

A photograph of a seagull with white and grey feathers and a yellow beak, standing on a large pile of dark brown seaweed. The background shows the ocean with some yellow seaweed floating in the water.

The Reformation
Messenger

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WE BELIEVE: The all-wise loving God created all things in the universe by His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Owner and Sustainer. He met the challenge to His loving leadership and authority by reconciling the world to Himself through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, the Word made flesh. The Holy Spirit, Jesus' representative on earth convicts of sin, guides into truth, and gives strength to overcome all unrighteousness. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with mankind and the standard of all doctrine, the Ten Commandments are the transcript of His character and the foundation of all enduring reform. His people, in harmony with God's word and under the direction of the Holy Spirit call all men everywhere to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus. Bible prophecy reveals that earth's history will soon close with the visible return of Jesus Christ as King to claim all who have accepted Him as the world's only Redeemer and their Lord.

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Jacob's Experience

“And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” Genesis 32:26

“To tell tempted souls of their guilt in no way inspires them with a determination to do better. . . . Hold up before them the possibilities that are theirs. Point them to the heights to which they may attain. Help them to take hold upon the mercy of the Lord, to trust in His forgiving power. Jesus is waiting to clasp them by the hand, waiting to give them power to live a noble, virtuous life.

“God often brings people to a crisis to show them their own weakness and to point them to the Source of strength. If they pray and watch unto prayer, fighting bravely, their weak points will become their strong points. Jacob's experience contains many valuable lessons for us. God taught Jacob that in his own strength he could never gain the victory, that he must wrestle with God for strength from above.

“All night Jacob wrestled with the Angel. Finally the strong wrestler was weakened by a touch on his thigh. He was now disabled and suffering the keenest pain, but he would not loose his hold. All penitent and broken, he clung to the Angel, . . . pleading for a blessing. He must have the assurance that his sin was pardoned. His determination grew stronger, his faith more earnest and persevering, until the very last. The Angel tried to release Himself; He urged, ‘Let Me go, for the day breaketh,’ but Jacob answered, ‘I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.’

“Had this been a boastful, presumptuous confidence, Jacob would have been instantly destroyed; but his was the assurance of one who confesses his own unworthiness, yet trusts to the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God. .

heart of infinite love could not turn away the sinner's plea.

“As an evidence that Jacob had been forgiven, his name was changed from one that was a reminder of his sin to one that commemorated his victory. ‘Thy name,’ said the Angel, ‘shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.’

“Shall we obtain strength from God, and win victory after victory, or shall we try in our own strength, and at last fall back defeated, worn out by vain efforts? Let us, by unre-served surrender to God, obtain the power that everyone must have who conquers in the battle against evil.” – *Christ Triumphant*, p. 89

“We may learn precious lessons in Christian experience by a study of Jacob's repentance and his wrestling with the Angel. Jacob knew his peril. He knew that without the protection of God, he would be helpless before his enemy. He did all in his power to atone for his past transgressions; and then in humiliation and repentance, pleaded for divine protection. With cries and tears he made his supplication to God; and when the strong hand of the Angel was laid upon him, he wrestled with all the energy of his being. . . .

“Let us seek the Lord with all the heart. Let us have faith in God. Let us cultivate a prayerful frame of mind. Let us educate the tongue to speak right words,—words that will encourage and strengthen our fellow men. Let us talk of goodness, and mercy, and the love of God. Put away all unbelieving words, and all that is cheap and common. Then the angels of the Lord will be with us, and the peace of God will fill the soul.” –*The Review and Herald*, March 28, 1899
Ellen G. White



My fellow believers in Christ, I feel impressed to share with you this important lesson. Since you met Jesus Christ, is He (Jesus) still in your life? What is the relationship you have with your Saviour? Do you still have the same strength that you had when you first met Jesus? Or have you already lost Jesus because of some indulgence in sin? Remember that every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before. Let each of us examine ourselves to see if we are still with Christ. Examine whether you are still in the faith that you have professed since you met Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Corinthians 13:5

HAVE YOU LOST JESUS?

Where is Jesus? When we attend holy gatherings like camp meetings, seminars, workshops, and conferences, some people go with Jesus but after when they are leaving the place, they leave without Jesus; while other people go without Jesus but they return home with Jesus in their lives. For people who have lost Jesus in the gatherings, they will search for Him but it may take many days to find Him. Sadly, Jesus could be lost forever to some. The individual has a choice to either maintain Jesus in their company or Jesus may be lost to them forever.

"Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the

feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him." Luke 2:41-45

About this event, in the Spirit of Prophecy we read, "In returning to their home, after they had gone a day's journey, their anxiety was aroused, as they missed Jesus. He had not been seen of them since they left Jerusalem. They supposed he was with the company. Inquiry and search were made among their acquaintance and relatives for their much-loved son; but no trace could be found of Him. They hastened back to Jerusalem, their hearts heavy with sorrow. For one day of neglect they had lost their Son, Jesus, from their company, which cost them three days of anxious search, with sorrowful hearts, before they found Him.

"This should be a lesson to those who are following Christ. If they neglect watchfulness and prayer, and become careless, they may, in one day lose Christ; but it may take many days of anxious, sorrowful search to find Him again, and to enjoy the peace of mind and consolation of His grace that they lost through vain talking, jesting, joking, and evil speaking, or even neglect of prayer." —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 31

Christ warned His disciples to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation.

From the above statement Ellen white continued, "Here is a lesson of instruction to all the followers of Christ. He designed that none of these lessons should be lost, but be written for the benefit of future generations. There is necessity of carefulness of words and actions when Christians are associated together, lest Jesus be forgotten of them, and they pass along careless of the fact that Jesus is not among them. When they are aroused to their condition, they discover that they have journeyed without the presence of Him who could give peace and joy to their hearts, and days are occupied in returning and searching for Him whom they should have retained with them every moment. Jesus will not be found in the company of those who are careless of His presence, and who engage in conversation having no reference to their Redeemer, in whom they profess their hopes of eternal life is centered. Jesus shuns the company of such, so also do the angels who do His commands. . . . The divine rays of light emanating from Jesus are not with them, cheering them with their loving, elevating influence. They are enshrouded in gloom, because their careless, irreverent spirit has separated Jesus from their company and driven the ministering angels from them." *Ibid.*, p. 37

REMEMBER HOW YOU HAVE ACCEPTED JESUS

Brethren, remember how you have fallen and do the first works. Jesus, through John the revelator, said, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." Revelation 2:4-5

Ellen White continued, "Love for Christ need not flag. 'Nevertheless I have some what against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.' Thine is a decay, a declension in holy zeal—not forsaken is the object of it, but lost is the fervor. The first affection of the convert to

Christ is deep, full, and ardent. It is not necessary that this love should become less as knowledge increases, as the more and increased lights shines upon him. This love should become more fervent as he becomes better acquainted with his Lord. . . . It is our work to know our special failings and sins, which cause darkness and spiritual feebleness, and quenched our first love." *—The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 956-957

"Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Corinthians 10:11

"Many who attend meetings of devotion, and have been instructed by the servants of God, and been greatly refreshed and blessed in seeking Jesus, have returned to their homes no better than they left them, because they did not feel the importance of praying and watching thereunto, as they returned to their homes. They frequently feel inclined to complain of others because they realize their loss. Some murmur against God, and do not reproach themselves as being the cause of their own darkness and suffering of mind." *—The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 38

Finally brethren, do you have Jesus with you? Do you talk of Jesus? We are to talk of Jesus in our congregation, in our company, and at home. You must talk of Jesus everywhere you go lest Jesus be forgotten of you. Paul says, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." Colossians 1:23

May God bless us and help us to humble ourselves before Him. Amen.

Jenifer Akello
Uganda

LOOKING FOR YOU. . .

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

Submit: Drawings, Announcements, Reports, Articles, Poems, Photos, Personal Testimonies and Experiences.



Judging from the condition of our world today, it seems that there are very few peacemakers left. Wars, fighting, and riots continue more than ever before. Churches are divided into innumerable numbers of splinter groups. Families are broken down; divorces and separations result when peacemakers are missing. Human hearts are troubled for the same reason. Peace is a very elusive element, and people have not learned how to gain it. Highly educated statesmen and politicians are not able to bring peace into the world. They are not true peacemakers.

Yet Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9

Opposite to peacemakers are troublemakers. "An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends." Proverbs 16:27-28

Sister White writes about a brother in the church. "Brother C wants *his* mind to control others, and unless he can have this privilege he is dissatisfied. He is not a peacemaker. His course will cause more confusion and distrust in a church than any ten persons can counteract. His peculiar temperament is such that he will be picking flaws, and finding fault with all but himself. He will not prosper until he learns the lesson that he ought to have learned years ago, humbleness of mind." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 389

Also, Sister White writes about a sister in the church. "Sister F moves from impulse, and finds fault, and has had too much to say against her brethren and sisters. This will cause confusion in any church. If she could control her own spirit, a great victory would be gained." —*Ibid.*, p. 51

One of the hardest things to do is to be a peacemaker. It

requires much patience, sacrifice, and love. Isaac was an example of a good peacemaker. In Genesis chapter 26 we find a story about him digging a well, and when it was finished, the herdsmen of Gerar came and claimed it to themselves. Instead of fighting for his rights, he moved on and dug another well. Even this the herdsmen of Gerar claimed to themselves; then again, without fighting or arguing, Isaac moved on and dug a third well. So remarkable was this incident that it has been recorded in the Bible as an excellent example of a peacemaker.

We read in 1 Corinthians 13:5, "Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." For a selfish, covetous person this is a hard lesson to learn.

Today, people would ridicule and laugh at Isaac as a foolish, spineless man, a floor mat for others to walk over.

Abigail was a peacemaker. She was the wife of a rich man, Nabal, who owned 3,000 sheep, and 1,000 goats, and much land. When David sent his young men to him for provisions, he insulted them and refused to give anything. David's anger was aroused because he had protected Nabal's property against his enemies, and he wanted to destroy Nabal and his household. When Abigail heard of this she went to meet David, "And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. . . I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days." 1 Samuel 25:24, 28

Abigail was not guilty of the insult to David. She did not even know what her husband had said, but she took the insult upon herself. She confessed the wrong as if she would have done it. This calmed David, and he thanked her for preventing him from shedding blood that day.

Jesus, our peacemaker, also took the guilt of the sinner upon Himself. By His sacrifice He was able to unite the lost human family with God, and make eternal peace.

For a person to be an effective peacemaker, he must be very humble. Jacob humbled himself before his brother, Esau and called him his lord.

A successful peacemaker will also be an overcomer through Christ. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord

will not hear me.” Psalm 66:18. Sometimes a peacemaker takes the guilt upon himself as in the case of Jesus, Abigail, and others like Daniel. Jesus said, “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Matthew 5:23–24

The man with the gift had nothing against his brother, but he remembered that his brother had something against him. Even then it was his duty to go and reconcile with his brother, before offering his gift to God.

Sister White relates the story of Brother Howland. Brother Howland went to the house of a poor fisherman who had not come to the church meetings for some time. “Brother Howland went to his house and knelt before him, saying: ‘My brother, forgive me. What is it that I have done?’ The man took him by the arm and tried to raise him to his feet. ‘No,’ said Brother Howland, ‘what have you against me?’ ‘I have nothing against you.’ ‘But you must have,’ said Brother Howland, ‘because once we could speak to one another, but now you do not speak to me at all, and I want to know what is the matter.’

“‘Get up, Brother Howland,’ he said. ‘No,’ said Brother Howland, ‘I will not.’ ‘Then I must get down,’ he said, and he fell on his knees, and confessed how childish he had been and how many evil surmisings he had cherished. ‘And now,’ he said, ‘I will put them all away.’

“As Brother Howland told this story, his face shone with the glory of the Lord. Just as he had finished, the fisherman and his family came in, and we had an excellent meeting.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 192

Jesus, the true peacemaker, does not accuse, but He defends the guilty one. The words of Jesus to Mary, “neither do I condemn thee,” were like sweet music in the ears of one who was condemned to die for her sins.

Jesus defended the high priest, Joshua, whom Satan accused. “And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And He answered and spake unto those that stood before Him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his

head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.” Zechariah 3:1–5

A peacemaker loves both parties, otherwise his work would not be successful. A peacemaker loves God, and he loves also the sinner, and he tries to bring them into unity.

When the peacemaker hears evil spoken of someone, he immediately goes into action, defending the one defamed, and brings out some of his good qualities, and rather than adding fuel to the fire, he pours water on it.

Normally we do not speak evil of a person whom we love; the love must die first, then evil can be spoken of him. True peacemakers must therefore bring love into the soul, and this love works wonders, uniting the people. The love of God will remove bitterness, and ill-feelings, and then peace becomes possible.

The last church on the earth is called Elijah; his work is to bring peace among the people. “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” Malachi 4:5–6

Peacemakers love their enemies; their work is to change them to be their friends. Yet there is one thing that peacemakers cannot do, they cannot compromise their principles. They know that true peace cannot be purchased by compromise. If peace with the wicked can be secured only by compromise, or by disregarding the law, then let there be a war. Millions of martyrs are witnesses of this war that has continued for 6,000 years. From outside they seem as victims, but in reality they are the winners and their persecutors are the losers.

God is calling each one of us to be a peacemaker. Even one peacemaker in the family or in the church is a great blessing to everyone. There is a kingdom of peace where no troublemakers are allowed, only the ones who will follow the example of Isaac, Jacob, Abigail, and Jesus will be there. If you accept this calling, the peace of heaven that passes all understanding will fill your own heart also. Amen.

Timo Martin





Out Of The Boat

The story of Peter walking on the water is very well known in the Christian the world (Matthew 14:25–32). It has been the subject of many paintings and used in many sermons as an illustration of the importance of keeping our eyes on Jesus. Peter got out the boat to walk on the water, looked back at the disciples and when he saw the wind and waves (having taken his eyes off Jesus) he began to sink. Jesus reached out His hand and took Peter and together they returned to the boat.

Peter, before his conversion, was known as being self-confident and rash; quick to say and do things before thinking things through very well. He was often reproved by Jesus, “He turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me.” Matthew 16:23

In the unconverted Peter, Jesus saw important character traits that would be suitable for leadership in His work; therefore Jesus carefully trained Peter, so that one day he could fulfil the responsibilities placed upon his shoulders.

But the question is, why did Peter want to get out of the boat?

“Ardent Peter is nearly *beside himself with delight*. He sees his Master boldly treading the foam-wreathed waves, coming to save His followers, and *he loves his Lord as never before. He yearns to embrace and worship Him. He longs to meet Him and walk by His side upon the stormy water*. He cries, ‘Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.’ Jesus granted his request; but Peter had taken only a step upon the surface of the boiling deep, when he looked back proudly toward his companions to see if they were watching his movements, and admiring the ease with which he trod upon the yielding water.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 269 (emphasis mine)

Peter loved his Lord so much; he was willing to do what seemed odd, bizarre and unconventional. He did not care what others thought of him. He did not care of the practicality of what he was about to do. He did not think it through, or plan it. All he cared about was that he loved his Saviour and wanted to embrace Him, cost what it may. He stepped out of the boat. His love was “strong as death.” Song of Solomon 8:6. The other disciples may have questioned his sanity, but he did not care. “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38–39. The Lord still had lessons to reveal to Peter about his character in this incident. Although he was courageous enough to step out, his pride caused him to fall, but step out he did—to do what no man had ever done before.

“Looking unto Jesus, Peter walks securely; but as in *self-satisfaction* he glances back toward his companions in the boat, his eyes are turned from the Saviour. The wind is boisterous. The waves roll high, and come directly between him and the Master; and he is afraid. For a moment Christ is hidden from his view, and *his faith gives way*. He begins to sink.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 381 (emphasis mine)

“In taking his eyes from Jesus, they fell upon the boisterous waves that seemed greedily threatening to swallow him; their roaring filled his ears, his head swam, his heart failed him with fear. As he is sinking, he recovers presence of mind sufficient to remember that there is One near who can rescue him. He stretches out his arms toward Jesus, crying, ‘Lord, save me, or I perish!’ The pitying Saviour grasps the trembling hands that are reached toward Him, and lifts the sinking form beside his own. Never does

that kindly face and that arm of strength turn from the supplicating hands that are stretched out for mercy. Peter clings to his Lord with humble trust, while Jesus mildly reproaches him: 'O thou of little faith! *wherefore didst thou doubt?*'" –*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 269 (emphasis mine)

"The trembling disciple now clings firmly to the hand of the Master till they are both safely seated in the boat among their joyful companions. But Peter was subdued and silent; he had no reason to boast over his fellows, *for he had very nearly lost his life through exaltation and unbelief*. When he took his eyes from Jesus in order to note the admiration of others, he lost guidance, and doubt and fear seized upon him. So it is in the Christian life; nothing but an eye firmly fixed upon the Saviour will enable us to tread the stormy billows of the world." – *Ibid*, p. 270 (emphasis mine)

It was "self satisfaction," "doubt", "exaltation and unbelief" and lack of faith that nearly cost him his life. But in the moment of crisis he had the presence of mind to call out to the Lord to save him.

"When trouble comes upon us, how often we are like Peter! We look upon the waves, instead of keeping our eyes fixed upon the Saviour. Our footsteps slide, and the proud waters go over our souls. Jesus did not bid Peter come to



Him that he should perish; He does not call us to follow Him, and then forsake us. 'Fear not,' He says; 'for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through

the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.' Isaiah 43:1–3." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 381–382

Peter could have done a lot more walking on water if he would have kept his eyes on Jesus. But at least he got out of the boat. He took a step of faith initially and stepped out. Even though his faith failed while walking on the water because he took his eyes off of Jesus, the fact remains that he *did* get out. Although it was stormy and dark, Peter still got out of the boat, because of his love and faith in Jesus. Peter believed that if Jesus was right there with Him during the storm in the dark all would be well, because Jesus was going able to help him out. That is why Peter wanted Jesus to tell him to "come" to Him, walking on

water; because Peter believed that if Jesus was able to walk on water in a middle of a dark sea storm, He was well able to take care of him in the dark sea storm also. And because Peter did get out of the boat, he received a blessing of being the only mortal man to ever have walked on water.

No matter how adverse your situation may be, Jesus will be there with you to help you out. You may be in a situation that is dark and you cannot see your way out, but you do not need to fear, for Jesus will be right there to guide you through. Remember, you are not in it alone, for Jesus is standing right there by your side to help you out.

THE RIGHTEOUS RISETH AGAIN

"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again." Proverbs 24:16. We do not read here, "*If* a just man falleth," but we read, "*For* a just man falleth."

"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me." Micah 7:8. And here again it does not read, "*If* I fall" but "*When* I fall".

Peter fell into the water on that dark stormy night, but at least he got up and out by calling to Jesus. How many other just and faithful men in the Bible have also fallen spiritually at some point in their lives? There are many famous men in the Bible who were very close to God, but fell terribly, such as David, Moses, Noah, and Abraham, yet they got up again when they called unto the Lord for help. They found forgiveness in Christ and continued on their spiritual journey. "Although the patriarchs and apostles were subject to human frailties, yet through faith they obtained a good report, fought their battles in the strength of the Lord, and conquered gloriously. Thus may we trust in the virtue of the atoning sacrifice and be overcomers in the name of Jesus." –*Conflict and Courage*, p. 368

On the heavenward journey the pathway is not smooth. There are obstacles we may trip over across the pathway; pitfalls we may fall into. We may fall, but we get up. But if we make no effort at all, we will not have to face those obstacles. Some would rather just sit at home and not take a chance at falling.

Yet, we are given hope. "The fallen must be led to feel that it is not too late for them to be men. Christ honored man with His confidence and thus placed him on his honor. Even those who had fallen the lowest He treated with respect. It was a continual pain to Christ to be brought into contact with enmity, depravity, and impurity; but never did He utter one expression to show that His sensibilities were shocked or His refined tastes offended. Whatever the evil habits, the strong prejudices, or the

overbearing passions of human beings, He met them all with pitying tenderness. As we partake of His Spirit, we shall regard all men as brethren, with similar temptations and trials, often falling and struggling to rise again, battling with discouragements and difficulties, craving sympathy and help. Then we shall meet them in such a way as not to discourage or repel them, but to awaken hope in their hearts.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 166

“If they fail once, twice, or thrice, censure not. Already discouragement is doing its work and tempting them to say, ‘It is of no use; I can’t do it.’ This is not the time for censure. The will is becoming weakened. It needs the spur of encouraging, cheerful, hopeful words, as, ‘Never mind the mistakes you have made. You are but a learner, and must expect to make blunders. Try again. Put your mind on what you are doing. Be very careful, and you will certainly succeed.’” —*Child Guidance*, p. 374–375

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1

OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

At least Peter got out of the boat, out of his comfort zone. He ventured where the others would not dare to go. The other disciples were not as courageous or rash.

Lloyd Jones is quoted as saying, “Men who try to do something and fail are infinitely better than those who try to do nothing and succeed.”

And, Robert H. Schuller: “I’d rather attempt to do something great and fail than to attempt to do nothing and succeed.”

It takes courage to step out and risk failure. “Many who are qualified to do excellent work accomplish little because they attempt little.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 498. “Many become inefficient by evading responsibilities for fear of failure.” —*Ibid.*, p. 500

The Lord is looking for courageous men and women, who are willing to step out of their comfortable boat on dark stormy nights. “Men of stamina are wanted, men who will not wait to have their way smoothed and every obstacle removed, men who will inspire with fresh zeal the flagging efforts of dispirited workers, men whose hearts are warm with Christian love and whose hands are strong to do their Master’s work.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 497

The Lord is looking for people with energy, and courage; people willing to do and dare anything for their Lord; people who will go to the ends of the earth if led by the Spirit. Who will answer that call today?

“Christian life is more than many take it to be. It does not consist wholly in gentleness, patience, meekness, and

kindliness. These graces are essential; but there is need also of courage, force, energy, and perseverance. The path that Christ marks out is a narrow, self-denying path. To enter that path and press on through difficulties and discouragements requires men who are more than weaklings. . . .

“Some who engage in missionary service are weak, nerveless, spiritless, easily discouraged. They lack push. They have not those positive traits of character that give power to do something—the spirit and energy that kindle enthusiasm. Those who would win success must be courageous and hopeful. They should cultivate not only the passive but the active virtues. While they are to give the soft answer that turns away wrath, they must possess the courage of a hero to resist evil. With the charity that endures all things, they need the force of character that will make their influence a positive power.

“Some have no firmness of character. Their plans and purposes have no definite form and consistency. They are of but little practical use in the world. This weakness, indecision, and inefficiency should be overcome. There is in true Christian character an indomitableness that cannot be molded or subdued by adverse circumstances. We must have moral backbone, an integrity that cannot be flattered, bribed, or terrified.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 497–498

The Lord has little use for those who are studying their own ease, with the work of the Lord only a secondary issue in their lives when it is convenient for them. “Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.” Judges 5:23. “Many of our missionary enterprises are crippled because there are so many who refuse to enter the doors of usefulness that are opened before them. Let all who believe the truth begin to work. Do the work that lies nearest you; do anything, however humble, rather than be, like the men of Meroz, do-nothings.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 246

“And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will He do evil.” Zephaniah 1:12. “The Lord has no place in His work for those who have a greater desire to win the crown than to bear the cross. He wants men who are more intent upon doing their duty than upon receiving their reward—men who are more solicitous for principle than for promotion.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 476

As we near the close of this earth’s history, evil is waxing worse and worse. False Protestantism is increasingly be-

coming more corrupt. The difference between the true followers of God and the world will become greater. God's people will be viewed as different and it takes great courage to stand for the Lord. Many fear losing friends, family, jobs, material goods, etc. if they decide to follow the path-way that our Saviour walked. It is too straight and narrow, yet only those who are willing to sever every earthly tie, will be saved for time and eternity. Jesus is calling the youth to a great challenge today. He wants an army of youth to finish the work on this earth; He is looking for youth with courage, stamina, strength and no fear of being different. We must deny ourselves, pick up our crosses and follow the Lord today; being willing to stand alone if all others do not support us. God is with us.

And finally, back to Peter: Peter had many good character traits that Jesus could see if they were channeled correctly. Jesus could see that when Peter was converted those traits would be very useful in His cause.

"You know what Peter's character was, how strikingly his peculiar traits were developed. Before his great fall he was always dictatorial and forward, speaking unadvisedly, from the impulse of the moment. He was always ready to correct others, and to express his mind before he had a clear comprehension of himself or of what he had to say. But Peter was converted, and the converted Peter was very different from the rash, impetuous Peter. He retained his former fervor, but now the grace of Christ regulated his zeal. Instead of being impetuous, self-confident, and self-exalted, he was calm, self-possessed, and teachable. He could then feed the lambs as well as the sheep of Christ's flock." —*Gospel Workers*, p. 366

"Jesus read the character of His disciples. He knew how sorely their faith was to be tried. In this incident on the sea He desired to reveal to Peter his own weakness,—to show that his safety was in constant dependence upon divine power. Amid the storms of temptation he could walk safely only as in utter self-distrust he should rely upon the Saviour. It was on the point where he thought himself strong that Peter was weak; and not until he discerned his weakness could he realize his need of dependence upon Christ. Had he learned the lesson that Jesus sought to teach him in that experience on the sea, he would not have failed when the great test came upon him." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 382

We may ridicule Peter; we may think he was out of his mind. We may deplore his lack of faith while walking on the water, but he is the only one who had courage to step out of the boat—step out of his comfort zone and do the unthinkable—walk on the water. Would you have done so? And so it will be in the end of time, men and women will step out of their boat, doing the unexpected; doing what others may think is "insanity". They may work in a

way that is different from what we may think is the "normal" way of doing things. Who are we to judge when we see people do the unexpected, as long as they are not violating principle?

"And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in My name, that can lightly speak evil of Me. For he that is not against us is on our part." Mark 9:38–40. We cannot put the Holy Spirit in a box, telling Him how the work must be done. The work must be done under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

"Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much *out of the common order of things*, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." —*Last Day Events*, p. 203 (emphasis mine)

The Lord has a work for you, an individual plan. How willing are you to follow your Master anywhere that He may lead you? Do you love your Master enough to get out of your boat? To step out of your comfort zone? To the unthinkable? Regardless what others might think or say of you? To venture where it seems humanly impossible? Or ridiculous to the human way of thinking? "With God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26. We need to listen, to trust and be willing to go anywhere, and everywhere He leads us.

Sure, we must not be impulsive like the unconverted Peter and act without thinking; however, we need the courage and the boldness of the converted Peter to do and go where others may dare not. Our love for our Master must be as strong as was Peter's, so that we would be willing to walk on the water for the Lord if He asks. Amen.



Wendy Eaton



Daniel 10: An Encounter with Jesus



Daniel chapter 10 is a unique passage of Scripture that communicates the nature of a spiritual battle that is going on. In this chapter the veil is drawn aside and we are given a glimpse into the invisible world. According to the Biblical perspective, our visible world is surrounded by invisible or unseen angelic beings that are engaging in a continual battle. On one side, there are those angels who are loyal to God that fight to protect God's people; and on the other side we find Satan and his evil angels fighting against God's people, pretending that this world is his. It is a cosmic conflict in which we are involved. There is good news though, as we study this chapter; because, as we know, Jesus always wins and Satan always loses. That is the theme of the books of Revelation and Daniel.

Here in Daniel chapter 10, Daniel the prophet has an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is very interesting though, when you look at this chapter, because you do not find a lot of prophecy as we have seen and studied in the previous chapters. Here we find a man with the spirit of sanctification and we learn what it is like when sanctification occurs in our life, which is relative to our Christian experience. Remember, Paul makes it clear "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14

"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision." Daniel 10:1. Notice

that Cyrus is the king of Persia at the time of this occurrence. Continuing on, "In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks." Daniel 10:2. We do know that Daniel did not always understand the vision he was given as we studied previously in Daniel 8 and 9; and so here we find Daniel praying and fasting. He is a good example that we should follow when we struggle with something in our Christian life. Whether you are struggling with sin or with understanding some Scripture, you need to know that Jesus is with you. He is there to help you in your time of need. Do you have a need in your life? Do you struggle with sin? You do not need to be afraid because Jesus will give you understanding and power to overcome and to be overcomers in this life.

We find Daniel the prophet in a situation in which he had been mourning for three full weeks. "I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." Daniel 10:3. Daniel does not tell us yet in this verse why he ended the fast, but the Scripture goes on in verses 10–11 to tell us why. "And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling." From the

context, we know that the person who was sent is none other than the angel Gabriel, sent by God to help Daniel understand the vision. So, Gabriel comes back, he is touching Daniel, Daniel is trembling but Gabriel wants Daniel to know that he is greatly beloved by God.

There is then an interaction between Daniel and this angel Gabriel, in the next verse, “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.” Daniel 10:12. Here we find Daniel earnestly praying, asking God to do something. He, in fact, fasts as well as prays. This is the call of the hour today for our people who are awaiting the coming of Jesus. It is a call to prayer; a call to treat our bodies as the temples of the Holy Ghost; in fasting. In the hour that we are living in, just before the coming of Christ, God is calling us to dedicate mind, body, spirit, and soul unreservedly to Him. Yes, we too, like Daniel, must pray and long for deliverance. It has been a long time since Jesus promised to come again (John 14:1–3) and we, like Daniel, are awaiting His return. Maybe there have been moments in your life when you have been reading the Bible but not understanding what you read. Maybe you prayed and fasted but received no answer yet. Do not be discouraged—God is sending help from above when we look upon Jesus. God is sending His angels as that beautiful promise states, “Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.” Exodus 23:20. In the Bible that “way” represents Jesus—He said; “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness.” Isaiah 35:8. This is where God has promised to bring us.

Daniel prayed for three weeks with no apparent answer to his prayer, and then appeared a majestic being of dazzling brightness (Daniel 10:5–9). The brightness is so magnificent, so great, that Daniel actually faints. Who could this being be? What being of dazzling brightness would consider Daniel so precious as to come down from heaven to be by his side, as he persisted in prayer? Who was this person who came to encourage Daniel, to lift his spirit, to give him hope? We find a clue to the identity of this being in Revelation 1:13. “And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.” This figure is referred to as the Son of Man—Jesus Christ!

Gabriel is explaining to Daniel why it was 21 days be-

fore his petition was heard and an answer came, and further explained why he was delayed in coming to him. “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” Daniel 10:13

I mentioned at the beginning that this event occurred during the time of the kingdom of Persia under Cyrus. We previously learned that the Medes and the Persians overthrew the Babylonians sometime around 538 B.C., so we know that the 3rd year of Cyrus would be 535 B.C. We also remember that Daniel went into captivity in 605 B.C. This means that 70 years have now gone by, and Daniel is approximately 87 years old. The 70 years are significant, because Jeremiah the prophet predicted that Jerusalem would be in captivity for 70 years. Daniel, aware of these predictions, knows that the captivity is coming to an end, but at this point, three years into Media-Persian rule, there has been no release. So, Daniel longingly waits. Who is this prince of the kingdom of Persia that Gabriel is referring to?

“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” John 12:31. This verse tells us of Jesus’ response when Satan had come to tempt Him. The prince of this world is Satan. And if Satan is the prince of this world, he was the prince of the Kingdom of Persia. In other words, Satan was resisting Daniel’s prayers from being answered, because he was influencing the mind of King Cyrus not to allow the Israelites to go. Something interesting here to be noticed; we have seen the “prince” of the kingdom of Persia that is Satan is not alone in this battle, because the last part of verse 13 in Daniel 10 tells us about the “kings” of Persia. Plural form—these are the demons that have fallen with Satan when they rebelled in Heaven (Revelation 12:7–9).

“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.” Daniel 10:14. This takes us from the time of Daniel down through the centuries to our time. It involves you and me as much as it did Daniel. We are all part of spiritual Israel, which includes all followers of Jesus throughout history up until in our time—the latter days.

“Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will show thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth

with me in these things, but Michael your prince.” Daniel 10:20–21. But, who is this Michael mentioned here? Who is this mighty conqueror who descends, leading the armies of heaven against Satan? Whoever Michael is, he has stronger power than Satan. Michael is mentioned in the Bible in only five places, but in every case, he is mentioned in conflict with Satan. “And there was war in heaven: Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:7–9. “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” Jude 1:9

Here we see Michael the archangel contending or fighting with the devil for the body of Moses. Michael has the power to overthrow Satan and to resurrect Moses from the dead. We know Moses was resurrected, because the Bible says his grave could not be found, and later, he appeared along with Jesus and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. Michael has the authority to cast Satan out of heaven, and has authority over death. Only one person can do these things and that person is Jesus Christ! Jesus has power over Satan, and He has authority to raise anybody from the dead. But, why then does it say Michael here instead of Jesus? First, the word Michael means “one who is like God”. Is Jesus like God? Yes, He is. But the Bible also says that Michael is the archangel. This does not mean that Jesus was a created being; one of the created angels. The definition of the word archangel means commander and chief of the angels. Jesus never had a beginning, and He will never have an ending, but one of Christ’s functions is as the Commander and Chief of the angels, the Archangel. “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17

No doubt Michael is Jesus Himself as we have read. It is just one of the names of Jesus. He is also known as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Prince of Peace, and the Good Shepherd. He is known as the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, and Immanuel. There are many names for Jesus, because Jesus is everything to us.

Daniel chapter 10 is an impressive chapter that draws back the veil into the invisible, unseen world. We cannot physically see what is going on behind the scenes, but with our eyes of enlightenment through the Scriptures we are able to spiritually see behind the veil, so that we may have an understanding of what is going on.

When we pray we are not to use the same set routine or repetitive phrases because each situation in our life, or the lives of our family, friends, or other people is unique. Our words of prayer give God access to intervene in our life or in the life of the person we pray for in a specific manner, due to the individual circumstances at the time. So, when we pray for others, we have the privilege of opening the door in the people’s lives for God to give angels access, to hopefully have an impact.

I would like, in closing, to ask you to pray for a person or two, somebody you may know that needs to encounter the love of Christ. Somebody you may know that needs Divine intervention, because we have seen in Daniel’s prayer how God delegated help for Daniel and his people. In the last days, there will be great battles and struggles. Men’s minds will be engulfed with darkness, and Satan himself, knowing that the time is short, will take command of the battle. But Daniel records these words of encouragement, “And said, O



man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.” Daniel 10:19. God says to us also, “Be strong—yes, be strong!” In the battle between good and evil, between Christ and Satan, we will sometimes feel weak and struggle to go on. In these times when we feel Satan’s temptations

overwhelming us, when we feel Satan’s power coming over us like a wave of the sea, we must go on our knees and seek God. It is then that Michael will come. Yes, the Mighty Conqueror will come in power, giving us strength and beating back the forces of evil, and victory will be ours. Praise His Holy Name! Amen!

Nicholas Anca

Peer Pressure



With God's help, we want to look at how a Christian youth can overcome peer pressure in this present day.

WHAT IS PEER PRESSURE?

Peer pressure is the influence exerted on you by your age mate(s), encouraging you to change your attitudes, values, or behaviors in order to conform to their group norms. It could either be positive or negative. This article, however, is on how a Christian youth can avoid negative peer pressure. It can come from friends in schools or even someone you have seen on TV and admire.

The fact is, the world of the youth is interesting and challenging. It is a world filled with potentials and opportunities to be explored and developed for wonderful results. Everywhere in the world, the great potentials for the young population, which is about half of the world's population, are recognized. This is why so much should be committed to ensuring that these potentials are fully tapped into and developed, because therein lies strength, growth, and development of every organization, or nation.

Sadly, many young people fail to recognize the great opportunities that they have and the wonderful future that lies ahead of them if these opportunities are properly harnessed and utilized. Many of them are overwhelmed by the euphoria and ecstasy of their age, and also peer pressure which has blindfolded them to the realities of life. Others go on without awakening from the stupor their fantasies have drawn them into; thus wasting their whole lives filled with untapped potentials. Some wake up too late to realize that they had wasted a good part of their lives, that would definitely have made them better than what they are, and have struggled so hard to come to terms with the realities of life.

A former schoolmate of mine named Hawa, came from a godly home. She was very beautiful, brilliant and studious. She was one of the best students in my senior

school days, however, she had a problem with peer pressure. There were some rich students that used to come with vehicles to school, and buy good food; they were admired by virtually everyone. This set of boys wanted to play with Hawa and destroy her future. I was a good friend to Hawa and when the boys started proposing love to her, I told her the truth, that these boys would not marry her. I encouraged her to focus on her studies and dream big. I tried all I could to make her believe in herself and study, but to no avail. She had a friend who was always advising her negatively. After a few weeks, I heard a rumor that she was dating one of the rich boys, David, who was always smoking and gambling on the streets after school. This was very troubling for me because I knew in my spirit that it was a wrong decision on the part of Hawa to be with that boy. I tried talking to her a few times, but to no avail. I started praying for her, knowing full well she needed prayers at such a time. She had another female friend who pressured her a lot and since they were both female, they spent much time together. I only saw her a few times each week. After a while the boy introduced her to smoking, and a lot of negative activities. Her performance in school went down drastically; she became addicted to all sorts of hard drugs.

One fateful day, as we were in the school, we saw some police officers come looking for David, because they had gotten information that he deals hard drugs. After they searched him thoroughly, they found nothing on him. As the police were about to leave the school premises, Hawa walked in; David had put his hard drugs in her bag unawares. The police had to search her too, since she was his girlfriend, to ensure that he was totally clean. As they opened her bag, there were his hard drugs in there. She started crying, but it was too late. The police then arrested both of them. After much prayer by her loved ones she was later released, but that scar remained on her for a very long time. This is what happens when a

peer influences you negatively. As Christian youth, our light should shine! Others may be influenced, but we cannot. "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:15. We should not allow friends or circumstances to lead us into sin.

HOW DO I OVERCOME PEER PRESURE IN SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND UNIVERSITIES AND AT WORK PLACES?

1. DECISION: It all starts with decision. The decision comes from the heart. You must make up your mind! To resolve is to decide firmly on a course of action. As a young person with a promising future, you must decide firmly not to be affected by the corruption in the institute of your studies or work. You must constantly remember that, though you are in the world, you are not of the world; you are destined for greatness. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." Daniel 1:8. Daniel had an understanding on how to overcome the flesh; therefore, he made a decisive choice—deciding from the inside (heart). You must make up your mind as a youth to be holy, and serve the Lord anywhere. It is a choice, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15

2. KNOW YOUR GOD: Know your God and exactly what you believe in. Make sure anyone who wants to become your friend, knows from the very onset that your beliefs and obedience to God come first before anything else in your life. For Joseph to succeed he needed to know the God he served. "There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Genesis 39:9

Let us see the story of the three Hebrew children: "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Daniel 3:16–18. These young men knew their God very well and because of that they were not afraid of what the world would do to them. They went further to say, even if God chooses not to deliver them, they will not worship the king's idol. Until a Christian youth is able to understand this, he/she might end up in the hands of the devil.

"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he

corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Daniel 11:32. "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29. Read your Bible and pray every day. It will bring you closer to God. The word of God is the ultimate safeguard against peer pressure.

3. STAND OUT: Standing out is not always easy but you must stand out to succeed. Stand up to what you believe in. Be proud of who you are. It is the best way of life to be able to do this without regret. Do not let anyone or anything change your mind, and do not let them make you doubt your abilities. Do not be ashamed of yourself or your faith in Christ. Be courageous! "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17

"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Galatians 1:10. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe." Proverbs 29:25

4. CONFIDENCE: Be confident in yourself. Say, "no" to negative peer pressure and stand your ground. The grace to do so is available if only you are ready to say "no" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. Be bold in the presence of your peers and always speak with confidence. Signs of timidity and weakness will encourage the person pressuring you to continue until he/she succeeds. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus 2:11–12

Ask for this grace in prayer. And when you ask, do not pray casually. Cry out with all your might for wisdom. God will give it to you. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Proverbs 1:10

"Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." Psalms 27:3

5. DO YOUR DO: Doing what everyone else does might look fun, but if you know in your spirit that it is the wrong thing to do, you must summon the courage to say no. Then you must do what is right. Do not copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know and enjoy the person you are. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by

the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:2. In my college days, people knew me with a slogan, “Watch me do my do” meaning, watch and see how I do things in a godly way. There is a saying people say, “If you go to Rome, you must behave like the Romans do.” Well, listen to my own version. “If you go to Rome as a Believer, teach the Romans how to behave well.” You cannot follow the crowd and disobey God! Do your do and stay happy in the Lord. Do not compromise your salvation for the pleasures of this evil world, take your stand as a youth and God will lift you up as He did for your brothers, Joseph, Daniel, Job, David, and Solomon, etc.

6. RECOGNIZE YOUR GOOD FRIENDS: Hang out with close friends, who should have the same mindset as you do. If your companions are also trying to do the right thing it will become less likely for you to be negatively peer pressured. In fact, their good qualities will rub off onto you in a matter of time. Become wise by walking with the wise; hang out with fools and watch your life fall to pieces. Do not be deceived and misled! Evil companionship’s communion and associations corrupt and deprave good manners and morals and character. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.” 1 Corinthians 15:33

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night.” Psalm 1:1–2

Happy are those who reject the advice of evil people, who do not follow the example of sinners or join those who have no use for God. Instead, they find joy in obeying the Law of the Lord, and they study it day and night. Show me your friend, and I will tell you who you are. There are no two ways about it. If your friends are believers, your faith will increase; likewise, if your friends are unbelievers, gradually you might fall away. Heaven is a race; you do not need people that will slow down your speed. Get them off your road and keep running with Jesus.

7. DO NOT BE A RECIPIENT: Do not accept invitations to parties with lots of people you do not know. Do not associate with people who use bad language, swear all the time, drink, do drugs, have dirty minds, watch dirty movies, etc. It is impossible to continue to resist the constant temptations of people who constantly do wrong if you are always hanging out with them. Avoid situations that may cause you to

give in to peer pressure. For instance, if an acquaintance or friend asks you to smoke or drink, think about what it will do to your body; be strong to resist temptations. For your body is the temple of the Lord. Associate with people but do not welcome and foster all types of friendships. The person that will destroy you will not come as an enemy, they will come as a friend. The wolf in sheep’s clothing will break your bones if care is not taken. When you are unsure of what to do, or need help, at any point in time, do not be afraid to go to your parent, pastor, a youth group pastor or leader, Christian friends, or a trusted Christian adult for guidance, good lecturers and, above all, go to God your heavenly Father.

For what will it profit you, if you gain the pleasures of today and forfeit your future? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.” James 1:12. Happy are those who remain faithful under trials, because when they succeed in passing their tests, they will receive as their reward the life which God has promised to those who love Him.

With God’s help, you will be faithful and overcome all negative peer pressures. You will not fail God!

Be prudent in your interactions and inter-personal relationships!

Ebrima John Jaiteh, The Gambia

I want to thank God for the strength and grace to write. To Him all be glory and adoration!

I also want to thank my mother in the Lord, Wendy Eaton may grace and strength be multiplied in your life and family! I want to appreciate all the church members especially in Africa. Not forgetting Brother Christian Godoxor and my Pastor Judicael Mutapayi Luboya



Photo courtesy of: LOUD CRY - Canadian Reform Youth

The Science of Prevailing Prayer

Why Some Prayers Go Unanswered? - Hindrances to prayer

Both the Bible and real-life experiences show us that God answers prayers. The Bible says: “He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him: He also will hear their cry, and will save them.” Psalm 145:19. But whether God will answer you when you pray is largely up to you.

Much that is called “prayer not answered” is not real prayer in the first place. Much that goes under the name of prayer is offered merely as a form, with neither care nor expectation that it be answered. Those who pray thus will not care to watch to see whether their prayers are answered. Prayer is human speech about human concerns directed to God. It therefore involves human beings, God, and the course of events past, present, and future.

“Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. When Jesus was upon the earth, He taught His disciples how to pray.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 93

Do you really understand and know what prayer is? I was surprised recently as I was reading about what some people believe regarding prayer. It is a popular belief that you can pray however you choose. It said that whether you are sleeping, dressed or naked, kneeling down or walking, speaking loudly or silently, God will hear and answer. Is this necessarily true? Although we are to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17), and can lift our petitions to our heavenly Father wherever we may be, we must not neglect the private time on our knees, nor the formal worship times in the church. Jesus, our Brother, knelt down for prayers; Paul and the entire congregation, and many others did also (Acts 21:5). Do we consider the fact that God reigns as Master of the Universe? How will you come before Him in reverent prayer?

“Reverence should be shown also for the name of God. Never should that name be spoken lightly or thoughtlessly. Even

in prayer its frequent or needless repetition should be avoided. ‘Holy and reverend is His name.’ Psalm 111:9. Angels, as they speak it, veil their faces. With what reverence should we, who are fallen and sinful, take it upon our lips!” —*Child Guidance*, p. 538

There are, however, a number of hindrances to our prayers being answered. The Bible uses the term “prayer” to describe only our words to God, not His response to us, which means some prayers are rejected! But, why? We pray not to change God’s mind for He is unchanging. Rather, we pray in order to seek to know the will of God and His love for us. To obtain answers requires entering into prayer in the right frame of mind and heart. We can pray with confidence but our prayer should be offered in humility and gratitude.

Christians need to understand prayer not just as a matter of curiosity, as we might admire a stamp collection. We need to be able to distinguish prayer from other religious practices so we can use it properly. Our ability to identify what prayer is, and what it is not, is extremely important.

God’s responses to personal petitions teach us what we can expect when we pray according to His will. Sometimes God grants the request, but sometimes He does not. Sometimes He waits to give us an answer. God may not answer immediately or as soon as we might want (Job 7:11–12). Moreover sometimes *no answer* is *His answer*. Frequently God has already given the answers to our inquiries, and we can find them by searching the Scriptures (Psalm 144:3; John 5:39). In this article, we will investigate the conditions we need to meet in order to secure favourable answers to our prayers.

“TEACH US TO PRAY”

“Lord, teach us to pray.” Luke 11:1. This was a genuine request to Jesus by His disciples. Jesus gave an answer saying, “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our

daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” Matthew 6:9–13

“Christ did not give us this prayer to repeat as a form. He gave it as an illustration of what our prayers should be,—simple, earnest, and comprehensive.” —*The Youth’s Instructor*, December 7, 1899

Christ, in His example, gave something important that should be given heed: “*Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. . . . And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*” If there is anything a believer should study with deep and intense devotion, it is the subject of prayer. Many have gone astray today and some have abandoned their faith because they did not know how to pray. We came across a man who told us that he could never go to church again for the rest of his life. He said, “I was a very faithful follower of Jesus Christ. I paid my tithes and offerings and tried my best to obey God’s laws, but a couple of years back a man opposed me, claiming my big plot of land belonged to him. Not only that, he sued me in court. I told God, ‘If You help me to win this case I will ever live to serve You, but if You allow that man to take away my large piece of land—my only hope, I will never worship You again.’”

The great question is: Why should we pray? To whom shall we pray? Where and when? How often, and how, should we present our petitions? These are important questions.

What matters to God:

- Praying to God, not to Mary, saints, angels, or images. Only Jehovah God is the “Hearer of prayer.” Psalms 65:2
- Praying in harmony with God’s will, or requirements, which are found in the Bible. (1 John 5:14)
- Praying in Jesus’ name; recognizing His authority. “No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6), said Jesus. Christ is our righteousness.
- Praying in faith, asking for more faith if needed. (Matthew 21:22; Luke 17:5).
- Being humble and sincere. The Bible says: “The LORD be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly.” Psalms 138:6
- Being persistent. Jesus said: “Ask, and it shall be given you.” Luke 11:9. Pray without ceasing.

What does not matter to God:

- Your race or nationality. God is not partial, but “in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.” Acts 10:34–35

- Whether you pray aloud or silently. God answers even silent prayers that others are not aware of. Nehemiah 2:1–6
- Whether your concerns are weighty or trivial, God encourages you to cast all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7).
- We may pray anytime and anywhere: the Bible does not limit prayer to any particular time or place (1 Thesalonians 5:17).

HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

“There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 95

1. An unforgiving spirit

The number one hindrance to prayer being answered is that we cannot forgive those who trespass against us. “Forgive us our debts, *as we forgive our debtors.*” Many professed believers find it very difficult to forgive others their wrongs. Jesus said, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:15. An inability to forgive hinders prayers. “Fasting and prayer will accomplish nothing while the heart is estranged from God by a wrong course of action. Read Isaiah 58:6, 7, 9–11.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 377

God may not answer immediately or as soon as we might want (Job 7:11–12). Moreover, sometimes no answer is His answer. Frequently, God has already given the answers to our inquiries, and we can find them by searching the Scriptures (Psalm 144:3; John 5:39).

“What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” Mark 11:24–26. In these words Christ Himself made it clear that those unwilling to forgive others cannot receive answers to their prayers. “If we expect our own prayers to be heard we must forgive others in the same manner and to the same extent as we hope to be forgiven.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 97

“He who is unforgiving cuts off the very channel through which alone he can receive mercy from God. We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. It is their part, no doubt, to humble their hearts by repentance and confession; but we are to have a spirit of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults. However sorely they may have wounded us, we are not to cherish our grievances and sympathize with ourselves over our injuries; but as we hope to be pardoned for our offenses against God we

are to pardon all who have done evil to us.” —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 113–114

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Matthew 5:23–24

2. Disobedience

Hindrance number two: It can happen that the person praying still leads a life of rebellion. God does not listen to those who continue to offend Him by their actions. “And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.” Isaiah 1:15. (Read Isaiah 59:1-4). “If we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cling to any known sin, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. Our own merit will never commend us to the favor of God.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 95. “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” 1 John 3:22

3. The prayer goes against God’s will

Forgetting “Thy will be done” is another hindrance to prayer. God does not answer requests that go against His will, or His requirements, which are all written in the Bible (1 John 5:14). For example, the Bible requires us to avoid being greedy. Gambling promotes greed (1 Corinthians 6:9–10), so God will not answer your prayer if you pray to win the lottery. God is not a genie who will be summoned to do your bidding. You can be thankful for this, otherwise you might have to fear what others may ask God to do in your life (James 4:3).

This hindrance occurs when we do not pray according to the will of God (Matthew 6:10). We should always remember to pray for the will of God to be done under all circumstances. Our God is infinite in wisdom; what we think to be the best may not be for our own good. Remember the response of the Hebrew slaves that were sentenced to death because they decided to obey God rather than man. “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” Daniel 3:16–18

These young Hebrews knew that God is able to do all things, including saving them from the burning furnace. But even if

not [if He, for whatever reason, should choose not to deliver them], they said, “Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods.”

There is a very big difference between what we want and what we need. God may not give us what we want, but He will surely give us what we need. “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Philipians 4:19

Would a loving mother give a sharp razor to her child even if she would cry for it? The mother will surely reject this request, because, she realizes that it is not good for her baby to have one as she may hurt herself. When our loving God, in His infinite wisdom, sees that what we are asking will not help us keep our faith, He may refuse to grant our request. “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” James 4:3. “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we

know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” 1 John 5:14–15. “When you pray for temporal blessings, remember that the Lord may see that it is not for your good or for His glory to give you just what you desire. But He will answer your prayer, giving you just what is best for you.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 82

If there is anything a believer should study with deep, and intense devotion, it is the subject of prayer.

Many have gone astray today and some have abandoned their faith because they did not know how to pray.

“That prayer which comes forth from an earnest, believing heart is the effectual, fervent prayer that availeth much. God does not always answer our prayers as we expect, for we may not ask what would be for our highest good; but in His infinite love and wisdom He will give us those things which we most need.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 531

When we abide in Him, we will not ask anything in opposition of His will. Then whatever we shall ask it will be given us.

4. Doubt and discouragement

Doubt and discouragement are definitely hindrances to our prayers being answered. “Without faith, it is impossible to please God.” Hebrews 11:6. At some point in life it happens to nearly all, that, even when we are trying to live according to the light we have received, answers to our prayers still seem not to come. This is when many lose their faith, but it should not be so. When the winds of discouragement seem to blow hard on us, that is the exact time when we need to pray. The answers to our prayers will come. Another element of prevailing prayer is faith. “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6. Jesus said to His disciples, “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark

11:24. Do we take Him at His word?

DON'T GIVE UP!

"[Jesus] spake a parable unto [the disciples] to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." Luke 18:1–8

When Jesus went to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He met a very persistent woman who was asking prayers for her daughter who was possessed by a devil (Matthew 15:22–28).

Here was a woman who was desperately in need of Christ's help, but the closer she came, the stronger the winds of discouragement were blowing on her. As she cried, Jesus initially answered her not a word. The disciples even asked Him very earnestly to send her away. As she kept on crying, the first answer she received from Jesus was, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." This answer would have utterly discouraged a less earnest seeker.

But she was persistent and refused to be discouraged. She kept her faith and continued following Jesus. Finally, Jesus answered and said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Had the woman given up, her daughter would not have been healed. Her faith was tested, but it stood the test and thus her request was granted.

"When upon Mount Carmel he [Elijah] offered the prayer for rain (1 Kings 18:41–45), his faith was tested, but he persevered in making known his request unto God. Six times he prayed earnestly, and yet there was no sign that his petition was granted, but with a strong faith he urged his plea to the throne of grace. Had he given up in discouragement at the sixth time, his prayer would not have been answered, but he persevered till the answer came. We have a God whose ear is not closed to our petitions; and if we prove His Word, He will honor our faith. He wants us to have all our interests interwoven with His interests, and then He can safely bless us; for we shall not then take glory to self when the blessing is ours, but shall render all the praise to God. God does not always answer our prayers the first time we call upon Him; for should He do this, we might take it for granted that we had a right to all the blessings and favors He bestowed upon us. Instead of searching our hearts to see if any evil was

entertained by us, any sin indulged, we should become careless, and fail to recognize our dependence upon Him, and our need of His help.

"The servant watched while Elijah prayed. Six times he returned from the watch, saying, there is nothing, no cloud, no sign of rain. But the prophet did not give up in discouragement. . . . As he searched his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. . . . And when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came. The servant appeared, and said, 'Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand.'

"Elijah did not wait for the heavens to gather blackness. In that small cloud, he beheld by faith an abundance of rain; and he acted in harmony with his faith. . . . Faith such as this is needed in the world today—faith that will lay hold on the promises of God's word, and refuse to let go until Heaven hears." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 88

"If we do not feel immediate answers to our prayers, we should hold fast our faith, not allowing distrust to come in, for that will separate us from God. If our faith wavers, we shall receive nothing from Him. Our confidence in God should be strong; and when we need it most, the blessing will fall upon us like a shower of rain." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 121

The word of God bids us, "Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thessalonians 5:17–18. "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us." 1 John 5:14

Men and women in the Bible prayed when faced with weighty decisions or daunting challenges. Sometimes they prayed aloud and sometimes silently; they prayed when in groups and when alone. The important thing is that they prayed. As we "pray without ceasing", He is willing to listen to those who do His will.

There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep the communication open between Jesus and your own soul. May God help us to overcome and continue instant in prayer according to His will. We are living in perilous times; prayer will increase our faith and prevent us from falling into temptation. Let us wait, work and watch until He appears with glory in the clouds. Maranatha! Amen.

Victor Shumbusho, D.R.Congo

Union Publishing Leader



The Two Brothers



Richard and Danny were two brothers who did not always get along when they got older. They had completely different temperaments.

"Who needs him, he's of no use to anyone," Richard was telling his friend Eric when the subject of Danny came up.

"That's a pretty harsh thing to say about your brother," Eric responded. Richard knew it was harsh, but could not help his feelings. He thought back when he and Danny were younger. Danny was younger by a year and a half, and was always the guy who could "fix anything". Oh, how mom and dad bragged when Danny fixed the washing machine or the lawnmower or unclogged a drain in the kitchen. At first, Richard tried to learn to do what Danny did but it never worked out.



Finally, in high school, Richard found his gift and, like his own dad, it was the gift of speaking. He won competition after competition in speech, debate, and other forms of speech giving. He seemed to have a natural ability to talk to people, give speeches or just get people to see things his way or rally to his cause. It served him well as he moved into a teaching career whereas Danny built a very successful



auto mechanics business around his skill.

But sadly, for all the success the brothers had, their dislike of each other kept growing and it drew them apart. Danny never understood that talking was a good skill and Richard thought that being able to tinker with machines or pipes or wires was a low person's way of life. They fought about it endlessly until Danny moved out, but family gatherings were always tense except when they went to see Grandma. Everything stopped at Grandma's house because she saw them as her sweet baby boys and for a while when they visited her, they were sweet children again, innocent, and always ready to play.

Eric left his friend Richard in his office thinking about his brother. Richard wondered if there was ever to be a way to make things better between them. He had been praying about it. He did not know that over at his garage, while fixing a car, Danny had been praying the same thing. Richard's thoughts were broken by the phone ringing. He answered it. The sound of urgency in the voice was frightening.

"Richard, the Credit River has overflowed its banks and is flooding the town of Streetsville," Eric informed him. Streetsville was not far from the large city where his family grew up. "The water is rising there and people are becoming trapped in their second floors. The Red Cross is going in to try to get people out."

At first, Richard did not get too alarmed but then he remembered; Streetsville was where Grandma lived. He picked up the phone and called her but no answer. He knew she lived alone in that big house and probably could not get to the phone. The thought of her alone facing that terror was more than he could stand. Mov-

ing almost on instinct, Richard got moving. He organized a rescue mission for the town of Streetsville using his huge network of contacts at church, work, his clubs and his business contacts. Within hours, Richard had an army of men and machinery gathered in the parking lot of the church. They were ready to invade Streetsville and save those people.

“Folks,” he announced to the crowd of rescuers from his bullhorn, “we need to pray. My grandma is down there and you all have relatives there too. Let’s pray that God helps them until we can get there.” And then he bowed his head and led them in prayer.



“Richard we have another area to pray about.” Eric shouted out. “Lots of these boats are broken. We need mechanical help or getting all of us down there will be no good. We need someone who can fix anything.” Richard felt his face go hot with emotion because it was like God was telling him, “Get Danny.” He had no time to wallow in self-pity or resentment at Danny. He picked up his cell phone and called his brother’s number.



All he had to say to Danny was “Danny, it’s Richard, Grandma’s in danger. Get down here.” And he knew Danny would fly to the scene. And that is what happened. Danny brought his tools and workers and in no

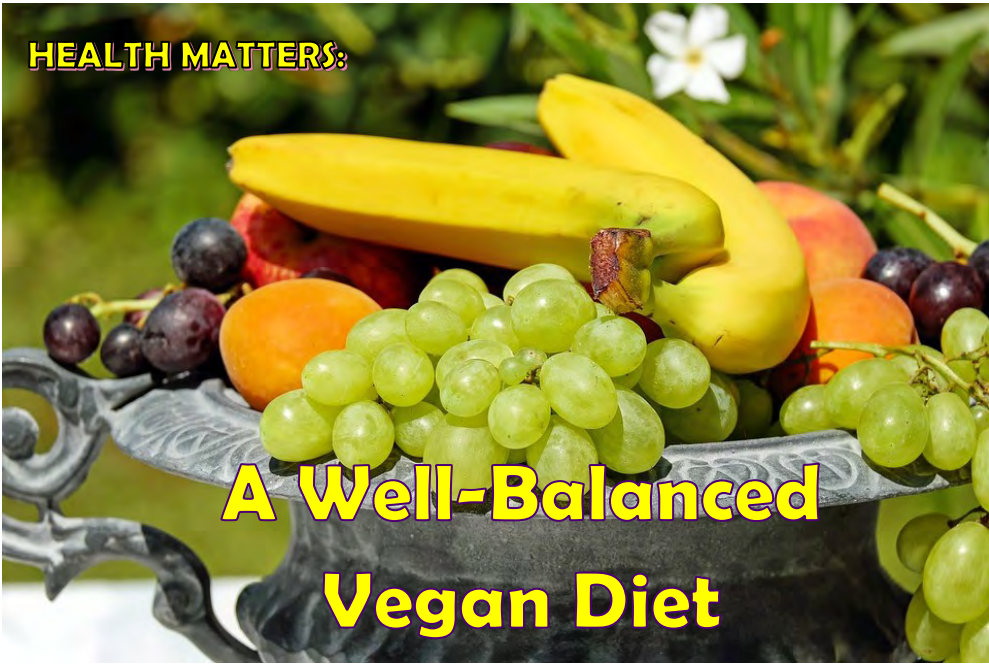
time, they had the boats in tiptop shape. Side by side, the brothers loaded the boats and together they got to Streetsville and got every citizen out. As the brothers sat side by side on the boat heading to grandma’s house they both suddenly knew why they were so different. Danny knew that he could have never gotten such a huge response and organized the rescue so beautifully. And Richard knew that Danny’s gift for fixing things was crucial to their success.

As they got grandma into the boat, she hugged them both and kissed them and then she said what they both were thinking. “God has given each of you boys a wonderful spiritual gift. Working together you are a powerful tool for Him.” They knew it was right because that is how God blesses the church. By giving everyone unique and wonderful gifts, we all can work together to do what God has for us to do. Separate we are incomplete but together we are powerful tools for God to use for good.

“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

1 Corinthians 12:14–27





A Well-Balanced Vegan Diet

Meat-eaters view vegans as receiving an inadequate diet, and are therefore, weak and sickly. We learned last month that a balanced diet which provides our body the nutrients necessary to meet its metabolic needs, requires foods in a specific variety and quantity. A balanced vegan diet takes some thought, and is not simply the removal of all animal-sourced food products. If poorly planned, a vegan diet may be deficient in vital nutrients. However, well-planned vegan diets have been found to offer protection against many degenerative conditions, and contribute to a longer and healthier life. Sister White, in her counsels on health did not use the term “vegan.” She made references to a vegetarian diet that would eventually eliminate all dairy, eggs, etc. The word “vegan” was not coined until 1944, to differentiate between those who included dairy products as a part of a vegetarian diet and those who also abstained from the use of any animal products in their diet.

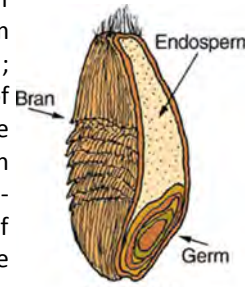
A balanced diet for human beings consists of a combination of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals, and fibre. Can we ensure that we obtain these nutrients and their proper amounts with a vegan diet? I believe we can, and, in fact, a vegan diet provides the proper balance of all the required nutrients, versus an animal-based diet which has some nutrients in too-large volumes, while being deficient in others, and also contains substances that are actually harmful to our health.

Carbohydrates, also known as sugars, form the main source of energy for the body, and are contained in most plant food products, except in some greens and processed oils. However, the main sources of carbohydrates come from grains, vegetables, and fruits. Whole grains should be used vs non-whole grain foods, which are often found in processed food products. Carbohydrates are then divided into two categories, simple and complex. The difference between a simple and complex carbohydrate is in how quickly it is digested and absorbed—as well as its chemical structure.

Whole grains form the foundation of the vegan diet, and are

considered complex carbohydrates, and are absorbed slowly into the body. They are the body’s main energy source. All carbohydrates are broken down into the body into simple sugars. They are also a good source of fats, fibre, iron, B and E Vitamins, zinc, potassium, and other minerals. They are also a source of protein, and are low in fat.

Whole grain foods contain three parts of the seed of the plant: the bran (outer layer which contains most of the fibre; germ (part from where new plant sprouts); endosperm (largest part of the seed, but provides little nutrition). Non-whole grain products are a result of mod-



ern processing of grain. The bran and the germ of the grain are removed, leaving behind only the endosperm, which is of little nutritious value. The reason why grain products are processed in this manner is so that the “essential oils” contained in the product are removed, therefore eliminating the risk of rancidity, so that the product can be stored without needing refrigeration, increasing the shelf life of the food. However, the process also removes all the fibre, most of the Vitamin E, half the Vitamin B’s, and many of the phytochemicals. Whole grains provide the bulk of the fibre in any diet, needed for proper functioning of the digestive system. Examples of whole grains include: whole wheat pasta, brown/wild rice, whole oats, whole wheat or whole grain breads and cereals, bagels, tortillas, pita bread, crackers, whole wheat or rye flour, popcorn, bulgur, buckwheat, millet, barley, quinoa, amaranth, couscous, spelt, flaxseed. Eat 6–11 servings per day.

Vegetables are also a source of carbohydrates. They are nutrient-dense, contain less sugar than fruit, and are low in calories and fat. They are high in fibre, and the large variety of vegetables available all provide the diet with a number of nutrients as well as sugar; these include calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, beta-carotene, vitamins A, B, C, K.



They are a rich source of antioxidants which slow down the body’s aging process. To receive maximum nutrition from vegetables eat a variety of types and colours, as each vegetable has its own unique combination of nutrients. Three to five servings of vegetables should be eaten daily. One-half to one cup of any vegetable is a serving. Vegetables are ideal for people who are diabetic, as the amount of calories and sugar content is low, and are otherwise nutrient-dense.

Fruits are low in calories and fats. They are a good source of sugars, fibre, vitamins, antioxidants, and minerals. Fruits, as well as vegetables, contain phytochemicals: plant substances

that have beneficial, health-protective qualities. The colour of the fruit determines the type of phytochemical found in it, therefore to receive a well-balanced number of phytochemicals, eat from a variety of different coloured fruits. The amount of fruits should be 2-4 servings per day. A serving can be an apple, plum, peach, orange or banana; or one cup of berries, including grapes, cherries, strawberries, or raspberries. Carbohydrates should be 45-65% of our daily calorie intake.

Almost all foods, except sugar and fats contain protein, including whole grains, vegetables and fruits. Protein is made up of over 20 amino acids. Our body requires 9 "essential" amino acids, meaning that we must derive them from our food; they are not produced by our bodies. The body uses amino acids as building blocks for blood, skin, cartilage, muscles, bones, hormones, and enzymes. All animal-based proteins contain all nine essential amino acids, and are known as "complete proteins." Most plant-based proteins contain all the amino acids also, but do not contain adequate amounts of each of the essential amino acids. These sources of amino acids are called "incomplete proteins". Two plant sources, quinoa and soy are close to being complete proteins.

We must ensure that our diet contains all nine essential amino acids. A vegan diet is able to provide the body with all the essential amino acids. As stated, most plants contain all the essential amino acids, but not in the right amounts that the body requires. Often there is a "limiting" protein, one that is in a concentration that is too low to be useful. Previously, we had been told that we must eat specific combinations of foods at each meal to ensure that we are consuming all the essential amino acids at every meal, otherwise we would develop an amino acid deficiency. However, recent research shows that our bodies put together the amino acids from all sources to make complete proteins throughout the day. You do not have to worry about how and when to combine foods. It does not need to be a complicated science. Vegans who eat a varied diet containing vegetables, beans, grains, nuts, and seeds, have no difficulty in getting enough protein and all essential amino acids.

Animal products are not necessary to provide enough protein that we need on a daily basis. For example, one cup of vegetables contains 4 grams of protein; one cup of whole grains contains 6 grams of protein; one cup of fruit contains 1 gram of protein. Most people who eat animal protein consume too much protein for their body's needs, often over 100 grams per day (which, according to dietary guidelines is what is needed for someone weighing 125 kg/275 pounds) and causes health complications such as kidney disease, osteoporosis and some cancers, not to mention heart disease from the saturated fats in animal protein. A vegan diet can easily provide the 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight (or 0.45 g/pound) that is required for optimum health. For example, an 80 kg person would require 64 g of protein per day. 5 servings of vegetables=20 g protein, 10 servings of grains=60 g protein, 4 servings of fruit=4 grams

protein. TOTAL: 84 g protein. Even if the 80 kg person ate the least amount of recommended grains, fruits, and vegetables, their daily intake of protein would be 50 g from these sources alone. However, we have not even talked about the foods which contain the most concentration of proteins.

Legumes are considered the main source of protein for vegan diets. These include foods such as beans, peas, and lentils. They are low in fat, do not contain cholesterol as does animal protein. They are also good sources of folate, calcium, zinc, potassium, iron and magnesium, Vitamin B's, and are rich in antioxidants and phytochemicals. They also contain complex carbohydrates which prevent insulin and sugar spikes which are harmful. They also contain essential fats. Because they are also high in fibre, they promote good gastrointestinal health and help to lower cholesterol levels. One cup of most cooked beans or lentils contains approximately 15 grams of protein; one cup of cooked soybeans contains 30 grams of protein; one cup of firm tofu contains 40 grams of protein.



Another source of vegan protein is the nut, seed, and nut butter category of foods. Typically these foods contain 10-20 gram of protein per 100 grams (3 ounces). A serving size of nuts is usually one ounce. Nuts and seeds also contain vitamins, minerals, fibre, and fats. Some examples in this category are almonds, pistachios, walnuts, cashews, Brazil and pine nuts. Seeds include sesame, pumpkin, flax, and sunflower. Butters made from nuts and seeds are also healthy if they are made without added sugars. One-quarter cup of most nuts can range from 4-9 grams of protein.



Two to three tablespoons of seeds provide 8 grams of protein, with the exception of flax, which contains 4 grams of protein. However, flax is a very good source of Omega-3 fatty acids. One tablespoon of any nut butter is equivalent to one serving of protein. The amount of servings per day will depend on how much protein is obtained in the diet overall. Typically 2-3 servings of legumes or seeds is all that is needed in a diet that also includes proper amounts of whole grains, vegetables, and fruits. Only 10-15% of our daily caloric intake needs to be from proteins.

Some people are concerned about soy and its isoflavone content, which has estrogen-like properties. Studies done in countries which consume high amounts of soy (up to 65 g/day) show no adverse health effects, including on fertility, during pregnancy, in infants and children. There is also no risk for women with breast cancer or for women during menopause. Soy can inhibit iron absorption, therefore eat it with foods containing Vitamin C. Soy is high in protein, essential oils, fibre, iron, calcium, thiamine, folate, magnesium, potas-

sium, zinc, manganese.

Calcium is needed for bones, muscles, nerves and blood clotting. Calcium intakes for vegans can be low, therefore most vegan food pyramids include a calcium-rich food section to highlight awareness of the need for calcium. Vegan foods containing calcium include: calcium-fortified soy and nut milks and juices, dark-green leafy vegetables, tofu, bok choy, broccoli, kale, and okra. The recommended daily requirement of calcium is 1000 mg or 6–8 servings per day. We can only absorb 500 mg of calcium at a time, so calcium-rich foods need to be spread out during the day. Those who feel that cow's milk is a superior source of calcium are not aware that the high levels of phosphorus in cow's milk prevents calcium from being absorbed into the body.

A vegan diet can be low in saturated and trans fats, which decreases the risk of many diseases. However, fats are necessary in the diet, in order to absorb fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K), to provide an energy source and to act as an insulator. Fats provide "essential fatty acids" which are needed from our diet, as our body does not produce them. These include Omega 3, 6, and 9.

Omega-6: Needed for brain function, to prevent rheumatoid arthritis, allergies, high blood pressure, eczema, menstrual pain. Omega-3: decrease plaque build-up in blood vessels, reduce triglyceride levels, promote nerve health, reduce inflammation, for healthy skin and nails, brain health, growth and development, beneficial for illnesses such as arthritis, lupus osteoarthritis, asthma, diabetes, irritable bowel, breast and colon cancer.

Excess Omega-6 fatty acids can cause inflammation which contributes to a number of diseases. We need to ensure adequate levels of Omega-3 fatty acids to balance out the high levels of Omega-6's in most foods. Too many Omega-6 also cancel out the health benefits of Omega-3's. Pregnant women deficient in Omega-3 run the risk of nerve and vision problems in their infants. Adult deficiencies can cause poor memory, fatigue, dry skin, poor circulation, depression, and mood swings. Most processed oils are high in Omega-6. Foods high in Omega-3 are ground flaxseeds and flaxseed oil (only plant source which does not contain Omega 6 soybeans, soy bean oil, tofu, walnuts, and chia (salba). Nuts, seeds, avocados, and olives are high in good fats. We only need 2–3 servings per day of fats, or 15-20% of our total daily calories.

A Vitamin B12 deficiency can cause anemia and irreversible nerve damage. It also increases the risk of heart disease. Vitamin B12 is only synthesized by bacteria micro-organisms, and is therefore found in areas of bacterial growth, namely dirt and soil. No foods naturally contain B12. Animal foods contain B12 because the animals have ingested it, either from the soil or eating other animals, and then their own gut bacteria is also able to produce B12. Two theories suggest why B12 deficiency seems to be on the rise. Humans have been getting their B12 from the dirt for hundreds of thousands of years by eating plants that still had bits of soil on them. Today however, we

wash our fruits and veggies so well that we no longer consume dirt or proper levels of B12. The other theory is that the soil in some areas of the world where crops are planted has been depleted of the mineral, cobalt, which is needed to synthesize B12. Even animals which eat from these cobalt-depleted soils can be low in B12. For these two reasons, not only vegetarians, but those who eat animal foods can be deficient in B12. Many foods are now fortified with B12, such as non-dairy milks, cereals and supplements are also available.

Vitamin D is needed for absorption of calcium, immune system functioning, prevents auto-immune diseases, protects brain function, and lowers risk of cancers. Vitamin D is derived from the sun, and is not present in any vegan foods, unless Vitamin D has been added to it. However, many foods that are vitamin D enriched use a non-vegan source of vitamin D. When sun exposure is not sufficient, vegans need to take vitamin D supplements. In the summer, 10–15 minutes, 2–3x a week is adequate sun exposure to maintain Vitamin D levels. In Canada, between September and April, most Canadians become vitamin D deficient. Look for a vegan source of D2 or D3, both are available. Supplement with 600 I.U. per day.

The body needs iron to make hemoglobin, a component of red blood cells, which carry oxygen to our cells. An iron deficiency can lead to anemia (low red blood cells). Iron supplies our muscles with oxygen, contributes to brain health, controls body temperature, improves energy, concentration, immune function, and promotes good sleep. Iron can be found in 2 forms: heme and non-heme. Plants only contain non-heme iron, which is less well absorbed. Therefore, vegans need higher daily intakes of iron than meat eaters. Iron needs Vitamin C in order to be absorbed. The recommended daily iron intake for men is 14 mg, and women is 33 mg. Good sources of iron include soybeans, molasses, spinach, lentils, quinoa, tofu, beans, chick peas, potatoes, cashews, broccoli.

No essential nutrient is missing from a vegan diet. Man can live long and healthy on a vegan diet. An animal-based diet may provide man with all the nutrients he requires; however, it is unbalanced in terms of the amount of protein and fats it contains. It also contains substances that are very harmful to one's health, including saturated fats and cholesterol. These harmful substances are not found in a well-balanced, healthy vegan diet. And, if we eat a varied vegan diet, we can obtain all our nutrients in the quantities and ratios that our bodies need. God, who gave mankind the original diet in Eden, intended man to be vegan. He would not give man a diet that was not sufficient in all required nutrients. However, after man fell into sin, animal products were eventually introduced after the flood when vegetation was scarce. God permitted man to eat meat to eat and this shortened their lives. But, as the people of the last days, we are to be preparing for heaven, where we will be vegans for eternity. Let us move forward in health reform and become vegans. Now is the time!



India



Left: church at Tirupattur—head office.

**Left Below: seven members who were baptized on February 3, 2017.
From Left—Nitya Rakehel, Josan, Silviya, Tilakavathi, Jayasri, Helan Sheela and Visva**

Senegal

Right: Brother Judicail. Centre: Brother Eric who will be working in Mali. Left: an interested soul preparing for baptism.



Ethiopia—Youth Conference February 7-12





“Christ taught His disciples that the measure of divine attention bestowed on any of God's work is proportionate to the rank which that object occupies in the scale of creation. The little brown sparrow, apparently the most inferior of birds, is watched over by Providence. Not one falls to the ground without the notice of our heavenly Father. The flowers of the field, the grass which clothes the earth with verdure,—all share the notice and care of our heavenly Father.

“Behold the birds of the air;’ Christ said, ‘they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature. And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.’ If the lilies of the field are objects upon which the great Master Artist has bestowed care, making them so beautiful that they out-rival the glory of Solomon, the greatest king that ever wielded a sceptre; if the grass of the field is made into a beautiful carpet for the earth, can we form any idea of the regard which God bestows upon man, who was formed in His image?

“God has given man intellect in order that he may comprehend greater things than these beautiful objects in nature. He carries the human agent into a higher department of truth, leading the mind.” – *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p 1579–1580