow.

Even if the grass is still green, I have noticed every summer when I cut my father’s lawn that the weeds grow faster and are taller than the surrounding grass, even though the conditions for growing are exactly the same. Many of these weeds that are growing taller than the grass are edible weeds. They are burdocks, dandelions, plantains, wild carrots and so on. They are very healthy and edible and in the hot and dry weather they stand strong. Yet we cut them down because, in our lawns, we want primarily grass to grow.

Some weeds closely resemble other plants and you have to be very careful when you pull them up. You do not want to pull up your vegetable plants by mistake.

We can learn a lot of spiritual lessons from weeds.

THE GARDEN OF THE LORD

The Lord has a garden. It is described in Isaiah as a vineyard. “Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching His vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein.” Isaiah 5:1–2. He takes good care of it.

In the garden of the Lord we are to be flourishing plants that bear fruit. Not every plant bears fruit, sadly. Unfortunately the enemy does come in and plants his weeds in the garden/church. “Satan has many helpers. Many who profess to be Christians are aiding the tempter to catch away the seeds of truth from other hearts. Many who listen to the preaching of the word of God make it the subject of criticism at home. They sit in judgment on the sermon as they would on the words of a lecturer or a political speaker.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 45

Weeds often cause damage to the plants in the garden in that they can grow so thickly that they crowd out the plants we wish to grow. They steal moisture and nutrition from the soil so that the plants we want to grow do not

grow as strong and hardy. There are weeds in the church that also can cause damage to the weaker members. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Romans 16:17. These people are weeds in the church—unwanted plants doing damage to the good plants, hindering their growth.

"Satan is stealthily working to confuse the minds of those who know the truth by bringing in misleading sentiments and misleading examples. Unless they repent and are converted, those who are living divided lives, professedly serving the Lord but at the same time scheming to carry out their own plans—plans which retard the very work which Christ gave His life to accomplish—will be deceived by the enemy of souls. . . . He [the enemy] would be delighted to have minds diverted to any subject by which he might create division of sentiment and lead our people into controversy." —*Mind, Character and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 22–23

"Beware of those who arise with a great burden to denounce the church. The chosen ones who are standing and breasting the storm of opposition from the world, and are uplifting the downtrodden commandments of God to exalt them as holy and honorable, are indeed the light of the world. . . . I tell you, my brethren, the Lord has an organized body through whom He will work. There may be more than a score of Judases among them; there may be a rash Peter who will under circumstances of trial deny his Lord; there may be persons represented by John, whom Jesus loved, but he may have a zeal that would destroy men's lives by calling down fire from heaven upon them to revenge an insult to Christ and to the truth. But the great Teacher seeks to give lessons of instruction to correct these existing evils." —*This Day With God*, p. 172

Weeds can sometimes resemble the plants and need to be pulled carefully so that the true plants are not uprooted. Jesus told a parable of the wheat and tares in this regard (further described later). We are also given a warning. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves." Matthew 7:15

"Satan came as an angel of light in the wilderness of temptation to deceive Christ; and he does not come to man in a hideous form, as he is sometimes represented, but as an angel of light. He will come personating Jesus Christ, working mighty miracles; and men will fall down and worship him as Jesus Christ." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1105–1106

"Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who claim to have the great power of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep's clothing seems

so real, so genuine, that the wolf can be discerned only as we go to God's great moral standard and there find that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah." —*Faith and Works*, p. 45

"We are in times of peculiar danger from foes *without and within*." —*Gospel Workers*, p. 421 (emphasis mine). Satan's weeds may grow outside of the Lord's garden or within. He loves to come in and disrupt the Lord's Garden.

We are given counsel "not to company with fornicators." 1 Corinthians 5:9. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Ephesians 5:11

"Truth is of God; deception in all its myriad forms is of Satan, and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one." —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 252. This is true whether he is in the church or without the church. "Wherever an influence is exerted to cause men to forget God, there Satan is exercising his bewitching power. When men yield to his influence, ere they are aware the mind is bewildered and the soul polluted." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 290

The noxious weeds need to be kept out of the Lord's garden.

THE DEVIL'S GARDEN

Satan also has a garden where he grows all kinds of noxious and poisonous plants—plants that will kill you if you eat of them. Some may poison you even if you touch them. Many people in the world grow in this garden. It is very large and full of all kinds of evil and vice.

Are we to run away from this garden? Jesus said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." Matthew 10:16. And, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

We have the example of Enoch. Although he "would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart," he would not remain in seclusion. The wickedness of men had reached such a height that destruction was pronounced against them. As year after year passed on, deeper and deeper grew the tide of human guilt, darker and darker gathered the clouds of divine judgment. Yet Enoch, the witness of faith, held on his way, warning, pleading, entreating, striving to turn back the tide of guilt and to stay the bolts of vengeance. Though his warnings were disregarded by a sinful, pleasure-loving people, he had the testimony that God approved, and he continued to battle faithfully against the prevailing evil, until God removed him from a world of sin to the pure joys of heaven." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 87

We are to be a "weed" in Satan's garden. We are to grow up and be different and "invade" the enemy's garden.

When the weather gets hot and dry, and the grass withers, turning yellow and going dormant, we are to remain green and tall. “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7–8

Although Satan has tried to kill and destroy the truth of God’s word, as many times as he keeps pulling up the weeds, they keep returning. It is said of the Waldenses, “The work of these missionaries began in the plains and valleys at the foot of their own mountains, but it extended far beyond these limits. With naked feet and in garments coarse and travel-stained as were those of their Master, they passed through great cities and penetrated to distant lands. Everywhere they scattered the precious seed. Churches sprang up in their path, and the blood of martyrs witnessed for the truth.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 71–72. They were not content to remain hidden in their mountain fortresses. They went into the world to invade Satan’s garden. They planted their seeds, often with their blood. The truth could not be eliminated and uprooted. It kept on springing up over and over again.

The Waldenses went carefully and discreetly. As “weeds” they outwardly imitated some of the “plants” in order to make inroads into the hearts and lives of the people. “To have made known the object of their mission would have ensured its defeat; therefore they carefully concealed their real character. Every minister possessed a knowledge of some trade or profession, and the missionaries prosecuted their work under cover of a secular calling. Usually they chose that of merchant or peddler. ‘They carried silks, jewelry, and other articles, at that time not easily purchasable save at distant marts; and they were welcomed as merchants where they would have been spurned as missionaries.’” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 71. They truly were, “wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” Matthew 10:16

The Waldenses boldly left their safe haven and went as “weeds” to invade the garden of Satan; to bring some perfume and beauty amongst the noxious plants. They went to bring hope to the hopeless.

Although the Waldenses sought to be discreet, one who is a true follower of Christ can never be exactly like the world. In fact, we are told that true Christians are a spectacle in the world. “The world is in need of a demonstration of practical Christianity. In view of the fact that those who claim to be followers of Christ are a spectacle to an unbelieving world, it behooves them to make sure that they are in right relation to God.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 313

“They are made indeed a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. They are marked characters because of their

purity of heart and life, their strength of purpose, their firmness and usefulness in the cause of God. They are God’s noblemen.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 577

The word “spectacle” means, anything presented to the sight or view especially something that is striking or impressive. It is synonymous with marvel or wonder. Something seen that is unusual to what we normally would expect.

Yes, people in the world often wonder how, and why, true Christians are so different; they do not conform to the norms of society. How are these people so different? Firstly, in their manner of dress. Outward appearances often make the first impression when you meet someone new. Does your outward appearance reflect Christ so that a difference can be seen before you say anything? Secondly, in their manner of speech. The next impression often comes from the speech. Is your speech such as others can detect that you are different? And also in all habits of life, such as diet and the keeping of the Sabbath, there is a marked difference.

When you add an “s” to the adjective “spectacle” it becomes a noun, “spectacles”, which is another word for “eye glasses.” Eye glasses give you better vision; they help you to see clearer and things become more noticeable. So with the children of God, the world looks at them through their eye glasses. It is as though they are looking at you with a magnifying glass; carefully studying your habits to see if they line up with your profession. And not only the world, but the quote above states that true Christians are a spectacle also to angels and to men. They also are watching your actions with keen interest; through spectacles—a magnifying glass.



We are not to hide our light under a bushel. “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.” Matthew 5:14. Everyone can see it. If you let your light shine, it will dispel the darkness. We are not to fight against the darkness, but to let the light in. We will not be ashamed of being watched through spectacles; being different.



“As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” John 17:18. Let your true colours be seen in Satan’s garden. Seek not to imitate the plants around you.

OUR DUTY

So what are we to do when we see potential “weeds” in the Lord’s garden? Are we to go weeding, pulling up all the weeds? We are counselled to separate open sinners by following the counsels written in Matthew 18, but the tares are to be left for the Lord to pull up. There have been many disturbing elements come into God’s church, professing godliness, but as the members draw closer to the Lord and to each other, false brethren will be seen in their true light and the Lord will separate them. Notice, it is not the wanted plants that pull out the weeds. It is the gardener.

“A few words more press upon my mind. I want you to be united with the church, not because I regard all the church members perfect nor because I regard you perfect. God has precious ones in His church; there are also men and women who are as tares among the wheat. But the Lord does not give you or anyone else the office of saying who are tares and who are wheat. We may see and condemn the faults of others, while we have greater faults which we have never realized, but which are distinctly seen by others. God requires you to give to the world and the church a good example, a life that represents Jesus. There are duties to be performed and responsibilities to be borne. The world has not enough true Christians; the church has need of them; society cannot spare them. Christ’s prayer for His disciples was: ‘I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.’ Jesus knows we are in the world, exposed to its temptations, but He loves us and will give us grace to triumph over its corrupting influences. He would have us perfect in character, that our waywardness may not occasion moral deformity in others.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 333–334

The “weeds” that venture boldly into the devil’s garden by spreading their roots, with the purpose of diffusing light, will never be seen pulling up the noxious plants. They will simply be a shining example of a wonderful and beautiful plant. Their beauty of character will draw others to them. Their kindness, friendliness, helpfulness and honesty will be something that others who are tired of the ungodliness around them will be drawn to.

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Romans 15:1. “God does not want us to place ourselves upon the judgment seat and judge each other. . . . When we see errors in others, let us remember that we have faults, graver perhaps, in the sight of God than the fault we condemn in our brother. Instead of publishing his defects, ask God to bless him and to help him to overcome his error. Christ will approve of this spirit and action, and will open the way for you to speak a word of wisdom that will impart strength and help to him who is weak in the faith.” –*That I May Know Him*, p. 187

If plants are grown very tightly, few weeds can get in as there is neither sunlight nor space in the soil to spread their roots. In the church (the Lord’s garden), we need to grow tightly together also to keep the weeds out. In perfect unity there is strength.

“Union is strength; division is weakness. When those who believe present truth are united, they exert a telling influence. Satan well understands this. Never was he more determined than now to make of none effect the truth of God by causing bitterness and dissension among the Lord’s people.” –*Counsels to the Church*, p. 291

“Those who refuse to work in harmony greatly dishonor God. The enemy of souls delights to see them working at cross purposes with one another. Such ones need to cultivate brotherly love and tenderness of heart. If they could draw aside the curtain veiling the future and see the result of their disunion they would surely be led to repent.” –*Counsels to the Church*, p. 43

“Strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings, and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ. Before the heavenly universe, and before the church and the world, you will bear unmistakable evidence that you are God’s sons and daughters. God will be glorified in the example that you set.

“The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God’s people together in Christian love. It needs to see the Lord’s people sitting together in heavenly places in Christ. Will you not give in your lives an evidence of what the truth of God can do for those who love and serve Him? God knows what you can be. He knows what divine grace can do for you if you will be part-takers of the divine nature.” –*Counsels to the Church*, p. 290–291

“It is important that all now come up to the work and act as though they were living men, laboring for the salvation of souls who are perishing. If all in the church would come up to the help of the Lord, we would see such a revival of His work as we have not hitherto witnessed. God requires this of you and of each member of the church.” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 165–166

May God help us to be tender plants for the Lord. Amen.

Wendy Eaton





The Road To Victory

Jesus so we can share with others about what He has done for us in our lives. We should be able to tell others how Jesus has transformed us and how He can transform anyone's life who is willing. King David did not say "The Lord is Israel's Shepherd;" he said, "The Lord is *my* Shepherd." Psalm 23:1 (emphasis mine). Jesus must be my personal Shepherd and I must have a personal experience with Him.

It is important for us to begin each new day with confidence, declaring our faith in Jesus as Job did when he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job 19:25. We should face the day with courage and optimism, asserting that "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24. Faith must be put into action. When we sit down and dwell upon our trials and difficulties they grow larger with each passing moment. If we roll up our sleeves and go to work the troubles become smaller, and if we pray while we work we shall have strength to triumph over every difficulty.

Faith in God's saving grace will sustain us in the hours of temptation and affliction. Faith in Christ's power to save us from sin will make us overcomers. Jesus proved that we can overcome. That is why He said in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Our life can be long and uphill. In order to successfully pass through it, we need the constant presence of Jesus. Have you ever felt alone? Do you have any needs in your life? Is there something in your life which prevents you from following Jesus unreservedly? Like Paul we must admit, "For the good that I would I do not." Romans 7:19. It is then that we hear a voice saying, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33. Remember that there is possibility for failure with Christ. The Saviour stands before us today, saying, "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10.

Christ came to win that which man had lost. Nothing is more hopeless than a sinner who rejects salvation. The

We can be victorious! With the Lord's help, I would like to share a message with you of hope. Jesus is our Friend, our Lord and Redeemer. The Bible is crystal clear that we can be victorious. We read that, in Jesus, by Jesus, and through Jesus, we can overcome the world with its attractions. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus, experienced that in his own life and therefore tells us, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4

When we are born again we have a new and personal experience with the Master. We go forward, fully trusting His promises and believing that "the just shall live by faith." Galatians 3:11. When Martin Luther discovered this passage in the Bible he, himself, started a new and fresh experience with Jesus. Many times we read, or we hear from other people, about what Jesus has done in their lives. While there is nothing wrong with that, we must have our own personal experience with

Saviour wept when He saw the lost condition of His people. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," (Matthew 23:37) He cried, as He beheld the city that was rejecting His message. This was an expression of His deep sorrow, not only for Jerusalem but for all who are lost; all who will not surrender to Him and accept the salvation He offers. Jesus can die to save men; He can conquer the grave and come forth the risen Prince of Peace. He can plead before His Father for those who confess and forsake their sins. Yet He cannot save men who are determined to be lost.

Do you have some "besetting sin," some point of weakness, perhaps secret, that you have been unable to overcome? Have you ever met temptation, struggled with it, only to wake up a little later to the remorseful fact that you had slipped, and failed to overcome? Or perhaps you are struggling with some habit that holds you as its slave. You are struggling, wrestling, always fighting it, but somehow never able to conquer it. These things are serious. We must overcome these sins, these habits, and these sudden temptations. We must be cleansed of them thoroughly if we expect to inherit eternal life. The Bible has a lot to say about being an overcomer. The term "overcomer" is especially prominent in the book of Revelation, where Jesus encourages His people to remain steadfast through trials. In the book of Revelation, Jesus promises a great reward to those who overcome. Overcomers are promised that they will eat from the Tree of Life (2:7), be unharmed by the second death (2:11), eat from hidden manna and be given a new name (2:17), have authority over the nations (2:26), be clothed in white garments (3:5), be made a permanent pillar in the house of God (3:12), and sit with Jesus on His throne (3:21). Jesus warned that holding fast to Him would not be easy, but it would be well worth it.

Overcomers are followers of Christ who successfully resist the power and temptation of the world's deceptions. An overcomer may not be sinless yet, but holds

fast to faith in Christ until the end. He accepts Christ's righteousness in place of his own righteousness. In Christ, he can overcome every sin. He does not turn away and apostatize when times get difficult. Overcoming requires complete dependence upon God for direction, purpose, fulfillment, and strength to follow His plan for our lives. To overcome, in Scripture, means to hear God's voice, then to follow it in obedience and perseverance. If an army does not have a clear vision about what it is fighting for, it is doomed to be defeated. In the same way, if a Christian does not have a vision and goal, he will soon lose focus and be overwhelmed by the circumstances and temptations of the world.

We can thank the Lord that we can have victory through the life of Christ. The Apostle Paul said, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Saviour of His knowledge by us in every place." 2 Corinthians 2:14. It meant something to be a Christian in the early days of the Church. The truth about Jesus spread quickly everywhere and Christians were added to the church daily. In the first century many men and women were faithful to Christ and His word. In the 21st century today, God has a remnant people who faithfully keep all His commandments through the Holy Spirit's help. They also have the faith of Jesus. Satan is trying to destroy them but as they connect with the Jesus, He always wins and Satan loses.

Let us be faithful until the end because there is laid up a great reward for the overcomers and that reward is eternal life. It is my wish and prayer that no one will miss that glorious day when Jesus will return in the clouds of heaven, calling His faithful children home.

Hold on unto Jesus, brothers and sisters, dear friends, because Jesus is coming soon!

Amen!

Nicholas Anca

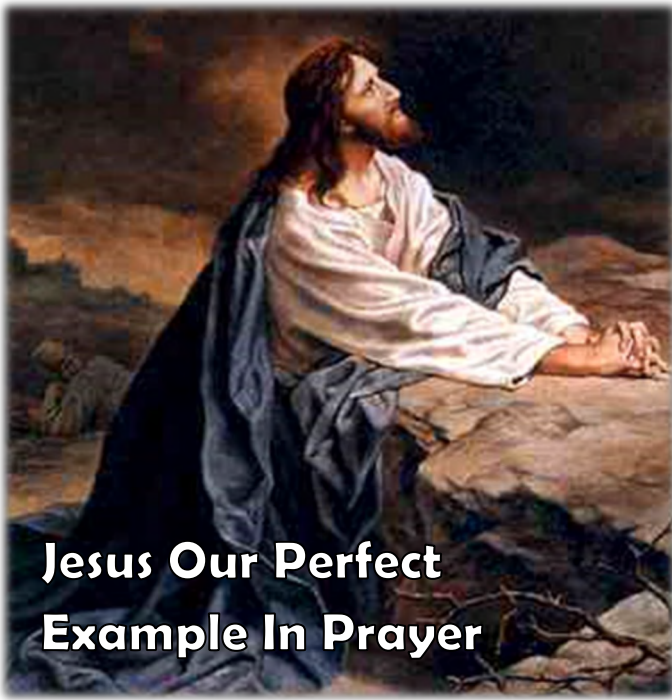
LOOKING FOR YOU...

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.



Jesus Our Perfect Example In Prayer

Prayer had been a significant part of spiritual life long before Jesus lived on this earth, but as evidenced in Luke 11:1 ("Lord, teach us to pray") not everyone knew exactly how to pray. The disciples were eager to learn new methods in which to pray and this is what Jesus presented in what is now known as "The Lord's Prayer". Its importance is demonstrated to us since Jesus had previously taught multitudes, as well as His disciples, this prayer in Matthew 6:9–13. Many of us know The Lord's Prayer by heart; however, by reading from *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, by Ellen White under the chapter, "The Lord's Prayer," (p. 102–122) we are given a much more in-depth knowledge and understanding of each part of this prayer that perhaps we had never thought of. (The following excerpts are taken from this book and chapter.)

"When ye pray, say, Our Father." Luke 11:2

"Jesus teaches us to call *His* Father our Father. . . . The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love that He has to us (1 John 4:16); for it is through the drawing of His love that we are led to come to Him.

"The perception of God's love works the renunciation of selfishness. In calling God our Father, we recognize all His children as our brethren. . . . In our petitions we are to include our neighbors as well as ourselves. No one prays aright who seeks a blessing for himself alone.

"But if you call God your Father you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom and to be obedient in all things, knowing that His love is changeless. You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest."

"Which art in heaven." Matthew 6:9

"He to whom Christ bids us look as 'our Father' 'is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.' Psalms 115:3"

"Hallowed be Thy name." Matthew 6:9

"To hallow the name of the Lord requires that the words in which we speak of the Supreme Being be uttered with reverence. 'Holy and reverend is His name.' Psalm 111:9. We are never in any manner to treat lightly the titles or appellations of the Deity. In prayer we enter the audience chamber of the Most High. . . . The angels veil their faces in His presence. . . . How much more should we, finite, sinful beings, come in a reverent manner before the Lord, our Maker!

"But to hallow the name of the Lord means much more than this. We may, like the Jews in Christ's day, manifest the greatest outward reverence for God, and yet profane His name continually.

"When you pray, 'Hallowed be Thy name,' you ask that it may be hallowed in this world, hallowed in you. . . . You cannot hallow His name, you cannot represent Him to the world, unless in life and character you represent the very life and character of God."

"Thy kingdom come." Matthew 6:10

"The kingdom of God's grace is now being established, as day by day hearts that have been full of sin and rebellion yield to the sovereignty of His love. But the full establishment of the kingdom of His glory will not take place until the second coming of Christ to this world."

"But before that coming, Jesus said, 'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.' Matthew 24:14. His kingdom will not come until the good tidings of His grace have been carried to all the earth. . . . Only those who devote themselves to His service. . . they alone pray in sincerity, 'Thy kingdom come.'"

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10

"The will of God is expressed in the precepts of His holy law, and the principles of this law are the principles of heaven.

"The petition, 'Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,' is a prayer that the reign of evil on this earth may be ended, that sin may be forever destroyed, and the kingdom of righteousness be established. Then in earth as in heaven will be fulfilled 'all the good pleasure of His goodness.' 2 Thessalonians 1:11."

"Give us this day our daily bread." Matthew 6:11

"The first half of the prayer Jesus has taught us is in regard

to the name and kingdom and will of God—that His name may be honored, His kingdom established, His will performed. When you have thus made God’s service your first interest, you may ask with confidence that your own needs may be supplied.

“Every day you are to pray, ‘Give us this day our daily bread.’ Be not dismayed if you have not sufficient for tomorrow. You have the assurance of His promise, ‘So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed’. . . . Of him that walketh righteously it is written: ‘Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. . . .’ When we pray, ‘Give us this day our daily bread,’ we ask for others as well as ourselves. . . . God gives to us in trust, that we may feed the hungry.

“The prayer for daily bread includes not only food to sustain the body, but that spiritual bread which will nourish the soul unto life everlasting. [Jesus] says, ‘I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.’ John 6:51. Our Saviour is the bread of life, and it is by beholding His love, by receiving it into the soul, that we feed upon the bread which came down from heaven.”

“Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us.” Luke 11:4

“Jesus teaches that we can receive forgiveness from God only as we forgive others.

“He who is unforgiving cuts off the very channel through which alone he can receive mercy from God. We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness

“However sorely they may have wounded us, we are not to cherish our grievances. . . . but as we hope to be pardoned for our offenses against God we are to pardon all who have done evil to us.

“But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose.

“Let Christ, the divine Life, dwell in you and through you reveal the heaven-born love that will inspire hope in the hopeless and bring heaven’s peace to the sin-stricken heart. . . . The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us. 1 John 4:16. When we feel that we have sinned and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray.”

“Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” Matthew 6:13

“Temptation is enticement to sin, and this does not proceed from God, but from Satan and from the evil of our

own hearts. ‘God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man.’ James 1:13.

“God in His great love is seeking to develop in us the precious graces of His Spirit. He permits us to encounter obstacles, persecution, and hardships, not as a curse, but as the greatest blessing of our lives. Every temptation resisted, every trial bravely borne, gives us a new experience and advances us in the work of character building. The soul that through divine power resists temptation reveals to the world and to the heavenly universe the efficiency of the grace of Christ.

“The prayer, ‘Bring us not into temptation,’ is itself a promise. If we commit ourselves to God we have the assurance, He ‘will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.’ 1 Corinthians 10:13.”

“Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.” Matthew 6:13

“The last like the first sentence of the Lord’s Prayer, points to our Father as above all power and authority and every name that is named. . . . In the prayer that breathes their daily wants, the disciples of Christ were directed to look above all the power and dominion of evil, unto the Lord their God, whose kingdom ruleth over all and who is their Father and everlasting Friend.

“We are now standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. A crisis is before us, such as the world has never witnessed. And sweetly to us, as to the first disciples, comes the assurance that God’s kingdom ruleth over all. . . . He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amid the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. He who ruleth in the heavens is our Saviour. He measures every trial, He watches the furnace fire that must test every soul. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands.”

The Lord’s Prayer is a template of how we should pray. We should pray with reverence to God, praying for others as well as ourselves. Although this prayer was spoken by our example, Jesus, we should not vainly repeat it with no context or substance behind it. We can use the ideas and customize it to our situation. The disciples saw the power and might that Jesus received after a session of prayer and naturally they wanted to see the same results in their own lives. If we are not seeing results from our prayer, perhaps it is time to evaluate how we pray and re-evaluate the way Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Then we will see results. Amen.

Elaine Romero



CHILDREN'S CORNER

Prayers

ESTHER'S PRAYER

Esther was the most beautiful young woman in the whole country. She won the beauty contest in the time of Medo-Persia and King Xerxes the Great—or Ahasuerus, as he is called in the Bible—and so he married her. Esther was a Jew, an orphan, and thus her cousin, Mordecai brought her up.

Esther's true character comes out when trouble starts. Haman plotted against the Jews and got the king to make a law. The law said that on a certain day all the Jews will be killed. That day would be in the month of Adar on the 13th day.

Esther did not know about the law until her cousin informed her. Esther now took charge of the situation. We see her at her best. Now a special strength from God filled her. No one can ever doubt her allegiance to her people or her God.

Esther and her people were in desperate straits, in exile. She is about to challenge the decrees that put her people at risk.

What she contemplates is risky and she knows that "through my own choice, I am endangering my life." Yet she tells Mordecai, "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink here day, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise." Esther 4:16

She called a great prayer meeting. After the prayer and fasting she said she would go to the king, even though it is against the law, and said, "If I perish, I perish." Esther 4:16

Even in the middle of trials we can turn to the Lord and seek help, recognizing the loving providence God has for us. Obedience to God and His people were more important than obedience to the king—her husband.

God heard the prayer of Esther and the Jewish people.

The Persian law could not be changed, so the king created a new law which said that the Jews were permitted to defend themselves against any attackers on the day that the death decree was to be put in effect.

God put fear into the Persians' hearts, but some were foolish enough to attack the Jews. As a result, they lost their lives. The struggle took place on the 13th day of Adar. The next day God's people celebrated a day of joyous relief, fasting and prayer.

Mordecai decreed that the celebration should become an annual 2-day event. Today the Jews observe Purim on one day; it is also called "The Feast of Esther."

The next Purim falls on March 24. This festival continually reminds them of God's protection.



These trying experiences that came to God's people in the days of Esther will be repeated. The same spirit will come in the future which will lead to a similar course toward those who are loyal to God.

We must learn to pray to God for deliverance, day and night, and combine fasting with our prayers. Esther had the prayer of faith and she trusted God for deliverance. God can do all things as we see how He protected the Jewish people.

Esther was a brave and faithful woman in the Bible. May we have strength and trust in God to take care of ourselves and others through prayer, is my wish and prayer. Amen.

Tiffany Bessec



DAVID'S PRAYER

"Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto Thy works. All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name." Psalm 86:8-9

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts." Psalm 139:23

We know that these Bible verses are examples of prayers by David.

I was reading a Christian web site and found the following paragraph: "Throughout the Psalms, David and the other writers poured out their hearts to God in prayer, expressing honest feelings of anguish and desperate pleas for protection. They grieved painful confessions of sin, confidently expressed their hope and trust in God, and joyfully lifted praises to Him. Many times we find ourselves in situations, especially in the many ups and downs and crises of recovery, where we don't know how to pray or express our feelings to God. Our fears of Him sometimes keep us from saying what we really feel. It is our hope that these prayers will help you get to know God better—to see Him through the psalmist's eyes; to genuinely cry out to Him, expressing your anguish and fears and uncertainties; to know Him as the God who loves you just as you are."

Like the paragraph says, sometimes we are afraid to ask something from God because we feel that He will reject it. But the Bible says, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matthew 21:22. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it." John 14:13-14

David did not fear or feel that His prayers would be rejected. He knew God would listen to him, but God does not answer our prayers all the time in the way we want them answered. That does not mean that God has not heard our prayer; it is because He knows what is best for us.

David's prayers were not just repetition; he was truly having a conversation with Jesus. But David's prayers were not a small sentence; no, most of his prayers were more than 20 verses. Perhaps one of the most well-known prayers of David was when he sinned with Bathsheba. How is it that David is called a man after God's own heart? How is it that when God is talking to David's son, Solomon, He says, "And if thou wilt walk in

My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days." 2 Kings 3:14. Then again when God was reprimanding King Jeroboam, He said, "and yet thou hast not been as My servant David, who kept My commandments, and who followed Me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in Mine eyes." 2 Kings 14:8

David is the man who used his power to seduce a woman named Bathsheba, while her husband was at war on King David's behalf. When she was found to be with his child, David arranged for her husband, Uriah to be killed in battle to cover up the matter. David was an adulterer and a murderer. Is this a man after God's own heart?

Yes, God says that he is. When God was directing Samuel the prophet to anoint a new king over Israel after He had rejected Saul, He told Samuel, "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7. So, despite his sin, God loved David's heart. I believe we have a glimpse into the heart which God so treasured when we read Psalm 51, which is a prayer of repentance. That psalm is truly one of the great prayers of the Bible.

After David's sin, the Lord sent him Nathan the prophet to confront him. Instead of making excuses, David comes clean. "I have sinned against the LORD." 2 Samuel 12:13. But if that was all we were told about the incident we would have no idea how deep was the repentance that David felt. Fortunately, we can read about it in Psalm 51 where he poured out his soul before the Lord with great transparency and brokenness of spirit. "For I acknowledged my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest." Psalm 51:3-4



Sometimes we look at David's prayers and think they are long and boring, but if you look at the songs that he also wrote, sometimes you can barely tell the difference between the two. I am not saying that our prayers should all be poetic and long, but they should be from the heart, because without love our prayers are useless to God. Amen.

Mathew Romero

Price For Heaven



If you would be asked to give up your faith, or be sentenced to death, which one would you choose? To give up Sabbath and your obedience to God, or to die for your faith? Millions of Christians have faced this question. In the Middle Ages, over 50 million martyrs chose to die rather than to deny their faith.

In our own church, young men chose to die rather than join the army and to give up their faith, in the two World Wars.

To be a reformer means to sacrifice, to obey God, to give help, and to love. Reformers know the meaning of true love. They love sinners, evil people, even their enemies. They even try to save the criminals.

Is heaven and eternal life worth all this effort?

Is your love to God so strong that you would rather die than to disobey Him even in one point? If your answer is “yes”, that you would rather die, then the next question comes—would you also be willing to give up your idols? This includes your bad habits, your worldly friends, vain television shows, and unhealthy foods, and many other idols.

In reality, God wants us to give up only things that are harmful to us, things that would keep us out of heaven, and which would endanger our spiritual and physical health. God wants us to be saved into eternal life, and for this He has set up mediums to secure our salvation. If we neglect these mediums, then God has to remove our names from the Book of Life.

The church family is a great medium for our salvation. “We sustain a loss when we neglect the privilege of

associating together to strengthen and encourage one another in the service of God. The truths of His word lose their vividness and importance in our minds. Our hearts cease to be enlightened and aroused by the sanctifying influence, and we decline in spirituality. In our intercourse as Christians we lose much by lack of sympathy with one another. He who shuts himself up to himself is not filling the position that God designed he should. We are all children of one Father, dependent upon one another for happiness. The claims of God and of humanity are upon us. It is the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature that brings us into sympathy with our brethren and affords us happiness in our efforts to bless others.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 541

“It is a serious mistake to neglect the public worship of God. The privileges of divine service should not be lightly regarded.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 511

Another important medium is Bible study. We read, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105

“None but those who have fortified their mind with the truth of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 593. We need to read the word of God, daily.

Also, God has given us the Spirit of Prophecy writings. Sister White wrote more than 100,000 pages of messages given to her by God.

“The testimonies of the Spirit of God are given to direct

men to His Word, which has been neglected. Now if their messages are not heeded, the Holy Spirit is shut away from the soul. What further means has God in reserve to reach the erring ones, and show them their true condition?" –*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 46

We may say that we believe the testimonies of Sister White, but if we do not read them and put them into practice, it is equal to rejecting them, and the Holy Spirit will leave us.

In order to live to be able to overcome every sin, we need to pray without ceasing. "No man is safe for a day or an hour without prayer." –*The Great Controversy*, p. 530

Jesus spent the whole night in prayer. "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Luke 6:12. If Jesus needed to pray all night, then we need to do the same.

Another requirement for our salvation is health reform. "The light God has given on health reform is for our salvation and the salvation of the world." –*Counsels on Health*, p. 446

"It was in love that our heavenly Father sent the light of health reform to guard against the evils that result from unrestrained indulgence of appetite." –*Child Guidance*, p. 461

"The controlling power of appetite will prove the ruin of thousands, when, if they had conquered on this point, they would have had moral power to gain the victory over every other temptation of Satan. But those who are slaves to appetite will fail in perfecting Christian character." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 491

Also we must not neglect missionary work. By saving others we save ourselves. We are to love our neighbour as ourselves. Because of this love we cannot let them perish. We sing in our gospel hymn, "Work for the night is coming, when man works no more."

Salvation is not a side issue in our lives; it is the main

purpose of our lives.

Paul writes, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14

David had only one thing that he wanted in his life, "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple." Psalm 27:4

Peter writes, "For even hereunto were we called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps. 1 Peter 2:21

Can our sacrifice be any less than the sacrifice of Jesus?

"When once the gaze is fixed upon Him, the life finds its center. The enthusiasm, the generous devotion, the passionate ardor of the youth, find here their true object. Duty becomes a delight and sacrifice a pleasure. To honor Christ, to become like Him, to work for Him, is the life's highest ambition and its greatest joy." –*Education*, p. 297

If you are choosing to be saved, whatever it may cost, then you will drink the bitter cup, which Jesus drank also; then you are willing to go to prison or even to a martyr's death. Then you are willing to pray without ceasing, and read the Bible every day, and do the work of saving souls. Then you will make it to heaven and sing the song of victory with others who also paid the same price. Heaven is worth it. The reward given to you pays a thousand times over for all your sacrifices and self-denials you have made.

Yet, all our sacrifices are not enough to pay for our entrance to

heaven. It is the sacrifice of Jesus that opens the door to heaven for us. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23

If we love God and obey His commandments, we will receive the gift of eternal life. Amen.

Timo Martin





Prepare to Meet Thy God

On a beautiful Sabbath morning, October 10, 2015, members and visitors from near and far gathered near picturesque Boundary Bay in White Rock, British Columbia for the beginning of the Western Canadian Field Conference. The conference Motto was, "Prepare to Meet Thy God." Amos 4:12 (last part)

Brother Jeffrey Ho welcomed everyone and then shared with us the words in Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We then began our Sabbath School by singing the hymn, "Anywhere with Jesus."

Sister Franziska Pedersen taught the Lesson entitled, "The Gift of Grace." We were reminded that God chose us and adopted us as His sons and daughters before the foundation of the earth was laid. "We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 250. Our Heavenly Father is, "Merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Exodus 34:6. He, therefore, gave us His son, Jesus, to die for us sinners and has loved us without comparison. Jesus is waiting with open arms for each and every one of us to turn away from the old sinful ways. He is ready and willing to bury our past sins in the depths of the sea and give us strength to continue in a new life in Him.

Brother Evald Pedersen held the divine service entitled, "Prepare to Meet Thy God, O Israel." "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:44. Here Jesus is comparing His coming to a thief in the night; and we must, therefore,

be on watch and ready at all times because we do not know the exact time of His appearing. In the book of Matthew we have the parable

about the ten virgins. Only five of the ten were ready to enter into the marriage feast. The others did not make the preparation which was necessary. "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matthew 25:13

At the end of a school year the students have exams. Some students are so busy all year long and do not take the time to study. So, in the last week before exams, they stay up all night and try to catch up with their studies. That usually does not work too well. The best is to prepare throughout the whole year. This is also how it is with us Christians. We should be working on our preparation for our Lord's coming every day.

If you were invited to meet the Queen of England, would you prepare? Then how much more must we prepare when we are expecting to meet the King of the Universe! In John 14:1–3 we read that Jesus is preparing a place for His children. How are we preparing?

Read Matthew 25:31–46. Our main preparation has to do with how we treat our fellow men. Do we keep the commandments, love the Lord, and love our neighbour as ourselves?



"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that

evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth His coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of.” Matthew 24:45–50. We are to take care of the things that are given to us to look after: feed the hungry, help those in need, etc. We do not know how the end of the world will be. It will most likely be different than we imagine. But we have a loving Heavenly Father who will do all in His power to save us. Let us treat our fellow human beings the way God is treating us. He gave all for us; let us do the same for our fellow servant and we have no reason to fear when Jesus comes. Amen.

Sabbath afternoon, after a delicious lunch, Sister Marcela Castro shared her “Spiritual Cake Ingredients.” Sugar, oil, milk, egg, vanilla, yeast, spoon, and oven. When you put sugar under a microscope it will look very beautiful; however, it has many sharp edges and spikes as well. So it is with God’s people (you and me); we can sometimes be sharp and hurt each other. We need oil, the Holy Spirit, to soften us; and God’s Holy Word, the milk. We need new



life in the Lord Jesus (the egg). Then we need flavour, praising our God through music. If we have the desire for God’s church to grow, we must be witnesses for Him. Our workers must stir us

up and encourage us to go on when trials come. Amen.

Brother Nicholas Anca continued with “Signs of the Times.” “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.” Revelation 1:7. “And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12. In Revelation chapter 1 we read that Jesus will *come* and in Revelation 22 we are told that He will come *quickly*. But, before that day, we are told that many signs will occur.

Jesus told His disciples/His people what signs to watch for before the destruction of Jerusalem. “And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matthew 24:2. “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.” Luke 21:20. Every-

thing was fulfilled which had been predicted and all Christians followed the instructions and were safe.

His disciples were looking forward to His second coming and asked Him when this would be. In Matthew chapter 24 and Luke chapter 21 we read of about 20 signs named by Jesus. The Apostle Paul, who died in about 60–65 A.D. wrote in Acts 20:29, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” In Matthew 24:24 we read, “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Many false prophets will arise and draw away many. Just to name a few in our day and time, Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Jose Louis. In Revelation 13:13–14 we read of the greatest deception. “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.”

In the world of politics we find that fragile peace agreements are being made. Nations are angry, conflicts are many. (Matthew 24:7; Revelation 11:18). Worldwide woes are occurring more frequently: tornadoes, famines, earthquakes, pestilences, floods, etc. Then we have signs in society. Studies show that children who watch TV for three hours each day, by the age of 12 have seen 14,000 murders. Violence is increasing, families are falling apart. Financial crisis and economic uncertainty is prevalent. Knowledge is increasing and not just in the scientific world, but also in knowledge of the Bible. The Gospel of the Kingdom is preached all over the world as a witness, but many do not change their life. In Titus 2:13 we read, “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Soon what is written in Matthew 24:27, 30 will be fulfilled. “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus did everything for you and me. On the cross of Calvary He did everything for you and me. Do not wait for the crises before you trust Him. The time to prepare is today. Let us get ready. Amen.

Next the children and young people presented their wonderful program about how we ought to live while we are preparing for Jesus’ soon coming. Several of the signs of

the times were mentioned which have already been fulfilled, and the end is fast approaching. Some of the songs sung were based on the following scripture texts: Acts 17:11, they “searched the scriptures daily, whether those



things were so;” John 3:5, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;” Mark 16:16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” We were also blessed with many instrumentals on the piano, cello, and the violin. Some of these were, “Great is Thy Faithfulness,” “I Need Thee Every Hour,” “Nearer My God to Thee,” and many more. We were encouraged to search the scriptures every day, pray, prepare for the coming of Jesus and endure unto the end.



The last meeting before the Sabbath came to a close was held by Brother Oscar Oviedo. He spoke on “The Conditions of the Church.” “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work.” —*Christian Service*, p. 41. In Matthew 25:1–13 we read the parable of the ten virgins. The sun is setting and a wedding is occurring. The maidens are God’s people on their way to meet the bridegroom — Jesus. They all had lamps containing oil, but five of them did not have extra oil in their vessels. Their hearts were not filled with the Holy Spirit. The bridegroom was delayed and so all ten of them got tired and fell asleep. But the midnight cry came and they were all surprised and woke up. They all needed to trim their lamps, but the foolish virgins discovered that they neglected to bring extra oil for their vessels. They then asked from the others to give them some of their oil; this, however, was not possible, since being filled with the Holy Spirit is a personal matter—it cannot be shared. In fear, the foolish virgins came

to the wedding, but too late.

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:22–25. We cannot live godly lives unless the Holy Spirit works within us. We cannot be sanctified without the Holy Spirit. Only by the Holy Spirit can we be practical Children of God. “If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it. If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:14–17

Our most urgent need and greatest concern should be to pray for the receipt of the Holy Spirit, the Latter rain—a revival of true godliness. Unless our vessels are full we will miss the goal. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” 2 Timothy 3:5. Without the Holy Spirit we are truly “foolish virgins.” We need love, not fear, to meet our Heavenly Father. At the end of the day, it is not a matter of, do I love Christ, but how much do I love Him. No matter what condition we are in today, we still have hope. May the Lord help us to prepare ourselves to be ready when He comes. Amen.

Sunday morning we all gathered again and Sister Franziska Pedersen spoke on “Positive and Negative Influences on Body and Mind.” In Genesis 1:1–25 we read that God created the heavens, the earth, the waters, grass, trees, the sun, moon, stars, birds, all animals, both on land and in the sea. He then created man in the image of God. Man possesses spiritual qualities which no other being has. He was given the special blessing to fill the earth; he also received work which was to benefit his body, mind, and soul; and God gave him the responsibility of looking after everything, tenderly, with wisdom and care. A special diet was also given to him by his Creator—a diet to keep him in the best of health both physically and mentally. And who better to give this to man than his Maker!

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19–20. “Obedience to the laws of health is to be made a matter of personal duty. We ourselves must suffer the results if violated. We must individually answer to God for our habits and practices.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 221

Worry, borrowing trouble, discouragement, anxiety, discontentment, distrust, and visible communications are just a few things which will affect our health, both in mind



and body. These are robbers of vital energy. Studies have shown that individuals who are happy and have a positive, optimistic disposition have a much greater chance of recovery from disease than those who have negative thoughts. The condition of the mind affects the health of the body to a far greater extent than many people realize. Jesus said,

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; . . . Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” Matthew 6:31, 33–34

David says in Psalm 101:3, “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.” Visible communication is the strongest impulse which plants thoughts into our minds. We must be fully aware of the potential power of suggestion and the influencing of the mind by all means of communication. This includes books, pictures, films, TV, Internet, etc. “My ears are the Lord’s, and I will not listen to the subtle reasoning of the enemy. My voice shall not in any way be subject to a will that is not under the influence of the Spirit of God. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and every power of my being shall be consecrated to worthy pursuits.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 409 (emphasis mine)

“The true principles of Christianity open before all a source of happiness, the height, depth, the length immeasurable.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 631. If we truly are in Christ, faith, hope, joy, obedience, optimism and love will fill our hearts. “Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16–17. We can come to Jesus in prayer with all our cares and burdens and He will give us rest. “And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Luke 18:1 (emphasis mine). In the New King James version of the Bible it says, “not lose heart.”

“Without hesitation or argument we must close and guard the avenues of the soul against evil. . . . He must pray for divine help and at the same time resolutely resist every inclination to sin. By courage, by faith, by persevering toil, he can conquer. But let him remember that to gain the victory Christ must abide in him and he in Christ.” —*The*

Adventist Home, p. 403. May the Lord help us to have the desire and the wisdom to follow His instructions to keep healthy in both body and mind, is our prayer. Amen.

Brother Nicholas Anca then presented, “Preparation for the Latter Rain.” “He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 123. Do you realize that your salvation depends on the preparation you make? Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for “the promise of His father” (Acts 1:4) and then they were to be His witnesses, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8



“After Christ’s ascension, the disciples were gathered together in one place to make humble supplication to God. And after ten days of heart searching and self-examination, the way was prepared for the Holy Spirit to enter the cleansed, consecrated soul temples.” —*Evangelism*, p. 698

Compare the life of Peter before Pentecost, “And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the Man.” Matthew 26:72. Then after Pentecost, “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” Acts 4:20. Peter and the other disciples were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and spoke boldly so that the listeners’ hearts were touched, and they asked what they should do. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:38–39. The Word of God is living and powerful. This was the result of these faithful followers of Christ who were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem—God’s church. Together and united they presented their request to the Father. They knew they had an Advocate with the Father. (Hebrews 8:1–2). The 120 prayed and evangelized the

world after receiving the Holy Spirit. They acknowledged their dependence upon God. They recognized that they were not able to do the work without the Holy Spirit. If we know Christ, but go against our conscience, Satan will take control of our mind and he will deceive us. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16

We have the freedom of choice. We can humble ourselves and make peace with our brothers and sisters. Let us study God's word. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. In order to receive the Holy Spirit, we must desire it with all our heart and pray for it earnestly, believing, and we will receive according to our faith. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2. Amen.

After a delicious lunch and a beautiful walk along the shore of Boundary Bay, Brother Evald Pedersen continued with the topic, "The Results of the Latter Rain." We all like to see the results of our labour, but many times we do not see many results. The latter rain is in the future; so how do we know what it will be like? We do not know. But we are told that it will be even more marvelous than the Early Rain, where 3,000 souls were baptized in one day. Now we are happy when five or six souls are baptized in one year in our Canadian Field.

Wonderful things happened in the days of the Early Rain. The Apostles spoke with power—not a trace of fear. People were amazed and miracles happened. As the Gospel was preached with boldness, so also the persecutions grew stronger. The Latter Rain will also make Satan angry because he knows he has only a short time. We can expect when the truth is preached, the persecutions will increase. Most likely, the Sunday Law and the Latter Rain will come at the same time. We have not seen it, so we can only imagine what it will be like. "The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was 'the former rain,' and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 21. Let us pray for the Latter Rain and the soon coming of Jesus.

The Early Rain was the beginning of the Gospel. After the

Former Rain a long time of trouble and persecution came. After the Latter Rain, the work will be finished. It will be the end of suffering and sorrow, and we can go home. Therefore, let us look forward to that time and lift up our heads. May we all be ready when Jesus comes. Amen.

The farewell meeting was held by Brother Oscar Oviedo. He first refreshed our memories of the many wonderful messages we were privileged to hear during the two days together. He then continued to speak on "The Condition of the Church." Many of the signs of the times have been, and are being, fulfilled. The ten virgins all fell asleep while the bridegroom delayed. In Matthew 24 the evil servant says, "My Lord delays His coming." What is the purpose of the delay? "And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him,

Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him." Exodus 32:1. A delay shows our true colours. We know the signs of the times; we know Jesus will come, but during the delay, we may fall into temptation like Israel did with the golden calf.

When Samuel was delayed, Saul took matters into his own hands and performed the sacrifice which Samuel was to bring. This was a big mistake! (see 1 Samuel 13:8–9). A delay should not make us cold, but rather it should increase our love and make us stronger. "And that,

knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Romans 13:11. Let us not postpone our preparation for the coming of Jesus or wish He would delay, because we perhaps have some plans which we still want to accomplish. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10. May we leave this conference remembering the blessing, encouraging messages we heard here by word and song and may we, with a deeper commitment, prepare for our Lord's soon coming is our prayer. Amen.

Franziska Pedersen

(see Group Photo on Page 26)





Pesticides in Foods

Pesticides have been used by commercial farmers for many years, to protect crops from weeds, disease and insects. The use of pesticides increases crop yields. Proponents of pesticide use estimate that 30–70% of crops would be lost without the use of pest control products. Also, food could potentially be contaminated by diseases carried by insects that can affect human health. The use of pesticides is highly regulated, and must pass stringent tests before a product is approved for sale or use.

The Government of Canada states that, “Pesticides are designed to kill ‘pests’, but some pesticides can also cause health effects in people. The likelihood of developing health effects depends on the type of pesticide and other chemicals that are in the product you are using, as well as the amount you are exposed to and how long or often you are exposed.” Over a lifetime, this can amount to significant amounts of pesticides consumed. Once we ingest a pesticide, our body does not have the ability to remove it—it is permanently stored in the body tissue. Despite governments allowing pesticides to be used in our food supply, many have been shown to cause damage to the nervous system; mutations in DNA; hormonal disorders; damage to liver, kidneys, eyes, lungs; developmental and reproductive damage; and, cancer. Children have unique susceptibilities to the potential toxicity of pesticides. A connection has been shown between pesticide exposures in early life and pediatric cancers, decreased cognitive function, behavioural problems, and lasting damage to a child’s brain development.

All countries use pesticides on their commercial crops. Nearly two-thirds of the 3,015 fruit and vegetable samples tested by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2013 contained pesticide residues, with 165 different pesticides identified. Pesti-

cides remained on fruits and vegetables that were tested, even when they were washed and, in some cases, peeled.

The organic food sector is growing rapidly with people choosing to purchase organic food to avoid food containing pesticides. However, many people who want to reduce their exposure to pesticides cannot find or afford an all-organic diet. The Environmental Working Group (EWG), based in the United States, produces a yearly list of the 12 worst offenders, produce that contain the most pesticides. They call this list the “Dirty Dozen.” The recommendation is that if you consume any of these 12 foods on a regular basis, that you purchase the organic version. They also produce a list called the “Clean 15” which is a list of produce that, grown conventionally (vs organically) contain the least amount of pesticide residue. Consumers are safe in purchasing these 15 foods grown in conventional methods. EWG’s aim is to give consumers confidence that by following their advice, they can buy foods with fewer types of pesticides and lower overall concentrations of

| DIRTY 12 | 2015 | CLEAN 15 |
|--|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apples 2. Peaches 3. Nectarines 4. Strawberries 5. Grapes 6. Celery 7. Spinach 8. Sweet Bell Peppers 9. Cucumbers 10. Cherry Tomatoes 11. Snap Peas (Imported) 12. Potatoes <p>Bonus: Hot Peppers Bonus: Kale/Collard Greens</p> |   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avocados 2. Sweet Corn 3. Pineapples 4. Cabbage 5. Sweet Peas (Frozen) 6. Onions 7. Asparagus 8. Mangos 9. Papayas 10. Kiwi 11. Eggplant 12. Grapefruit 13. Cantaloupe 14. Cauliflower 15. Sweet Potatoes   |
| <p>www.perfectpea.com (based on EWG data)</p> | | |

pesticide residues. See www.ewg.org for more information.

Smart shopping choices matter. Studies show that people who eat mainly organic produce have lower pesticide levels in their bodies, despite eating 70% more fruits and vegetables than people who rarely or never purchased organic produce.

THE DIRTY DOZEN

Apples have topped the list of the Dirty Dozen for many years, and it remains at the top of the list again in 2015, with 99% percent of apple samples testing positive for at least one pesticide residue. The remaining foods on the Dirty Dozen list are peaches, nectarines, strawberries, grapes, celery, spinach, sweet bell peppers, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, imported snap peas and potatoes.

The average potato had more pesticides by weight than any other food. A single grape and a sweet bell pepper sample tested positive for 15 pesticides. Single samples of celery, cherry tomatoes, nectarines, peaches, imported snap peas and strawberries tested positive for 13 different pesticides apiece. If you eat your daily 5–7 servings of fruits and vegetables from the “dirty dozen” foods, you are consuming, on average, 14 different pesticides every day.

The EWG has added two items to the Dirty Dozen list, in the “Plus” category—kales/collard greens and hot peppers. These items are of special concern to public health because tests have found these foods laced with particularly toxic pesticides. If you cannot find or afford organic types, they suggest cooking them, because pesticides levels typically diminish when food is cooked.

THE CLEAN 15

This list contains the foods, grown conventionally, that have been found to have the least amount of pesticides. Avocados were again the cleanest in 2015, with only 1% of samples showing any detectable pesticides. Other items on the Clean 15 list include sweet corn, pineapples, cabbage, frozen sweet peas frozen, onions, asparagus, mangoes, papayas, kiwi, eggplant, grapefruit, cantaloupe, cauliflower, and sweet potatoes.

Some 89% of pineapples, 82% of kiwi, 80% of papayas, 88% of mango and 61% of cantaloupe had no residues. Multiple pesticide residues are extremely rare on Clean 15 vegetables.

To reduce the amount of pesticides ingested, avoid foods that are high in pesticides, eat more of the foods that are low in pesticides, buy organic when available, and grow your own crops whenever possible.

Western Canadian Conference



BELIEVERS IN NEW YORK, USA



BELIEVERS IN CEDARTOWN, GEORGIA, USA



Sermons We See

I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day,
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely show
the way,
The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear;
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear!

And the best of all the preachers are the men who live
their creeds,
For to see the good in action is what everybody needs.
I can soon learn how to do it if you'll let me see it done.
I can watch your hands in action, but your tongue too
fast may run.

And the lectures you deliver may be very wise and true;
But I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do.
For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you
give,
But there is no misunderstanding how you act and how
you live.

Edgar A. Guest