



The Reformation **Messenger**

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 5, MAY 2016

Rich or Poor?

Page 6

The Deceitfulness of Sin

Page 18

You Can Resist Temptation!

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 The Day and Hour of Jesus' Coming**
- 6 Rich or Poor?**
- 8 To Insult God**
- 12 Love Divine, So Sublime**
- 14 Health Matters: GMO's: A Modern Dilemma**
- 18 The Deceitfulness of Sin**
- 20 You Can Resist Temptation!**
- 25 Children's Corner: Heaven**

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The Day And Hour Of Jesus' Coming

necessarily implies that God makes the time known.

"I believe the above, to

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only." Matthew 24:36

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mark 13:32

"It is thought by many, that this passage proves that men are never to know the time. But if it proves this, it likewise proves, that the Son of God Himself, is never to know the time; for the passage declares precisely the same concerning Him, that it does concerning angels and men. But, can any person believe that our glorious Lord, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, is, and will remain ignorant of the time until the very moment that He comes to judge the world?

"If not, then certainly this text can never prove that men may not be made to understand the time. An old English version of the passage, reads, 'But that day and hour no man maketh known, neither the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.'

"This is the correct reading according to several of the ablest critics of the age. The word 'know' is used here, in the same sense as it is by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:2. Paul well understood many other things, besides Christ and Him crucified, but he determined to make known nothing else among them. So in the passage first quoted [Mark 13:32], it is declared that none but God the Father, maketh known the day and hour; that is, the definite time of the second coming of His Son. And this

be a fair and correct view of the subject, and that the Father will make known the true time of the advent, without the agency of men, angels or the Son.

"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD." Ezekiel 12:22-25

"Jesus has left us the sure promise, that His Father will make known the day and the hour of His coming. The 'Lord God' has promised to speak, and assures us that the word that He will speak 'shall come to pass.' With such testimony as this before us, from the Father and Son, what other conclusion can we come to, than that the 'word' which the Father is to speak is the true time, and when He speaks, His voice will make it known to His saints?" -James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 5-6

BENSON COMMENTARY:

On Mark 13:32, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man"-in Matthew 24:36, "Neither the Son, but the Father."

It is stated in 1 Corinthians 2:2, Paul writes, "I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," that is, "I determined to make known, to preach nothing among you, but Jesus Christ." So likewise in the text, But of that day and that hour

none maketh you to know, none hath power to make you know it (just as the phrase, Matthew 20:23, “is not Mine to give,” signifies, is not in My power to give;)—no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father.

Neither man, nor angel, nor even the Son Himself, can reveal the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem to you, because the Father hath determined that it should not be revealed. The divine wisdom saw fit to conceal from the apostles, and the other disciples of Jesus, the precise period of the destruction of Jerusalem, in order that they might be laid under a necessity of watching continually.

BARNES NOTES ON THE BIBLE:

Others have said that the verb rendered “knoweth” means something to “make” known or to reveal, and that the passage means, “that day and hour, none makes known, neither the angels, nor the Son, but the Father.” It is true that the word has sometimes that meaning, as in 1 Corinthians 2:2, but it is natural to ask where has “the Father” made it known. In what place did He reveal it?

MATTHEW POOLES COMMENTARY:

Mark 13:32–33. God hath concealed from us the knowledge of the last day that we might watch all our days.

—All commentary references taken from Biblehub.com/commentaries (on Mark 13:32)

“The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” Joel 3:16

“The voice of God, that is to shake the heavens and the earth, comes ‘out of Zion’, and is uttered ‘from Jerusalem’ . . . at the pouring out of the seventh vial. In Revelation 16:17 we read, ‘And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.’ At the same time, there is a great earthquake, produced by the ‘voice from the throne,’ which shakes down the cities of the nations, and removes the islands and mountains. This ‘voice from the throne,’ which causes the earthquakes, must be the same as the voice uttered ‘from Jerusalem, ‘which shakes the heavens and the earth.’ Joel 3:16 and Jeremiah 25:30–31. It seems clear that this voice which is to come ‘out of the temple of heaven. . . . is the voice of God.’” —James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, p. 4

“And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air;

and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.” Revelation 16:17

According to James White, as stated on page 6 of *A Word to the Little Flock*, “we may now see that it is the seventh vial, and the voice of God, which will shake the powers of the heavens, and cause the great earthquake or the shaking of the earth: and that this event constitutes the last literal sign, just before the sign of the Son of man appears in heaven.”

“There is a day that God hath appointed for the close of this world’s history. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. Prophecy is fast fulfilling.” —*Last Day Events*, p. 16

“Deliverance of the Saints. The sky opened and shut and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus’ coming and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people, He spoke one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upward, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah, and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn” —*Early Writings*, p. 34

“God Tells His People the Day and Hour of Jesus’ Coming—The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus’ coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are lighted up with His glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked cannot look upon them. And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honoured God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory. —*The Great Controversy*, p. 640.” —*Heaven*, p. 30

“God announces the time of Christ’s coming. Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus’ coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. —*Early Writings*, p. 15 (1851).” —*Last Day Events*, p. 272

“I have not the slightest knowledge as to the time spo-

ken by the voice of God. I heard the hour proclaimed, but had no remembrance of that hour after I came out of vision. Scenes of such thrilling, solemn interest passed before me as no language is adequate to describe. It was all a living reality to me, for close upon this scene appeared the great white cloud, upon which was seated the Son of man." –*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 75

"The day and hour of Christ's coming announced. 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only.' Matthew 24:36

"The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth." – *Maranatha*, p. 287

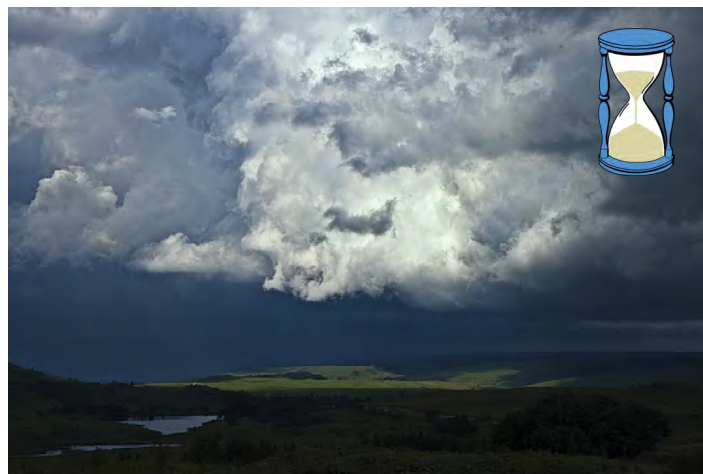
Those who "watch" will know the time. –E.G. White, egwritings.org/en/book

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:42–44

"The day and hour of Christ's second coming are not revealed in the Scriptures. Neither is the year in which this glorious event is to take place pointed out. No one of the prophetic periods reaches to the second coming of Christ.

"The time from the end of the prophetic periods to the coming of Christ is emphatically the waiting, watching

time. Those who watch, as our Lord commands, will know the time. No man will make it known; for it is not revealed to man in the Scriptures. Angels will not make it known, though they may minister to and communicate with, the children of men. Neither will the Son. But the Father will make it known when He speaks again from Heaven. He once spake the Ten Commandments in the hearing of the people. His voice then shook the earth. When He speaks again, the heavens and earth will both shake. Says Paul: 'Whose voice then shook the earth; but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.' Hebrews 12:26. 'The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake.' Joel 3:16 . . .



"Revelation 3:3, is also to the point: 'Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.' Those who do not watch, will not know the hour. Those who watch,

will know the hour. . . .

"Says James, 'Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' James 5:7–8." –James White, *The Second Coming of Christ*, p.62–64 (all underlining throughout the article mine)

Marlene Reid, Brisbane, Australia

LOOKING FOR YOU . . .

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Rich or Poor?



Are we rich or poor? We can have material riches, or more valuable spiritual riches. Are we satisfied with what we have, or are we hungering for greater riches? In the Laodicean time period, the angel of the church, who are the leaders, say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17

We can have earthly goods in abundance, but at the same time be poor in spiritual riches. Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12:15

"For what is man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matthew 16:26

If someone would offer you the whole world, and the only thing you have to pay for it is your soul, would you sell your soul? This offer was made to Jesus.

"Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." Matthew 4:8-9

Jesus refused this offer, but many professing Christians sell their souls to Satan for a small price.

Judas sold his soul for 30 pieces of silver. Millions of people are selling their souls to Satan for a short enjoyment of sin.

Satan is bargaining with people, offering them a higher

and higher price, until they decide to sell their souls.

When we were born into this world, God did not send us here empty handed. He gave us a body, with eyes, ears, feet, hands, and brains. He also gave us the soul, the inner man, with mind, memory, and understanding.

He gave us talents, and inherited abilities. He gave us innocence and a beautiful childlike faith. He also gave us His angels to protect us, and the Holy Spirit to speak to us, and to comfort us. He gave us a conscience to protect us from sin. Also He gave the hope of eternal life. He gave His Son to die for our sins. To have all these makes us truly rich.

But then comes Satan and starts bartering with us. Already at an early age he wants to buy our innocence, and as a payment he is offering the knowledge of sin. As soon as children have the knowledge of sin and corruption they will have temptations to sin. Then he wants our body, our eyes, and ears, offering to us attractive pictures and sounds to draw us to him. Instead of beholding Christ, our eyes and ears are turned to the exciting things that Satan offers. He wants to control the avenues to our soul. The price that Satan wants from us is to stop reading the Bible, and meditating upon it. He also wants us to neglect prayer, and not go to all the church meetings. He wants our minds and thoughts, to be replaced with vain imaginations, sensual thoughts, and finally he wants our heart, and thus our whole body becomes the servant of sin.

Little by little all the gifts God gave us are sold to Satan. Our talents are given to him for serving the world. He will replace the Holy Spirit with his own evil spirit. The

angels that protected us he replaces with his own angels, the demons. In the end he buys our soul, the hope of eternal life. Now Satan is laughing, and he leaves us to our own misery, and goes after other victims. And all that Satan offered us in the exchange for our soul breaks like a soap bubble, and suddenly we have nothing left. Now we are truly poor, and empty-handed. We may flatter ourselves that we are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, but God says, "You are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." We have sold our happiness for misery, our eyesight for blindness, our garments of righteousness for nakedness.

"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Matthew 13:12. Yet many do not know or recognize their poverty. The value of the people who have lost their salvation is nothing. "All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity." Isaiah 40:17

If we have sold our precious God-given gifts, there is still hope today. The prodigal son took all the riches that God had given him, and spent them in riotous living. After he was hungry, in tattered garments, and penniless, he decided to return to his Father. Christ is offering us to buy the heavenly riches from Him. "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Revelation 3:18

The price that you have to pay is all that Satan gave you in exchange for your soul, that is all your sins. Solomon writes to us, "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." Proverbs 23:23

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:33

The price seems high, but what we gain is a million times more than what we give up. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." 2 Corinthians 8:9

Still today, Jesus is offering us the heavenly riches, but for how long, we do not know.

The story of the five foolish virgins is a warning to any-

one who is hesitating and delaying to buy the precious salvation. They went to buy, but the door was shut and they remained outside. These virgins were members of God's church, but had neglected to make full surrender to God.

In the beginning, I asked a question, "Are we rich or poor?" Did we find an answer to this question? Paul writes, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." 2 Corinthians 6:10. Do we understand this?

Of Moses we read, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Hebrews 11:25–26

"Only through Christ can we obtain eternal riches. The wealth that He gives is beyond all computation. Having found God, you are supremely rich in the contemplation of His treasure. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'" – *The Review and Herald*, December 10, 1901

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again." Proverbs 19:17

"He who makes this investment lays up double treasure. Besides that which, however wisely improved, he must leave at last, he is amassing wealth for eternity,— that treasure of character which is the most valuable possession of earth or heaven." – *Education*, p. 141

"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it." Proverbs 10:22

The worldly riches are different. "For the love of money is the root of evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Timothy 6:10

Jesus said, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36. And Solomon adds to it, "Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom." Proverbs 23:4

Let us seek the true riches which satisfy the soul hunger, and make us rich in eternal riches, beside which the worldly riches lose their attraction. Amen.

Timo Martin



To Insult God

No one likes to be insulted. It often makes a person feel angry. Insult has caused many wars in this world. In 2 Samuel 10:1–8, we read of a war that occurred between the nation of Israel and the Ammonites. King David sent some of his trusted men to comfort the King of Ammon after Nahash, his father and former king died, as he had been a friend to David. The new king of Ammon did not trust David's good intentions. "Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away." 2 Samuel 10:4. And thus a war was started from this insult. This has continued throughout history even to this day.

Jesus was the One who was the most insulted, and He never retaliated. It is written of the Jewish nation that many rejected Him as the Messiah who came to save them. They insulted Him. "His life had been one of persecution and insult. Driven from Bethlehem by a jealous king, rejected by His own people at Nazareth, condemned to death without a cause at Jerusalem, Jesus, with His few faithful followers, found a temporary asylum in a strange city. He who was ever touched by human woe, who healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and speech to the dumb, who fed the hungry and comforted the sorrowful, was driven from the people He had labored to save." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 541–542. "He who by a command could bring the heavenly host to His aid—He who could have driven that mob in terror from His sight by the flashing forth of His divine majesty—submitted with perfect calmness to the coarsest insult and outrage." —*Ibid*, p. 734

The word "insult" means: to treat or speak to someone insolently or with contemptuous rudeness; affront. Or, to offend or demean; to attack; assault. It is synonymous

with offend, scorn, injure or abuse. To insult implies such insolence of speech or manner so that it deeply humiliates or wounds another person's feelings in an attempt to arouse them to anger.

This is what Jesus was subjected to by the people He came to save—His own people; the Jewish nation. The leaders in Israel, who should have been the most knowledgeable about the Scriptures, subjected Jesus to this kind of treatment. Although the word "insult" does not appear in the Bible, it is used many times in the Spirit of Prophecy in connection with the treatment Jesus received while on this earth.

While we can look at the history of the Jewish nation and deplore the insulting way they treated Him, we should look into our own hearts to see if we, perhaps, are insulting Him also. Oh no, we may say, there is no way we would dare to insult our beloved Jesus; our Lord and Saviour. But, if you look carefully into your life and actions, there may be times you have insulted Him unknowingly.

When we sin, it is not just a case of making Jesus sad, of crucifying Him afresh. There are instances in the Spirit of Prophecy where the word "Insult" is used in various circumstances. Insult is a very strong word. It implies contempt, rudeness, and scorn. When we sin all heaven sees and notices. All the unfallen worlds are now watching with intense interest the climax of the Plan of Salvation. They are watching you. How you live and act, and how you treat Jesus. Nothing in your life is done in secret. It is open for all the universe to see. And it is all written down. Sadly, some who claim to be His followers, insult Jesus.

Now, I will share some quotes from the Spirit of Prophecy which clearly state we insult Jesus by various actions and attitudes. When you read the word "insult" think of the true meaning of the word: to offend, demean or attack.

First, some Biblical examples:

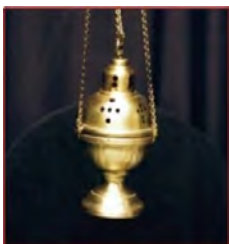
King David: "It was an insult to God when David numbered Israel. God's rebuke rested upon him, for he made himself as God, as though he could tell the strength of the armies of Israel by their numbers. . . . God looks not on the numbers of Israel for the success of His work. His armies number thousands of thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. These cooperate with the people who will connect with God to be channels of light." —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 152. Have we not heard other denominations ask us what our membership is? As though our strength and success depended on numbers? What is

our response? Do we feel embarrassed and try to make the number seem as large as possible, sometimes even talking of the Reform Church in connection with the separated group (from 1951), to make the number seem larger? God is not dependent on numbers. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Zechariah 4:6

There are other areas we can fail on in numbering and a big one is finances. Many times when I went to take money out of the bank for offerings or donations, I have thought that, well, I should only take this small amount just in case the car breaks down, or some other expense arises. I need a certain amount in reserve. I then hear a little voice telling me, "you have the money now, give it, I will take care of future expenses." And the Lord has never failed me.

King Saul: In 1 Samuel 15 King Saul was told to go and destroy the Amalekites, which included all the people as well as the animals. He and his men, however, kept the animals for sacrifices. "When, in direct violation of God's command, Saul proposed to present a sacrifice of that which God had devoted to destruction, open contempt was shown for the divine authority. The service would have been an insult to Heaven." *-Conflict and Courage*, p. 158. Although it may outwardly seem like a worthy cause to save the animals for worship purposes, it was, however, purely selfish. The people did not want to offer their own animals, but rather the ones they took from Amalek. This was a way to enrich themselves. It was ill-gotten gain. Their service to God was not genuine. It was a form only. "Yet with the sin of Saul and its result before us, how many are pursuing a similar course. While they refuse to believe and obey some requirement of the Lord, they persevere in offering up to God their formal services of religion. There is no response of the Spirit of God to such service. No matter how zealous men may be in their observance of religious ceremonies, the Lord cannot accept them if they persist in willful violation of one of His commands." *-Ibid*, p. 158. A formal religion with no heart conversion is an insult to Jesus as is any offering received from ill-gotten gain.

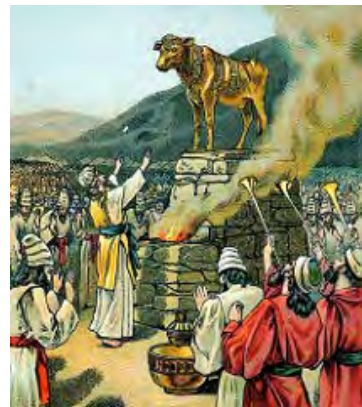
Aaron's sons: "Aaron's sons took the common fire, which God did not accept, and they offered insult to the infinite God by presenting this strange fire before Him. God consumed them by fire for their positive disregard of His express directions." *-Confrontation*, p. 81. What caused these men to insult the Lord? "The gratification of appetite debased their faculties and so beclouded their intellect that their power of



discernment was gone." *-Ibid*, p. 81. Although it was the use of alcohol that beclouded the minds of these men, there are other foods that are not healthful to the body, that will becloud the minds of people. On the cross Jesus refused the vinegar they offered Him to help numb the pain (and He was in a lot of pain), but "when He had tasted it, He refused it. He would receive nothing that could becloud His mind. His faith must keep fast hold upon God. This was His only strength. To becloud His senses would give Satan an advantage." *-The Desire of Ages*, p. 746. Eating any food that would becloud the brain and senses is an insult to the Creator and gives the advantage to Satan.

"It is an insult to the God of heaven for man to abuse his precious powers by placing himself under the control of Satanic agencies, and besotting himself by indulging in that which is ruinous to health, to piety, and to spirituality." *-Conflict and Courage* p. 35

Golden Calf: "Only a few days had passed since the Hebrews had made a solemn covenant with God to obey His voice. They had stood trembling with terror before the mount, listening to the words of the Lord, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.' The glory of God still hovered above Sinai in the sight of the congregation; but they turned away, and asked for other gods. . . . How could greater ingratitude have been shown, or more daring insult offered, to Him who had revealed Himself to them as a tender Father and an all-powerful King!" *-Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 317. Although we may not be worshipping an actual golden statue, we may, having made a covenant to serve and obey God, still have idols that we cherish and worship. If there is some sin you are not willing to give up; something more important in your life than serving Jesus, you have insulted Him. Ask yourself, who do you speak of most? Do you spend the majority of your time and money on yourself or for Jesus? Oh, how some insult the Saviour by putting their own interests above the Lord's interests.



MISSIONARY WORK

"For the conversion of one sinner the minister should tax his resources to the utmost. . . . And if Christ left the ninety and nine that He might seek and save one lost sheep, can we be justified in doing less? Is not a neglect to work as Christ worked, to sacrifice as He sacrificed, a

betrayal of sacred trusts, an insult to God?" —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 370. This is serious. It is an insult to not tax all our energies and resources to save those that are lost; to live a life of self-serving only, oblivious to the needs of those around us.

"Every soul is to minister. He is to use every physical, moral, and mental power, through sanctification of the Spirit, that he may be a laborer together with God. All are bound to devote themselves actively and unreservedly to God's service. They are to cooperate with Jesus Christ in the great work of helping others. Christ died for every man. He has ransomed every man by giving His life on the cross. This He did that man might no longer live an aimless, selfish life, but that he might live unto Jesus Christ, who died for his salvation. All are not called upon to enter the ministry, but nevertheless, they are to minister. It is an insult to the Holy Spirit of God for any man to choose a life of self-serving." —*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1159. This applies to all of us. No need for extra comments. Ask yourself if you are insulting God by your neglect of ministry.

RESPECT FOR LEADERS

From the example of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, we see how God dislikes rebellion against His chosen leaders. "It is hardly possible for men to offer greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities He would use for their salvation." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 402

"If God has given me a message to bear to His people, those who would hinder me in the work and lessen the faith of the people in its truth are not fighting against the instrument, but against God. 'It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproofs.'" And again, "'It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities that He has appointed to lead them.'" —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 680

"In rejecting Christ the Jewish people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, we may commit the same error. We offer insult to the Prince of life, and put Him to shame before the synagogue of Satan and before the heavenly universe when we refuse to listen to His delegated messengers, and instead listen to the agents of Satan, who would draw the soul away from Christ. So long as one does this, he can find no hope or pardon, and he will finally lose all desire to be reconciled to God." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324. Sadly, I have seen over the years many who have left the faith who did not want to hear reproof from leaders. They felt offended and went to another church that was filled with "love" where the preacher preaches smooth

things; pleasing to the ears.

OTHER SERIOUS INSULTS

During worship services: "God required them also to wash their clothes. He is no less particular now than He was then. He is a God of order, and requires His people now upon the earth to observe habits of strict cleanliness. And those who worship God with unclean garments and persons do not come before Him in an acceptable manner. He is not pleased with their lack of reverence for Him, and He will not accept the service of filthy worshipers, for they insult their Maker." —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 138. It does matter to the Lord, how you dress during worship services.

Sabbath Observance: "If men substitute a common day for the sacred, and say that will do just as well, they insult the Maker of the heavens and of the earth, who made the Sabbath to commemorate His resting upon the seventh day, after creating the world in six days." —*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4, p. 14–15. While we may believe and accept the Sabbath truth, ask yourself if your conduct and conversation on the Sabbath hours are in keeping with the Sabbath commandment, or is your Sabbath observance of such a nature that you insult your Maker by making it as a common day by your words and actions. Guard carefully your words, thoughts and actions. Watch yourself; listen to yourself.

Offerings: Some people who are well-to-do, live very comfortable lives. They give their tithes and offerings faithfully, and then spend lavishly on themselves during life. They then write a will stating that the church can have a small portion of their inheritance upon their death. "But many professed Christians put off the claims of Jesus in life and insult Him by giving Him a mere pittance at death. Let all of this class remember that this robbery of God is not an impulsive action, but a well-considered plan which they preface by saying: 'Being in sound mind.' After having defrauded the cause of God through life they perpetuate the fraud after death. . . . Can these dwell with pleasure upon the requirement that will be made of them to give an account of their stewardship?" —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 481. "Some think that only a portion of their means is the Lord's. When they have set apart a portion for religious and charitable purposes, they regard the remainder as their own, to be used as they see fit. But in this they mistake. All we possess is the Lord's, and we are accountable to Him for the use we make of it. In the use of every penny, it will be seen whether we love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 351

Speech: "Is Christ using cutting words, stern criticism

and unkind suspicion toward His people who commit faults? No. He takes every infirmity into account; He acts with discernment. He knows every one of our failings; but He uses patience; for otherwise we would have perished long ago on account of our bad treatment of Him. The greatest insult we can inflict upon Him, is to pretend to be His disciples while manifesting the spirit of Satan in our words, our dispositions and our actions. . . . To be master of one's spirit is to be stronger than kings or conquerors. A Christian leads one to think of Christ. He will be affable, kind, patient, humble and yet courageous and firm in vindicating the truth and the name of Christ." – *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1160. Carefully guard your words. They are all written down and you will have to face them again one day.

WILL WE SUFFER INSULT FOR CHRIST?

Yes, we will. "God's servants must arm themselves with the mind of Christ. They must not expect to escape insult and misjudgment. They will be called enthusiasts and fanatics. But let them not become discouraged. God's hand is on the wheel of His providence, guiding His work to the glory of His name." – *Our Father Cares*, p. 267

Sadly, some Christians do not react well when insulted. "The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death." – *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 81. "It is the love of self that destroys our peace. While self is all alive, we stand ready continually to guard it from mortification and insult." – *Mind, Character and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 607–608

Yet how did Jesus react? "When on this earth Jesus patiently bore insult. His stainless life was a rebuke, and many avoided His presence; but there were some who sought to be with Him because they felt at peace where He was. He was gentle, and never contended for His rights; but His own brethren scorned and hated Him, showing that they did not believe in Him, and casting contempt upon Him. . . . He lived above the difficulties of His life, as if in the light of God's countenance. He bore insult patiently, and in His human nature became an example for all children and youth." – *Christ Triumphant*, p.

As followers of Jesus we are to imitate His example. "When we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall not take neglects or slights to heart. We shall be deaf to reproach and blind to scorn and insult." – *Mind, Character and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 607–608

"There are conditions to the fulfillment of God's promises, and prayer can never take the place of duty. . . . Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the conditions, insult Jehovah." – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 143

During the trial of Christ, Peter was detected as a follower of Christ by his speech even though he tried to deny it. We too must be seen as a follower of Christ by our words and actions without preaching one sermon. "It is an insult to Jehovah to claim to be Christians and yet speak and act as worldlings. We cannot yield the

smallest place to worldly policy. We need to be sanctified every hour through the belief of the truth. It is not safe for one day to neglect putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. We can make no compromise." – *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 10

The angels recorded every insult when Jesus was on this earth. "Many companies of holy angels, each with a tall commanding angel at their head, were sent to witness the scene. They were to record every insult and cruelty imposed upon the Son of God, and to register every pang of anguish which Jesus should

suffer; for the very men who joined in this dreadful scene are to see it all again in living characters." – *Early Writings*, p. 138. They also record every insult you make to the Son of God.

If you have insulted your Lord and Saviour, thankfully, today there is still time to repent and find forgiveness. "Yet despite the insult which man has offered Him, God's love is still extended to the race; and He permits light to shine, enabling man to see that in order to live a perfect life he must obey the natural laws which govern his being. How important, then, that man should walk in this light, exercising all his powers, both of body and mind, to the glory of God!" – *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 8. But how long until the mercy of God reaches an end? Only God knows. Let us all repent and make our peace with God today. Amen.

Wendy Eaton



Love Divine, so sublime



This planet – the earth, so pure first of worth,
Fell down the abyss, losing all bliss.
But Love Divine, so sublime, descending from light
Meets the black of the night.
Covering Divinity, He came in human frailty.
Love in Person full of truth – this must clash with minds uncouth.
No one taught and spoke like He, convincing with authority,
He healed the sick and raised the dead, brought light and comfort to the sad.
His humble garb, His lowly fare, offend religious leader ever more,
He's not the One we waited for – their hopes were smitten to the core.
His wisdom, knowledge startled them, a man unlearned, just Joseph's son,
Could not reconcile their haughty notion, once more to be a nation
Free from Romans' iron fist, but not by Him, He is the least!
Messiah came to save His own, but most decided not to loan,
Their heart to truth divine and pure, rejecting heaven's only cure,
To heal from sin- the Serpent's (Satan's) bite, that ravished mankind thus with might.
Despite rejection, brutish blame, Jesus did for what He came.
God's will be done – straight to the end, never yielding to one bent,
To ease the load of suffering, that soon came crushing over Him.
Gethsemane – oh dreadful night – Satan's fury pressed with might,
Sins' horror, guilt and awful blight. "Jesus, give up that monstrous fight!"
But love for sinners – hating sin, gave Jesus strength from deep within.
He cannot give man up – He takes the bitter cup.
(Though Satan tried to vex) He drinks it to the dregs!

Meanwhile the leaders filled with hate, conspire to one hellish scheme –
To condemn Him falsely - we'll get rid of Him.
Then Judas played into their hands, his Master – Jesus – and this ends
For him all hope – reckoned not the mighty scope,
His kiss of falsehood would unleash – that miserably he soon would perish.
"His blood upon us, crucify Him!" this shout their guilt now reached the brim.
This password off from hell's dark loom, was sealing their eternal ruin.
Brutal insult, treachery, set the scenes on Calvary.
Cruel spikes are driven through those gentle hands, the tender feet -
Pleasing devils, hateful Jews - once in Judgment they must meet.
To make the most of scorn, malicious fury, the ultimate of mockery –
With piercing thorns they crowned their King, it is a tale that angels would not sing.
The Lamb of God – the Innocent, did not offer one complaint.
He yielded freely, though He knew it is crushing agony.
The Holy, Pure is now made Sin, vivid anguish ravished Jesus all within,
Then the Father's love withdrawn – O how He felt so all forlorn...
"Why hast Thou forsaken me?" the cry, so bitter, echoed through the sky.
He cannot see a ray of light, His mind is darkened from the might,
Of passing through the gates of hell, the penalty on Jesus fell.

The broken law – He must endure its justice – that is death for sure.
Horrid pain seized His frame, even though 't was not the same
As His soul's great agony on the cross of Calvary.
As Substitute for fallen man, He bore the guilt, for this He came.
None was with Him, all were gone – He tread the winepress all alone.
The Father's heart can bear no more, "It is enough!" the angels weeping sore,
Oh, what it cost, to save a world so lost!
Sorrow for the human woe, ripped the heart of Jesus, tore
It, broke it. "It is finished" now the price is paid, then laid
His spirit to the Father's care. It's over – Jesus is no more...

This was the darkest day for Israel – they killed their King Immanuel!
To some the midnight in their soul – would never lift to make them whole.
The earth did shake, the veil was rent,
The people quake – "What all this meant?"
What transpired at the cross, at first did seem that all was loss,
And dreadful sadness filled the hearts, of those who followed Jesus' steps,
Had failed give ear to what He said would come, thus now with grief were overcome.

Then wonder, oh disciples listen! "Christ the Son of God is risen!"
Mary shouts for joy her face is beaming, "This cannot be, you must be dreaming!"
"Hail, peace to you", and there He stood right in the midst of them who could
Not grasp that Jesus lives and is around – now their gladness knew no bounds!
Now salvation was secured, the broken law restored.
The ransom paid – with what a price! To rescue the lost human race.
The gates of Heaven opened wide to welcome all who would not hide,
Their love for Christ, His yielding sacrifice, to heal the soul from sin and vice.
Never man the depth of love, bestowed upon him from above,
With justice, mercy all combined, can fathom with his finite mind.
Through eternity the saved will raise, with joyful voice their praise,
What Love Divine, so sublime, with His blood and death,
Has bought to free the cursed from sin's decree of wrath and death eternally.
Remember Judas – oh that cursed name, for ever soiled with hideous shame.
Beware - your lot be the same to sell your Saviour for cheap gain –
His sacrifice to be in vain!
For what the Saviour's heart does cherish, is that none of Adam's children perish!
Who are chained to Satan's slavery, are not able to brake free,
From its grip so firm and tight, even so they try to fight
The war on sin so on their own, alas, but never ever had one won!
The answer to the sinner's malady, is to look to Calvary,
Where on the cross one died to heal, to restore God's image fair and real.
In those who take by childlike faith, the blood of Jesus for forgiveness,
So freely offered by God's grace, will ever make the saved amaze.
Then honour Him with full surrender, the heart, the will, the life to render
Allegiance, homage, all to Him who saves from sin and deadness.
With gratitude and joy and gladness, tell others eager with great awe,
Of the gift of Love on Golgatha!



Edda Tedford, Canada

GMO's: A Modern Dilemma

"By his [Satan's] ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth." —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, p. 247

What is it called when scientists take a strand of DNA from one species and insert it into another species? This new species, altered from its original, is known as a Genetically Modified Organism. This sounds simple and straightforward until you start asking questions such as "why", "how" and "what".

GENES AND DNA: AN INTRODUCTION

Before we can go any further, let us have a quick lesson on DNA. We have all heard of the term, but what exactly does it mean? All living organisms on this earth, whether they are human, animal or plant, are made up of thousands of different genes. First of all these genes



determine our species, whether we will be a human, a giraffe, or a banana plant. And, once our genes determine our species, then our genes get even more complicated. In humans, our genes dictate those functions that determine our humanness—they determine the structure of our bodies, that we have two legs,

two arms, that we walk upright—they tell our bodies how to function, how each cell in our body should work to keep us alive and healthy. Our genes also determine what is different between us, for example, the colour of our skin, our facial features, our height, our personality, even our predisposition to disease and illness.

It has not been that long since scientists have been able to determine which of our genes are responsible for the various functions of our body. They have been able to isolate the functions of genes in animal and plant species also. Through gene research, scientists are able

to determine which genes produce certain characteristics in plants and animals. Why has this become so important? In humans, scientists are able to determine which certain gene is known to cause a mutation in humans that will potentially cause disease or death; genetic testing can determine whether a pregnancy can result in a baby that may have lifelong problems or may even die at birth. Another example of genetic testing is done in women to determine whether they carry the gene mutation that makes them a very high risk for breast cancer, which allows women to take steps to decrease this risk. So, you can say that the knowledge of genes can be beneficial.

Now that science can determine which characteristics of an organism are beneficial to its existence, and which characteristics can be harmful, the next step is to determine how to use this to benefit mankind. The knowledge of plant genetics has become a field of study for scientists who are concerned about feeding the population of the world. Every year the population increases, and now humans number over seven billion people. Governments and scientists state that it is getting harder to feed the growing number of people in the world. The area available to grow crops and house livestock is not getting any bigger. In fact, with the growing numbers of people, the acreage available for food production is decreasing. How can the world support increasing numbers of people without being able to increase the amount of land to grow the food for the population? The theory put forward was that the only way to increase the amount of available food was to increase the amount of crops produced per acre. It is shown that for every acre of crop planted, about 30% of the crop is lost due to pests, weeds, drought, or other naturally occurring events. How can farmers decrease the amount of crop loss? The only way to do it would be to grow a crop that is resistant to things that

can kill it, to increase the percentage of crops that survive from planting until harvest time.

GENE MANIPULATION

Some species of plants survive difficult growing conditions much better than other species of plants. So, the next thing that scientists asked themselves was, "What if the characteristics of the hardier plant could somehow be transferred to the plant that didn't survive as well, could we boost the production of that second plant species?" Now that science had advanced far enough to determine which genes of a plant produced which characteristic; for example, they could identify the gene that made a plant drought resistant; if they took the drought-resistant gene and placed it into another plant, that plant should be able to resist drought much better than it did previously. Scientists began to experiment, and were able to transfer genes from various organisms onto a number of plants to enhance their ability to survive in tough growing conditions. Genes were taken from other forms of life including other plant forms, insecticides, pesticides, bacteria and viruses that enhance a specific trait that could the plant's ability to survive. Genetically modified food crops have a genetic codes that it different from the original plant DNA.

However, this ability to transfer genes from various organisms onto plants also raised many more questions. As we learned, genes determine "who" and "what" all living organisms are. Even slight differences in genes can radically change what organism is produced. For example, humans and chimpanzees share 99% of the same genes. And look how different we are in our ability to think, to reason, and even what we look like. In fact, humans and banana plants share 47% of their genes. So, if even one gene was to be altered, what does that mean for the species? In essence, the plant or animal is no longer what it was originally determined to be; a new species has being created. These new species are known as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's). Now does the term make more sense? Another vital question is, if humans eat the plants that have been genetically modified, will these plants react differently in our bodies? Can they affect our health in ways that the original plant did not?

HISTORY OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

The first scientific experiment in swapping genes between plant species was in 1992, with the Flavr Savr tomato. After ripe tomatoes are picked off the plant, they only last a few days before they become too ripe,

and begin to rot. Picking tomatoes before they are fully ripe makes for a flavourless tomato. We can see this in winter time when tomatoes travel to Canada from long distances. The only way they survive the journey without rotting is that they need to be picked before they are ripe. This is why tomatoes in the winter are virtually flavourless. They look nice and red, but they taste bland. So, scientists introduced genes from another plant into a tomato plant, hoping it would slow down the ripening process, but still maintain the flavour. It was an unsuccessful first attempt at gene manipulation. The tomatoes quickly became soggy, and the flavour did not improve. After less than a year, the Flavr Savr tomato was discontinued. Since that time, in only a short span of 24 years, science has improved and many "genetically modified" plants have been created.



Let us look at now consider modern genetically modified plants and what they have accomplished. For the rest of the article, these genetically modified plants will be referred to as GMO's, as that is how they are referred to worldwide. Since the introduction of the Flavr Savr tomato, the use of GMO crops has increased 100-fold to 70 million hectares world-wide. GMO'S are a very new technology and there is much controversy over its safety. It can take anywhere from 6-15+ years before a new modified plant is ready for release to be grown in fields as crops. Therefore, the foods that are now GMO crops have only been eaten by humans from 5-15 years. This is too soon to be able to determine what effects these foods may have on the human body. Even the leading scientists around the world disagree on the safety of GMO's.

A prominent Canadian scientist, David Suzuki is quoted as saying, "One small mutation in a human being can determine so much. Even if you move one tiny gene out of an organism into a different one, you are completely changing its context. There is no way to predict how it's going to behave and what the outcome will be." Do we want to be a part of this experiment?

Despite the rapid increase in GMO foods, the technology is still very crude. It is not possible to insert a new gene with any accuracy, and the transfer of new genes can disrupt the finely controlled network of DNA in an organism. Current understanding of the way in which DNA works is extremely limited. Any change to the DNA of an organism at any point can have side effects that are

impossible to predict or control. The new gene could, for example, alter chemical reactions within the cell or disturb cell functions. This could lead to instability, the creation of new toxins or allergens, and changes in nutritional value. One example that has been debated widely is that with the rise of GMO's, the incidence of gluten sensitivities and intolerances has increased. Could these two factors be related? We will address the health effects of GMO's next month.

THE SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION TO WORLD HUNGER

Crop yields can suffer for many different reasons. One reason is that insects eat the crops. Another reason is that weeds take over, or there is too little rain, or some other change in the normal weather pattern. GMO's were created to resist destruction by these means, to increase the percentage of crops planted that would survive until harvest time.

For many years, farmers would spray their crops with selective herbicides, which only killed weeds and spared their crops. However, these herbicides were not always effective in killing all the weeds that could damage crop yields. And, weeds were growing resistant to the current herbicides available.

Along came a company called Monsanto, which came up with a unique solution. It produced a product called "Roundup," which is a "non-selective herbicide that controls a wide variety of weeds, grasses and broadleaf plants." In other words, Roundup kills every plant it comes into contact with, including beneficial plants as well as weeds. But then, how was the farmer to protect the crops that could potentially be killed by Roundup? This is when GMO's became popular. Monsanto came up with their own solution on how to prevent crops being destroyed by Roundup. They also went into the business of producing GMO seeds; these



seeds were genetically modified so that the crops would be resistant to Roundup. Therefore, entire fields could be sprayed with Roundup, which would kill the weeds, but leave the Roundup-resistant crop intact. The seeds that Monsanto produced, that were genetically modified seeds, were known as "Roundup Ready" seeds. In other words, they were "ready" to be used, together with Roundup.

So, what does this all mean? Now, Monsanto is the biggest GMO seed manufacturing company in the world, selling to farmers worldwide. And, in what many people say is the strange twist, Monsanto is also the world's biggest producer of the most widely used herbicide, in

Roundup—ready to be used, without damaging crops that are grown from the seeds they produce. Because Monsanto controls the patent on GMO seeds, they determine the price of their seeds. Many farmers are unable to afford GMO seeds, including in the developing countries. Therefore, the areas which need increased crop yields to produce more food are unable to afford buying GMO seeds. No wonder there are many people who feel that GMO's are just a big cash-grab for large conglomerates such as Monsanto.

HERBICIDES

Can food treated with chemicals be harmful to human health? The main ingredient in Roundup and other herbicides is glyphosate. Monsanto and other companies that produce glyphosate claim that it is not harmful to human health. However, claims that Roundup is safe are misleading. Independent studies show that glyphosate is toxic. Commercial glyphosate formulations now contain extra added ingredients, to increase its effectiveness, and are more toxic than glyphosate alone. GMO crops have increased the use of glyphosate and thus people's exposure to it, presenting a risk that has not been adequately considered in regulating its use. American growers sprayed 280 million pounds of glyphosate on their crops in 2012. That amounts to nearly a pound of glyphosate for every person in the country. World-wide, 650,000 tons of glyphosate was used in 2011. This use is estimated to double by the year 2017.

The toxic effects of glyphosate have been shown to include disruption of hormonal systems and beneficial gut bacteria, damage to DNA, developmental and reproductive toxicity, birth defects, cancer, and neurotoxicity. In March 2015, The International Agency for Research into Cancer (IARC), which falls under the World Health Organisation (WHO), has recently classified glyphosate as a "probable human carcinogen"; its continued use poses unacceptable risks to our health, the health of our families, farmers, farmers' families, farm workers and society. Glyphosate manufacturers claim that the glyphosate in our foods do not stay in our bodies, but we excrete them through our urine and feces. However, in a study done in Europe, evidence suggests that a significant proportion of the population have glyphosate residues in their bodies. If health risks are associated with glyphosate, why is it still available for use? Governments trust the companies that manufacture a product to prove its safety; proving that a product is safe benefits the company, not the consumer.

Another problem with the continued, widespread use of Roundup is that weeds are pretty "smart"—the plants that used to die from the Roundup herbicide treatments

do not die anymore. They have adapted and become tolerant of the product that used to kill them. Sources confirm that as many as 20 new types of weeds nicknamed “SuperWeeds” have been found growing in GMO crop sites. GMO crop farmers have to use more and more glyphosate, or even different herbicides, to control them. Now, new herbicides are having to replace Round-up, which are even more more toxic to human health.

PREVALENCE OF GMO CROPS

How far have GMO crops spread? In North America, 94% of soybean crops are GMO’s, corn 93%, cotton 96%, sugar beets 90%, canola 88%, Hawaiian papaya 50%. A small amount of zucchini and yellow squash are also GMO foods. Much of the alfalfa and Kentucky blue grass, which are fed to animals, are GMO’s. Most people in North America, unless one is mindful of GMO foods, and tries to avoid them, probably eat foods that contain GMO products, every day of their lives. GMO crops are also grown in many other countries. We will discuss this more next month.



What may come as a surprise to many is that wheat is not a GMO food. Because wheat in North America is exported to many countries around the world, they have chosen not to create GMO wheat, as many countries that accept North American wheat have also banned GMO foods. Much of the European Union has strict rules on the growing and importing of GMO foods. Therefore, the reason that GMO wheat does not exist is purely an economical one; farmers in North America would suffer great financial losses if they could not sell their wheat to the rest of the world.

HAVE GMO CROPS INCREASED FOOD PRODUCTION WORLD-WIDE?

Most countries in the world have laws that govern GMO foods. Some countries accept GMO’s without any questions, some countries ban the growing of GMO foods, and some will not allow GMO foods into their country. As food becomes scarcer, more countries are willing to offer their people GMO foods. But, have GMO’s increased the amount of food available to the world? Studies show that GMO foods have not resulted in accomplishing what they were intended to do. Other than a few large companies growing very rich on GMO products, it has not been proven that GMO crops are the answer to the world’s

food supply problem. Just like 50 years ago, prior to the advent of GMO foods, 1 billion people do not have enough food to eat.

Despite their claims GMO crops have not increase their yields. Nor are there any GMO crops that are better than non-GMO crops at tolerating poor soils or challenging climate conditions. Also, there are hungry people, not because food is lacking, but because not all of the food produced goes to feed humans. The two major GMO crops, soy and corn, mostly go into animal feed for livestock, biofuels to power cars, and into processed human foods—products for wealthy nations that have nothing to do with meeting the basic food needs of the poor and hungry. Up to a third of the GMO crops planted go to waste. The increase in biofuels, not a lack of GMO foods, is the main cause of the global food crisis and the ongoing rise in global food prices.

Another cause of hunger is poverty and lack of access to land on which to grow food, which GMO foods cannot change. We already produce more than enough food to feed the world’s population and could produce enough with existing agricultural methods to feed 12 billion people.

IMPACT OF GMO’S ON HEALTH

There are contradicting results from scientists and from studies done on GMO foods. Some studies prove GMO’S are safe, and others prove GMO’S are unsafe. However, who are doing these studies, e.g. who gains from the results? There is not enough research into the effect of new proteins, altered DNA, etc. on our body. This topic has polarized most of the world. People who know about GMO’S are either GMO advocates or GMO opponents. Because of this conflicting information, GMO’S are not trusted. Even governments do not agree. Many governments ban GMO’S while other countries grow GMO crops extensively. When more research is done, what will be the final results? Will those who advocate for GMO’S realize that it was harmful after all? Will the opponents accept that GMO’S are a good thing? It is too soon to tell, but current research is providing us with some important answers, while the world continues to grapple with the dilemma created by the use of GMO foods.

NEXT MONTH: HEALTH EFFECTS OF GMO’S AND THEIR USE AROUND THE WORLD



The Deceitfulness of Sin

“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” Hebrews 3:13

“Mark the words ‘deceitfulness of sin.’ Satan always presents his temptations under the guise of goodness. Beware that you yield not to them. One violation of straightforward truthfulness prepares the way for the second violation, and wrongs are repeated, until the heart of unbelief becomes hardened, and the conscience loses its sensitiveness.

“Let none flatter themselves that the sins of their youth can easily be given up by and by. This is not so. Every sin cherished weakens the character and strengthens the habit; and physical, mental, and moral depravity result. You may repent of the wrong you have done, and set your feet in right paths; but the mold of your mind and your familiarity with evil will make it difficult for you to distinguish between right and wrong. Through the wrong habits you have formed Satan will assail you again and again.

“Many . . . look upon sin as a little thing. . . . Many take counsel of their own wishes and desires and follow their inclinations and finally conclude that sin is not so very offensive, not so terrible and dreadful in the sight of God. Sin that may appear little, that may be termed little by the blunted conscience, is so grievous a thing in the sight of God that nothing but the blood of God's own Son could wash it away. This fact places the true estimate upon sin. God will never tarnish His glory to come to our ideas and views. We shall certainly have to come to His. Just in proportion to the excellence of God is the heinous character of sin.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 81

“Many think it a sufficient excuse for the grossest errors to plead forgetfulness. But do they not, as well as

others, possess intellectual faculties? Then they should discipline their minds to be retentive. It is a sin to forget, a sin to be negligent. If you form a habit of negligence, you may neglect your own soul's salvation and at last find that you are unready for the kingdom of God.” —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 358

“Nothing is more treacherous than the deceitfulness of sin. It is the god of this world that deludes, and blinds, and leads to destruction. Satan does not enter with his array of temptations at once. He disguises these temptations with a semblance of good. He mingles with amusements and folly some little improvements, and deceived souls make it an excuse that great good is to be derived by engaging in them. This is only the deceptive part. It is Satan's hellish arts masked. Beguiled souls take one step, then are prepared for the next. It is so much more pleasant to follow the inclinations of their own hearts than to stand on the defensive, and resist the first insinuation of the wily foe, and thus shut out his in-comings.

“Oh, how Satan watches to see his bait taken so readily, and to see souls walking in the very path he has prepared! He does not want them to give up praying and maintaining a form of religious duties; for he can thus make them more useful in his service. He unites his sophistry and deceptive snares with their experiences and professions, and thus wonderfully advances his cause.” —*Messages to Young People*, p. 83

“‘The wages of sin is death’ (Romans 6:23). Sin, however small it may be esteemed, can be persisted in only at the cost of eternal life.

“Adam and Eve persuaded themselves that in so small a matter as eating of the forbidden fruit there could not result such terrible consequences as God had declared. But this small matter was sin, the transgression of God's immutable and holy law, and it opened the floodgates of death and untold woe upon our world. Age after age there has gone up from our earth a continual cry of mourning, and the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain as a consequence of man's disobedience. Heaven itself has felt the effects of his rebellion against God. Calvary stands as a memorial of the amazing sacrifice required as a propitiation for the transgression of the divine law. Let us not esteem sin as a trivial thing. Are not the hands and feet and side of the Son of the infinite God to bear an eternal testimony before the universe of its untold malignity and curse?”

“O that a right impression might be made upon the minds of young and old in regard to the exceeding sinfulness of sin!

“God is not deceived by appearances of piety. He makes no mistake in His estimation of character. Men may be deceived by those who are corrupt in heart, but God pierces all disguises and reads the inner life. The moral worth of every soul is weighed in the balance of the heavenly sanctuary. Shall not these solemn thoughts have an influence upon us, that we may cease to do evil and learn to do well? There is nothing gained by a life of sin but hopeless despair.

“Let faith lay hold on the promises of God. Jesus is mighty to save His people from their sins. Light from Heaven has illumined our pathway. Sin has been revealed to us by the Word and the Spirit of truth, that we may not be found transgressors of the divine precepts, and there is no opportunity to plead the excuse of ignorance. The command is ‘Depart from iniquity’ (2 Timothy 2:19).” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 255

“We cannot appreciate our Redeemer in the highest sense until we can see Him by the eye of faith reaching to the very depths of human wretchedness, taking upon Himself the nature of man, the capacity to suffer, and by suffering putting forth His divine power to save and lift sinners up to companionship with Himself. O why have we so little sense of sin? Why so little penitence? It is because we do not come nearer the cross of Christ. Conscience becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, because we remain away from Christ. Consider the Captain of our salvation. He suffered shame for us that we might not suffer everlasting shame and contempt. He suffered on the cross, that mercy might

be granted to fallen man. God's justice is preserved, and guilty man is pardoned. Jesus dies that the sinner might live. Shame is borne by the Son of the Highest for the sake of poor sinners, that they might be ransomed and crowned with eternal glory.

“We must hide self in Jesus Christ, and let Him appear in our conversation and character as the One altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand. Our lives, our deportment, will testify how highly we prize Christ and the salvation He has wrought out for us at such a cost to Himself. While we look constantly to Him whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we shall acquire strength to be like Him. We shall bind ourselves in willing, happy, captivity to Jesus Christ.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 287

“Never let us dishonor God by trying so hard to keep ourselves, fixing our eyes upon ourselves, and keeping ourselves constantly in view.

“Look unto Jesus who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Let us not do as we have done, make ourselves miserable over some supposed future tomorrow's burden. Carry your duties of today cheerfully. Today's faith, today's trust in Jesus, we must have. Today I may look and live. Today I will put my trust in God. Today I will rest in quietude and peace kept by the power of God. Say, ‘The Lord will be glorified by my being cheerful and happy in His assurance of His love—today.’” —*The Upward Look*, p. 180

“It is a sin to forget, a sin to be negligent.”

“God seeks our real happiness. If anything lies in the way of this, He sees it must first be removed. He will thwart our purposes and disappoint our expectations and bring us through disappointments and trials to reveal to us ourselves as we are. . . . Sin is the cause of all our woes. If we would have true peace and happiness of mind, sin must be removed.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 81

“Only come to Jesus now, while it is called today. The experience you have been passing through will prove of highest value to you when you yoke up with Christ, to be a laborer together with God. You have delighted in the truth, you have believed the truth, and you believe it still, and hope against hope because the Holy Spirit is striving with you.

“You have made crooked paths for your feet because of temptations, but resist the devil, and he will flee from you; draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh unto you.” —*This Day with God*, p. 38

Ellen G. White

You Can Resist Temptation!

4 steps to resisting temptation – 4 keys to overcoming

“I CAN resist anything except temptation.” This famous quip well describes how some people view temptation—deep down they relish it. Yet others regard temptation as a persistent foe that they would dearly love to defeat. What do you think? When faced with temptation, should you yield or resist?

All temptation is different and they all can lead to problems; especially those concerning immorality. They often end in tragic problems. If an immoral temptation comes knocking, how should you react? The Bible answers: “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.” 1 Thessalonians 4:3–4. How can you cultivate that strength of will? Consider four steps that can help.

STEP 1: GUARD YOUR EYES

John the apostle says about “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” is not of the Father, but is of the world (1 John 2:16). Feeding our eyes on sensual images will only fuel improper desires. Confirming the link between seeing and desiring, Jesus warned: “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Matthew 5:28–29. To resist temptation, we must act decisively and not feast our eyes on provocative images.

Lessons from Bible: The following people failed because they did not guard their eyes:

Eve: The Bible says, “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.” Genesis 3:6

Achan: “When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they [are] hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.” Joshua 7:21

David: “And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king’s house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her.” 2 Samuel 11:2–4

These above illustrations of Eve, Achan, King David, and many others in the Scriptures, show how “the lust of the eyes” is one of the ways to be tempted and to even fall. We need to guard our eyes.

Consider, too, the faithful man, Job, who said: “I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?” Job 31:1. Why not make a similar resolve?

Try this: If you glimpse erotic imagery, quickly avert your eyes. Imitate the Bible writer who prayed: “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way.” Psalm 119:37

STEP 2: GUARD YOUR THOUGHTS

Because we are all imperfect, at times we may struggle with wrong desires. The Bible states: “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” James 1:14–15. How can you avoid being caught in such a downward spiral?

When you have wrong thoughts, stop and pray.

“Even *your thoughts must be brought into subjection to the will of God* and your feelings under the control of reason and religion. Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way without any effort at restraint or discipline. If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and the *thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character.*” –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 310 (emphasis mine)

Lessons from the Bible: “And Amnon was so vexed, that he

fell sick for his sister Tamar; for she was a virgin; and Amnon thought it hard for him to do anything to her." 2 Samuel 13:2. Amnon developed the thought in his heart.

In this case, Try this: When you are plagued with immoral thoughts, immediately stop and pray. Fight wrong thoughts by filling your mind with "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8

STEP 3: GUARD YOUR STEPS

When desire, temptation, and opportunity converge, trouble can easily follow (Proverbs 7:6–23). How can you avoid becoming a victim?

The Bible wisely counsels: "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished." Proverbs 22:3. So, guard your steps. Anticipate situations that could trigger problems, and avoid them (Proverbs 7:25).

Lessons from the Bible:

Eve: "Satan commenced his work with Eve, to cause her to disobey. She first erred in wandering from her husband, next in lingering around the forbidden tree, and next in listening to the voice of the tempter, and even daring to doubt what God had said." —*Early Writings*, p. 147

Dinah: "There is ever great danger in idle association with people of the world. Dinah was curious to know the ways and customs of the surrounding people. This led to unguarded intimacy with them and ended in disgrace. Her danger came from seeking to be free from parental control and supervision, and from disregarding the admonition to remain separate from idolaters and their evil habits. 'Bad company ruins good morals.' 1 Corinthians 15:33. The inhabitants of Canaan were to the family of Jacob what the present world is to the Christian. What is called 'seeing life' may prove in many cases, to be flirting with death. Familiarity with sin blunts the sense and increases the danger of temptation." —*The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1 p.412–413

"Often when Satan has failed of exciting distrust, he succeeds in leading us to presumption. If he can cause us to place ourselves unnecessarily in the way of temptation, he knows that the victory is his. God will preserve all who walk in the path of obedience; but to depart from it is to venture on Satan's ground. There we are sure to fall. The Saviour has bidden us, 'Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.' Mark 14:38. Meditation and prayer would keep us from rushing unbidden into the way of danger, and thus we should be saved from many a defeat." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 126

When this occurs to you, try this: Honestly evaluate your

weaknesses, and plan ahead to avoid situations that could expose you to temptation (Matthew 6:13).

STEP 4: TRUST IN GOD

"So long as we surrender the will to God and trust in His strength and wisdom, we shall be guided in safe paths to fulfill our appointed part in His great plan. But the one who depends upon his own wisdom and power is separating himself from God." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 209

Your strength is wholly in God—in your simple, entire trust in God. "If we make God our strength, we shall have clear perceptions of duty, and unselfish aspirations; our life will be actuated by a noble purpose, which will raise us above sordid motives." —*Gospel Workers*, p. 114

"Jesus came to this earth, marred and seared by the curse, for the purpose of bringing moral power to men. He fought the battle in man's behalf in the wilderness of temptation, and it was the same battle that everyone of us must fight till the close of time. Christ was not overcome in this conflict. He who worked miracles for others, worked none for Himself. He had clothed His divinity with humanity, and He had come to bring divine power to man. He met the enemy at every step with 'It is written.' He used the word of God to thwart the temptations of the evil one. This is where our safety lies. We should study the word of God, and be so filled with it, that we can meet the enemy of our souls with 'It is written,' as did our example. Then we could hope for the grace that God has promised, to enable us to be overcomers." —*The Signs of the Times*, September 30, 1889

HOW CAN WE OVERCOME?

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called." 1 Timothy 6:12

Will God ever fail or let down the expectations of His humble children? NO!

"God knows the feebleness of the body and of the mind, and will require no more of him than He will give him strength to perform." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 97

God has promised to help each one of His followers to gain the victory over every temptation.

By putting forth earnest efforts in resisting temptation, and following God's will, our prayer becomes a prayer of living faith in the power and grace of God through Christ in us to overcome sin.

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James 2:26

It is by resisting the Devil and his temptations, that forces Satan to flee from us as he fled from Christ. As we take this first step in overcoming, we are also cleansing our hands and purifying our hearts from sin.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” James 4:7–8

Not one of us will obtain the grace, mercy, and power from God necessary to overcome sin until we show Him that we are serious, and put forth earnest efforts to resist the temptation!

“By whom we have receive grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for His name.” Romans 1:5

“One that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.” 1 Corinthians 7:25

After we recognize the temptation, we must also recognize that we are weak. We then should pray to God for help in overcoming, yielding and submitting ourselves to God; to do His will and not our own. Then we are to put forth the efforts needed to resist the temptation. It is only at this point that God recognizes our sincerity and sends us grace and power through Christ. This will work in us, combined with our feeble efforts, to aid us in advancing until we will have gained the victory. Thus the four key steps in overcoming sin and temptations are:

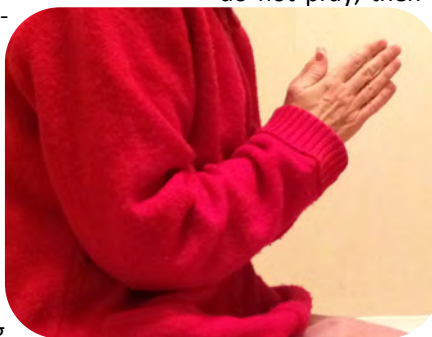
- Recognize the temptation and humbly admit that we are weak;
- Pray to God for grace and strength to overcome;
- Submit our will unto God;
- Resist the temptation by putting forth efforts to do God’s will.

RECOGNIZE, PRAY, SUBMIT, RESIST. R.P.S.R.

A practical example of this process can be seen in the following example: A liar who has spoken dishonestly most of his life decides to accept Christ as His Saviour and has been cleansed from his old life to become a new creature in Christ. He then decides that he will no longer tell lies, but will be honest in everything. A situation occurs at his work in which he made a simple mistake, but instead of admitting it and seeking to correct it, he lets it go, hoping that no one would notice. After a few weeks his boss notices the mistake and then asks him if he knows who made it? The thought comes to him to just say no, and hope that his boss would then give up the search and correct the mistake himself. He decides not to directly answer this question by asking his boss a different question hoping that he will become involved in this different subject and completely forget about the mistake. But the boss asks him again if he knew who made this mistake. Seeing that he cannot escape giving his boss a direct answer he finally tells him that he does not know who did it.

In the above example, when was the sin committed? The sin was not committed until the lie came out of his mouth. The thought to lie was the temptation, and all the prior steps which led up to the lie coming out of his mouth, were an artfully designed trap to lead him to lie and commit sin by disobeying God’s will. Of course, the best time for this man to resist the temptation to lie would have been at the very beginning before the question was even asked. He should have gone to his boss and admitted the mistake immediately. At the first suggestion to do wrong, is the easiest time to overcome through God’s strength and grace; every other step towards the sin becomes more difficult to resist. But even at the point where he could not escape giving a direct answer to his boss, he still could have overcome the temptation and not committed sin.

What he should have done at the very beginning was to recognize that he was being tempted to break God’s will; then pray to God for the grace and strength to resist; then submitted his will to God, and firmly resist the temptation; and then he would not have committed sin. But we must all pray before we try to resist any temptation, because if we do not pray, then we are actually trying to resist it in our own strength!



Thus it is God through Christ who is working in us to do His will. And in being united with Christ and divinity, we can—with Him—gain the victory over all sin.

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Philippians 2:12–13

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13

“Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed (Christ) remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. . . . We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” 1 John 3:6–9; 5:18

We do not have a passive Saviour, who gives us His strength and then leaves us to battle alone. Christ has promised to battle with us against sin and temptation! What a glorious privilege and honor granted to us that we might be united with our God! We are not called to fight this battle alone, but Christ has promised to fight it with and through us! And

if we suffer by crucifying self in order to do God's will, then we would be suffering with Christ!

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:16–18

What a privilege to overcome and struggle with Christ and, in His infinite strength, gain the victory over all sin to the glory of God which shall be revealed in us! If we just could comprehend this glorious truth, that through faith the all-powerful God is working with and in us so that we can overcome sin to the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness to His marvelous light, how could we ever fail and fall into sin again?

"For with God nothing shall be impossible." Luke 1:37

"The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27

"In all these things we are more than conquerors *through Him* that loved us." Romans 8:37

But what happens if we, who profess to serve and worship God alone, should choose to commit sin and disobey God? The only way we could sin, would be for us to reject God and cast Him away from us so that self would be revealed instead. In allowing self instead of Christ to be revealed in us, we would be denying, piercing, and crucifying Christ afresh!

If we could just keep self out of the picture, allowing self and pride to be crucified and mortified, and allowing God to work through and in us—thereby revealing Him and His righteous character to all around us, we would then gain the victory over sin because of our union with Christ which strengthens us.

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily." Colossians 1:26–29

By retaining a living connection with Jesus, allowing Him to live in and through us, His righteousness becomes our righteousness by a living active faith. Thus through His strength we cease to commit sin, and become a partaker of the divine nature, having *escaped* the corruption which is in the world through lust.

Thus there is no room for glory to be given to any one of us, because all the power we used in order to obey God and His law came from God through Christ to us!

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14

Brothers and sisters, we can only live the life of faith and obedience in and through Jesus Christ when we are dead to self.

As an overcomer in the period of Laodicea you have the right to six great rewards:

- 1. To be spared from the seven last plagues which will come upon the earth (Revelation 3:10).**
- 2. To receive a new name when Christ comes (Revelation 2:17).**
- 3. To eat directly from the tree of life (Revelation 2:7).**
- 4. To have power over the nations (Revelation 2:26).**
- 5. To have access to the temple in heaven (Revelation 3:12).**
- 6. To spend eternity with Christ (Revelation 3:21).**

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." 1 John 4:9

"For to me to live is Christ." Philippians 1:21

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20

In allowing self to be revealed in us, instead of Christ and His righteousness, we would be robbing God of the right to live His life through us, and thus we would be stealing away any glory which would have been given to Him!

Without prayer, there is no possible way that we could overcome self and temptation! This the reason why Satan hates prayer so much, and is doing everything he can to keep us from praying—especially when we are tempted. Prayer is the only channel we have to communicate directly to Christ in every time of need. Prayer is therefore the breath of life to the Christian.

Brethren, as sinful and unworthy as we are, we have been given the distinct honour and privilege of talking directly with the King of the entire universe! We can even urge our petitions before Him. There is no other royalty who will allow every subject in their kingdom to approach them at any hour with their petitions and requests.

It is out of love for unworthy people that our Saviour is willing to take all our fervent requests before the Father. And the Father, out of love for Christ and humanity, is willing to

hear and answer our requests according to His will!

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.” Hebrews 4:15–16

What love is this, brethren? And yet, many have come to look upon prayer as a drudgery, or an almost unnecessary item for salvation. But prayer is vital for our spiritual life and for a victorious warfare against every temptation and sin. But it must be the prayer of faith. Without an active exercising of faith in using God’s strength to overcome, it is impossible to please God.

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him.” Hebrews 11:6

“If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain of sin, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Matthew 17:20

“And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4

This road of overcoming is not easy to travel. It is a straight, rough, and narrow pathway. However, yoked up with Christ, the hard rough road becomes plain, and any trials or suffering becomes bearable and the victory sweet.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. . . . Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:3–7, 9 (emphasis mine)

“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only

to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Philipians 1:29

Brethren, let us remember to pray to God for strength to overcome every time we find ourselves tempted, submitting ourselves to Him and then firmly resisting the devil. May we allow God to live in and through us. May we allow the righteousness of Christ to shine from us, that glory may be given to the Lord God of all.

Some may be praying and yet still finding themselves overcome by temptation. If this is your experience now, the various practical ways on how to resist every temptation will help you: remember the promises which God provides for us in this battle against sin and be strong.

May we remember the above truths, especially the four keys to successfully overcome all sin and temptations—R.P.S.R. (Recognize, Pray, Submit, Resist). And may we always remember to pray for strength to overcome, and then escape sin through our Saviour's power and righteousness to the glory of God.

All the praying in the world cannot save one soul from sin if we choose not to resist temptation! This then brings us to the fifth and last part in this series of salvation: THE HUMAN WILL.

“Christ declared to the tempter, 'Get thee behind Me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.'” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 130. We may resist temptation, and

force Satan to depart from us. Jesus gained the victory through submission and faith in God, and by the apostle He says to us, 'Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.' James 4:7–8. We cannot save ourselves from the tempter's power; he has conquered humanity, and when we try to stand in our own strength, we shall become a prey to his devices; but 'the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.' Proverbs 18:10. Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds refuge in that mighty name.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 130

Only overcomers will meet the Lord. May the Lord help us to resist temptations especially in these last and perilous times of the history of the earth! Amen.

Victor Shumbusho- DR Congo





THREE HEAVENS

The Bible speaks about more than one heaven. We find that the Bible refers to three different heavens.

The first heaven we can read of in Genesis 1:8, 20. "And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. . . . And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven." The first heaven is a very real thing. The air above our earth is the first heaven. It is where the birds fly. The Bible calls it the firmament. In 2 Peter 3:10–13 it speaks of a time when this heaven will be destroyed and be made new. "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. . . . Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The second heaven is far above us. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." Psalm 19:1. It is where the sun, moon, and stars are. Or, perhaps we could say it is the whole universe.

The third heaven is above the other two heavens. Paul writes in Ephesians 4:10, "He that descended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." Paul calls the third heaven "paradise" in 2 Corinthians 12:4. He could not describe the third heaven because human words are inadequate.

When the thief on the cross talked with Jesus, he was assured of a place in paradise with Christ. So, paradise, or the third heaven, is where Jesus is now and it is there where Christ will take the righteous when He returns. It is also where the tree of life and God's throne are located. Paradise, or as we call it is the "heaven"

where God is.

It is my wish and prayer that we all will be in "paradise" or the "third heaven" together very soon. Amen.

James Bessec

HEAVEN—WHERE THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SPEND ETERNITY

Have you ever thought about where the righteous will spend eternity?

We all know that in the beginning, God created the earth as a paradise, the beautiful Garden of Eden. But, unfortunately, when our first parents sinned by eating of the forbidden tree, God had to take away the Garden of Eden from them. But, God reveals to us in His word that in the future He will restore the Garden of Eden where not only our first parents, Adam and Eve will live, but all the saints will live there.

We read in Titus 2:14 that when man sinned God had a plan to redeem us. It was God's purpose to redeem the earth also, which suffered the effects of sin. God says, "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD." Numbers 14:21

John saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. It also mentions that there was no more sea. He saw the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God and this will be the home of the saved, forever and ever.

Have you ever wondered what we will be doing in heaven? Of course we will sing hymns and praise God like we do in our earthly church, but how else will we be passing our time? The Bible tells us that the redeemed will build houses and live in them. Ellen White also mentions that we will travel the universe and dis-

cover the mysteries of God. We will also have the privilege to visit other planets where unfallen beings are living. Isn't that exciting?

The Sabbath will be kept in heaven. God tells us in His word that everyone will come and worship before Him from every new moon and every Sabbath, which we all know is the seventh day of the week. God Himself will live with us. The Bible tells us that the tabernacle of God will be with men, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be their God. There will be a tree of life, which bears a new fruit every month. There is probably even going to be some fruits which this earth never had.

In the earth made new there will be no more death, neither sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain. There will not be anything to disturb us for we know that the Satan, the prince of evil and sin, will forever be destroyed when Jesus comes.

We know that time is short and Jesus will soon come back to take us home, and it is my wish and prayer that we will all have a place in that future glorious home, which is the New Jerusalem. Amen.

Bellinda Mompoint

THE NEW JERUSALEM

When Jesus was about to leave this world, He said there were going to be mansions in His Father's house, and He assured the disciples that He was going there to prepare a place for all the righteous before returning to take them to be with Him.

This city is called the New Jerusalem. In Revelation, John describes this city coming down from God out of heaven, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Let us look what this New Jerusalem looks like:

The city is 12,000 furlongs or about 1,500 miles (2414 km) around or 375 miles (603 km) on each side. The walls are measured 144 cubits or about 216 feet (66 meters) high. The sides and the height are equal so the height is in proportion to the other measurements.

The materials in this city are amazing! The walls are jasper and the city itself is mainly made out of gold. The foundations of the city are made out of all kinds of precious stones. If you were to analyze the colour of those stones, you will find that they are basically the colours of the rainbow. So this city looks like it is sitting on a magnificent rainbow.

There are 12 gates to the city and each is guarded by an angel, the Bible says. The names of the 12 tribes of the children of Israel are written on the gates. These huge gates are made out of a single pearl. We are not told how big the gates are, but they will be big enough to let everyone in that is going to be saved.

In Revelation we read that there is no night there. But that doesn't mean that the sun and moon will no longer exist. In Genesis 8:22, we read that day and night will not cease, but the splendor and glory of God outshines the sun, so that they are not seen.

The New Jerusalem will be our capital city back on the new earth. Matthew 5:5 tells us that, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Just think of how beautiful heaven and the New Jerusalem is. Will it be not be worth it just to be there with Jesus and see how amazing it really is?

It is my wish and prayer that we will be saved one day and be able to live in a mansion in the New Jerusalem. Amen.

Tiffany Bessec

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Above: Victor Shumbusho with the children of one family he visited

Burkina Faso



Left: Baptism of two souls by Joe Mensah, Right: Brother Ben and Joe Mensah



Don't Waste Your Golden Years

Pray don't spend your time in sadness,
Weeping in the vale of tears;
Try to make somebody happy,
And don't waste your golden years.

If you meet a weeping willow,
Be a sunflower bright and gay.
And a sunny smile may answer . . .
Send you singing on your way.

Should you walk a lonesome valley,
With the teardrops in your eyes,
You may cheer a heart that's broken,
As you learn to sympathize.

Try to speak a word of comfort,
Which will banish grief and fears,
Helping those who're lost and fallen.
And waste not those precious years.

If you make somebody happy,
Your own heart may find the key,
Which unlocks the realms of gladness,
And a better life to be.

Thus, each little deed of kindness,
Bears its own and just reward;
And the years are never wasted,
In the service of the Lord.

Each hour is bright and precious,
As it blesses, guides and cheers;
So, apply your heart to wisdom,
And don't waste your golden years.

-Emily Hale