



Reformation Herald

GENERAL CHURCH PAPER OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST REFORM MOVEMENT



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Reformation Herald

"The age in which we live calls for reformatory action."
—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 488.

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Jesus Comes

*Hark! A mighty swelling sound
Filleth all the air around.
Voices shrill, and lifted high,
Waft it upward to the sky!
Higher yet the strains ascend,
And with angels' anthems blend!
Heaven and earth repeat the strain:
"Jesus comes, and comes to reign!"*

*Sun in solemn darkness veiled;
Moon, whose midnight glory paled;
Stars, in myriads falling fast,
As the leaves 'mid autumn's blast;
Roarings of the storm-waked sea;
Kingdoms in perplexity—
All take up the rushing strain:
"Jesus comes, and comes to reign!"*

*Haste the day, and speed the hour,
When with awful pomp and power,
And with trumpet's rolling sound,
Christ shall come in glory crowned!
Then shall Paradise be here;
Then shall beauty bless and cheer;
Voices ring o'er earth and main;
"Jesus now returns to reign!"*

—Author unknown

The Ministry of Angels

“Over every man good and evil angels strive. It is the man himself who determines which shall win.”¹

“The angels are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Shall we be privileged to cooperate with heavenly intelligences?”²

“Angels are ever present where they are most needed, with those who have the hardest battles with self to fight, and whose surroundings are the most discouraging.”³

“Good angels are ministering spirits, exerting a heavenly influence upon heart and mind; while the great adversary of souls, the devil, and his angels are continually laboring to accomplish our destruction.”⁴

“We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angels. It would be well to remember that every true child of God has the cooperation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God.”⁵

“As a people we do not understand as we should the great conflict going on between invisible agencies, the controversy between loyal and disloyal angels.”⁶

“Constantly the battle between the army of Christ and the army of Satan is going on. The angels of God are round about us as a wall of fire.”⁷

“As you are seeking His face, the angels minister unto you. . . . They receive their commission from God, whose eye beholds all things; and when a soul is in discouragement, he sends help from heaven,

even before the prayer for help is uttered.”⁸

“The Lord works continually to benefit mankind. . . . He commissions heavenly angels to save them from calamity, to guard them from ‘the pestilence that walketh in darkness’ and ‘the destruction that wasteth at noonday’ (Ps. 91:6).”⁹

“I saw that in our journeying from place to place, he [Satan] had frequently placed his evil angels in our path to cause accident which would result in our losing our lives; but holy angels were sent upon the ground to deliver.”¹⁰

“A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one.”¹¹

“Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. . . . They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril.”¹²

“In all ages, God has wrought through holy angels for the succor and deliverance of His people. Celestial beings have taken an active part in the affairs of men. They have appeared clothed in garments that shone as the lightning; they have come as men in the garb of wayfarers. Angels have appeared in human form to men of God. They have rested, as if weary, under the oaks at noon. They have accepted the hospitalities of human homes. They have acted as guides to benighted travelers. They have, with their own hands, kindled the fires at the altar. They have opened

prison doors and set free the servants of the Lord. Clothed with the panoply of heaven, they came to roll away the stone from the Saviour’s tomb.”¹³

“He would sooner send every angel out of heaven to protect His people than leave one soul that trusts in Him to be overcome by Satan.”¹⁴

“Our service is a continual warfare against the satanic science coming in through deceptive guise to take us unawares. Therefore angels are on guard to protect all who are watching and believing and walking and working.”¹⁵

“Every redeemed one will understand the ministry of angels in his own life. The angel who was his guardian from his earliest moment; the angel who watched his steps, and covered his head in the day of peril; the angel who was with him in the valley of the shadow of death, who marked his resting place, who was the first to greet him in the resurrection morning—what will it be to hold converse with him, and to learn the history of divine interposition in the individual life, of heavenly cooperation in every work for humanity!”¹⁶

“Angels actually come to our world. Nor are they always invisible. They sometimes veil their angelic appearance, and appearing as men, they converse with and enlighten human beings.”¹⁷

¹ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 11, p. 104.

² *Lift Him Up*, p. 209.

³ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 105.

⁴ *The Adventist Home*, p. 405.

⁵ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 154.

⁶ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1173.

⁷ *Sermons and Talks*, vol. 1, p. 313.

⁸ *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 16, 1893.

⁹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 348.

¹⁰ *The Review and Herald*, May 13, 1862.

¹¹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 512.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 630.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 631.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 560.

¹⁵ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, p. 130.

¹⁶ *Education*, p. 305.

¹⁷ *My Life Today*, p. 304.

Part 7

Historic Adventism

In the World—But Not *of* the World

by A. C. Sas

Conditions to be God's people

"Jesus is coming; and will He find a people conformed to the world? and will He acknowledge these as His people that He has purified unto Himself? Oh, no. None but the pure and holy will He acknowledge as His. Those who have been purified and made white through suffering, and have kept themselves separate, unspotted from the world, He will own as His." ¹

"Christ's followers are required to come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean, and they have the promise of being the sons and daughters of the Most High, members of the royal family. But if the conditions are not complied with on their part, they will not, cannot, realize the fulfillment of the promise. A profession of Christianity is nothing in the sight of God; but true, humble, willing obedience to His requirements designates the children of His adoption, the recipients of His grace, the partakers of His great salvation. Such will be peculiar, a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men. Their peculiar, holy character will be discernible, and will distinctly separate them from the world, from its affections and lust." ²

"Those who will be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ to the immortal inheritance, will be peculiar. Yes, so peculiar that God places a mark upon them as His, wholly His. Think ye that God will receive,

honor, and acknowledge a people so mixed up with the world that they differ from them only in name? Read again Titus 2:13–15. It is soon to be known who is on the Lord's side, who will not be ashamed of Jesus. Those who have not moral courage to conscientiously take their position in the face of unbelievers, leave the fashions of the world, and imitate the self-denying life of Christ, are ashamed of Him, and do not love His example." ³

1) Worldly amusements

"Christians have no need or desire for the billiard table, the theater, the dancing hall, or the many other forms of worldly diversion. A Christian does nothing which he can not do to the glory of God, upon which he can not ask the Lord's blessing." ⁴

"The low, common pleasure parties, gatherings for eating and drinking, singing and playing on instruments of music, are inspired by a spirit that is from beneath. They are an oblation unto Satan. The exhibitions in the bicycle craze are an offense to God. His wrath is kindled against those who do such things. For in these gratifications the mind becomes besotted, even as in liquor drinking. The door is opened to vulgar associations. The thoughts, allowed to run in a low channel, soon pervert all the powers of the being. Like Israel of old, the pleasure lovers eat and drink, and rise up to

play. There is mirth and carousing, hilarity and glee. In all this the youth are following the example of the ungodly authors of some of the books that are placed in their hands for study. All these things are having their effect upon the character.

"Those who take the lead in these frivolities bring upon the cause a stain not easily effaced. They wound their own souls, and will carry the scars through their lifetime. The evildoer may see his sins and repent, and God may pardon the transgressor; but the power of discernment which ought ever to be kept keen and sensitive to distinguish between the sacred and the common, is in a great measure destroyed." ⁵

"Many of the amusements popular in the world today, even with those who claim to be Christians, tend to the same end as did those of the heathen. There are indeed few among them that Satan does not turn to account in destroying souls. Through the drama he has worked for ages to excite passion and glorify vice. The opera, with its fascinating display and bewildering music, the masquerade, the dance, the card table, Satan employs to break down the barriers of principle and open the door to sensual indulgence. In every gathering for pleasure where pride is fostered or appetite indulged, where one is led to forget God and lose sight of eternal interests, there Satan is binding his chains about the soul." ⁶

"There are amusements, such as dancing, card playing, chess, checkers, etc., which we cannot approve, because Heaven condemns them. These amusements open the door for great evil. They are not beneficial in their tendency, but have an exciting influence, producing in some minds a passion for those plays which lead to gambling and dissipation. All such plays should be condemned by Christians, and something perfectly harmless should be substituted in their place." ⁷

"How much time is spent by intelligent human beings in horse racing, cricket matches, and ball playing! But will indulgence in these sports give men a desire to know truth and righteousness? Will it keep God in their thoughts? Will it lead them to inquire, How is it with my soul?"

"All the powers of Satan are set in operation to hold the attention to frivolous amusements, and he is gaining his object. He is interposing his devisings between God and the soul. He will manufacture diversions to keep men from thinking about God. The world, filled with sport and pleasure loving, is always thirsting for some new interest; but how little time and thought are given to the Creator of the heavens and the earth!" ⁸

"I have been shown that the true followers of Jesus will discard picnics, donations, shows, and other gatherings for pleasure. They can find no Jesus there, and no influence which will make them heavenly minded and increase their growth in grace. The word of God obeyed leads us to come out from all these things and be separate. The things of the world are sought for, and considered worthy to be admired and enjoyed, by all those who are not devoted lovers of the cross and spiritual worshipers of a crucified Jesus." ⁹

2) Worldly music

"Angels of God are in tears as they write in the roll the words and

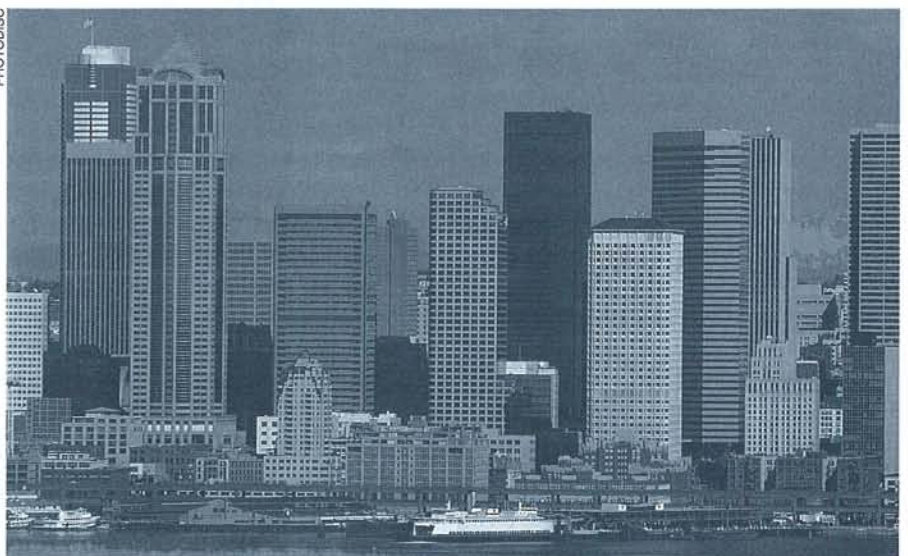
acts of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around yonder dwelling. The young are there assembled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping. This I saw repeated a number of times all through the ranks of Sabbathkeepers, and especially in —. Music has occupied the hours which should have been devoted to prayer. Music is the idol which many professed Sabbathkeeping Christians worship. Satan has no objection to music if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth. Anything will suit his purpose that will divert the mind from God and engage the time which should be devoted to His service. He works through the means which will exert the strongest influence to hold the largest numbers in a pleasing infatuation, while they are paralyzed by his power. When turned to good account, music is a blessing; but it is often made one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls. When abused, it leads the

unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly. When allowed to take the place of devotion and prayer, it is a terrible curse. Young persons assemble to sing, and, although professed Christians, frequently dishonor God and their faith by their frivolous conversation and their choice of music. Sacred music is not congenial to their taste. I was directed to the plain teachings of God's word, which have been passed by unnoticed. In the judgment all these words of inspiration will condemn those who have not heeded them." ¹⁰

"The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit." ¹¹

"As we heard the sounds of revelry and mirth that seemed to come from the abyss below, we shuddered. We heard the profane oath, the vulgar jest, and low, vile songs. We heard the war songs and the dance songs. We heard instrumental music, and the loud laugh, mingled with cursing and cries of anguish and bitter wailing, and were more anxious than ever to keep upon the narrow, difficult pathway." ¹²

PHOTO/ISC



3) Worldly fashions

a) Dress

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John 2:15, 16.

"Fashion is deteriorating the intellect and eating out the spirituality of our people. Obedience to fashion is pervading our Seventh-day Adventist churches and is doing more than any other power to separate our people from God. I have been shown that our church rules are very deficient. All exhibitions of pride in dress, which is forbidden in the word of God, should be sufficient reason for church discipline. . . .

"And as soon as any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world, that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as His children. They are the children of the world and of darkness." 14

b) Similarity of garments of the opposite sex

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." Deut. 22:5.

"I saw that God's order has been reversed, and His special directions disregarded, by those who adopt the American costume. I was referred to Deuteronomy 22:5: 'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do

"Those who feel called out to join the movement in favor of woman's rights and the so-called dress reform might as well sever all connection with the third angel's message. The spirit which attends the one cannot be in harmony with the other. The Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women." 15

c) Cosmetics

"And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window." 2 Kings 9:30.

"Many are ignorantly injuring their health and endangering their life by using cosmetics. They are robbing the cheeks of the glow of health, and then to supply the deficiency use cosmetics. When they become heated in the dance the poison is absorbed by the pores of the skin, and is thrown in to the blood. Many lives have been sacrificed by this means alone." 16

"Ladies may resort to cosmetics to restore the tint of the complexion, but they cannot thus bring back the glow of healthful feelings to the heart. That which darkens and makes dingy the skin also clouds the spirits and destroys cheerfulness and peace of mind." 17

"Curls and cosmetics are all in requisition to enhance the beauty of 'the human face divine'; but what is the result? Youth's roses only flee the faster—old age will creep on apace; rouge cannot hide its wrinkles, nor can it make any face beautiful. We are decided believers in the old adage, 'handsome is that handsome does.' No face has true beauty in it that does not mirror the deeds of a noble soul. There is not a thought, word, or deed, that does not leave its autograph written on the human countenance; and we care not whether kind nature has given her child an ugly face or a handsome one, if the heart that beats underneath all is warm and

"There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like the other sex as possible, and to fashion their dress very much like that of men."

"There is a terrible sin upon us as a people, that we have permitted our church members to dress in a manner inconsistent with their faith. We must arise at once and close the door against the allurements of fashion. Unless we do this, our churches will become demoralized." 13

"I saw that the ax must be laid at the root of the tree. Such pride should not be suffered in the church. It is these things that separate God from His people, that shut the ark away from them. Israel have been asleep to the pride, and fashion, and conformity to the world, in the very midst of them. . . .

so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." God would not have His people adopt the so-called reform dress. It is immodest apparel, wholly unfitted for the modest, humble followers of Christ.

"There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like the other sex as possible, and to fashion their dress very much like that of men, but God pronounces it abomination. 'In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.' 1 Timothy 2:9.

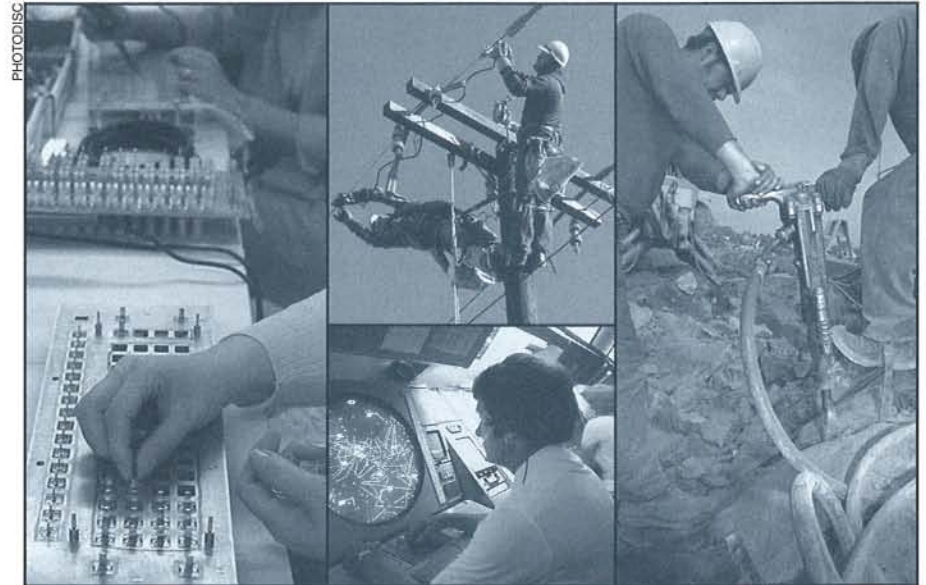
loving. And if the soul that looks out from the eyes be true and pure, the face will be beautiful always, for it has found the true fountain of youth; and though time may fold the hair in silver, and furrow the brow, yet there will ever be a beauty lighting it up that years cannot dim, for the heart and soul never grow old.”¹⁸

“We observe a young lady who looked faded and feeble. Bright red spots were upon her cheeks which at first sight appeared like the hectic flush indicating the advanced stage of consumption. She had a very aggravating cough. I entered into conversation with her in regard to the condition of her health. She told me she was not very sick, but was suffering from general debility. By closer observation, I saw that the bright spots upon her cheeks were not what I had supposed them to be. They were irritations of the skin, caused by the use of cosmetics. The entire skin of the face had lost its healthy, velvety smoothness, and showed an unnatural, disagreeable roughness. In the appearance of her face, thus marred by poisonous substances, and in the bright glow upon either cheek, giving such an unnatural appearance, we could trace causes for her ill health. Here was one of fashion’s slaves who had sacrificed health and natural beauty in using poisonous preparations which had been taken up by the pores of the skin and diffused through the system.”¹⁹

d) Wearing of Jewelry

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.” 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.

“Let those who have had experience see to it that they do not lead others astray on this point by their example. That ring encircling your finger may be very plain, but it is useless, and the wearing of it has



“The trade unions will be one of the agencies that will bring upon this earth a time of trouble such as has not been since the world began.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 88.

a wrong influence upon others.”²⁰

“Some have had a burden in regard to the wearing of a marriage ring, feeling that the wives of our ministers should conform to this custom. All this is unnecessary. . . . We need not wear the sign, for we are not untrue to our marriage vow, and the wearing of the ring would be no evidence that we were true. I feel deeply over this leavening process which seems to be going on among us, in the conformity to custom and fashion. Not one penny should be spent for a circlet of gold to testify that we are married.”²¹

4) Politics

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” 2 Cor. 6:14, 15.

“The Lord would have His people bury political questions. On these themes silence is eloquence. Christ calls upon His followers to come into unity on the pure gospel principles which are plainly revealed in the word of God. We cannot with

safety vote for political parties; for we do not know whom we are voting for. We cannot with safety take part in any political scheme. . . . What are we to do, then?—Let political questions alone. . . . God employs the strongest figures to show that there should be no union between worldly parties and those who are seeking the righteousness of Christ. . . . Those teachers in the church or in the school who distinguish themselves by their zeal in politics, should be relieved of their work and responsibilities without delay; for the Lord will not cooperate with them. The tithe should not be used to pay any one for speechifying on political questions. Every teacher, minister, or leader in our ranks who is stirred with a desire to ventilate his opinions on political questions, should be converted by a belief in the truth, or give up his work. His influence must tell as a laborer together with God in winning souls to Christ, or his credentials must be taken from him. If he does not change, he will do harm, and only harm.”²²

5) Trade Unions

“In the world gigantic monopolies will be formed. Men will bind

themselves together in unions that will wrap them in the folds of the enemy. A few men will combine to grasp all the means to be obtained in certain lines of business. Trades unions will be formed, and those who refuse to join these unions will be marked men.”²³

“The trades unions and confederacies of the world are a snare. Keep out of them, and away from them, brethren. Have nothing to do with them. Because of these unions and confederacies, it will soon be very difficult for our institutions to carry on their work in the cities. My warning is: Keep out of the cities. Build no sanitariums in the cities. Educate our people to get out of the cities into the country, where they can obtain a small piece of land, and make a home for themselves and their children.”²⁴

“Men become tempters of their fellowmen. The strong, corrupting sentiments of Satan are cherished, and they exert a masterly, compelling power. Under the influence of these sentiments, men bind up with one another in confederacies, in trade unions, and in secret societies. There are at work in the world agencies that God will not much longer tolerate.”²⁵

“We are not to unite with secret societies or with trade unions. We are to stand free in God, looking constantly to Christ for instruction. All our movements are to be made with a realization of the importance of the work to be accomplished for God.”²⁶

“Satanic agencies are becoming more determined in their rebellion against God. The trade unions will be the cause of the most terrible violence that has ever been seen among human beings.”²⁷

“Satan will do that which will close the Southern field against the truth, if the Lord does not interpose. And the trade unions will be one of the agencies that will bring upon this earth a time of trouble such as has not been since the world began.”²⁸

6) Ecumenism

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” Ex. 19:5, 6.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” 1 Peter 2:9.

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” 2 Cor. 6:16–18.

“In this day, God has called His church, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth—the messages of the first, second, and third angels—He has separated a people from the churches and from the world, to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself. He has made them the depositories of His law, and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time.”²⁹

“By the mighty cleaver of truth, God has separated a people from the quarry of the world, and brought them into His workshop. Here the Master Worker can successfully hew them with ax and chisel, and polish them for a place in His kingdom. No longer are they like the mass from which they were taken. They stand like noble pillars, to be used for God’s glory.”³⁰

“If our path is not always made plain and easy, if we are not always

so well favored as we think we should be, let us look to God, and say in faith, By the mighty cleaver of truth God has separated us from the world, from its customs and maxims, and has chosen us as his peculiar people, and he is able to work for us. Let us go forward in the strength of the Lord God Almighty, striving to uplift his law in the earth. So shall we testify to his truth.”³¹

“The church is made up of persons of different temperaments and of various dispositions; they have come from different denominations; for the Cleaver of truth has separated one here and one there from the great quarry of the world, and in the church of Christ all these various members must be cemented together by the Spirit of God.”³²

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¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 133.

² *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 441.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 287.

⁴ *The Signs of the Times*, June 21, 1905.

⁵ *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 367, 368.

⁶ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 459, 460.

⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 514.

⁸ *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 456.

⁹ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 288.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 505, 506.

¹¹ *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 36.

¹² *The Review and Herald*, January 12, 1869.

¹³ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 647, 648.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 136, 137.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

¹⁶ *The Review and Herald*, October 17, 1871.

¹⁷ *Healthful Living*, p. 191.

¹⁸ *The Health Reformer*, October 1, 1871.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, January 1, 1894.

²⁰ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 630.

²¹ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 180, 181.

²² *Gospel Workers*, pp. 391–393.

²³ *Country Living*, p. 10.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Mind Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 28.

²⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 84.

²⁷ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 23.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

²⁹ *The Signs of the Times*, January 25, 1910.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 2, 1898.

³¹ *Ibid.*, October 8, 1896.

³² *Ibid.*, April 13, 1891.

A Prophet Among You

Part 8

Unity of the Churches

by A. C. Sas

Ever since the time of the 16th century reformation, a gulf has existed between the Roman Catholic Church and the various Protestant churches. The idea of ever uniting these churches was long considered inconceivable. If, by the end of the 19th century, someone would have stated that Protestants and Catholics would eventually unite, he would have been labeled as a crazy person. The claim would be insisted upon that such a thing could never happen. But nevertheless, the servant of the Lord was shown that in the future the unity of the churches would be a reality. The Protestant churches will, for all intents and purposes, actually unite with the Catholic Church.

Hereunder we quote a few statements from the writings of E. G. White foretelling the ecumenical movement, which we now see unfolding before our very eyes.

"Many Protestants suppose that the Catholic religion is unattractive and that its worship is a dull, meaningless round of ceremony. Here they mistake. While Romanism is based upon deception, it is not a coarse and clumsy imposture. The religious service of the Roman Church is a most impressive ceremonial. Its gorgeous display and solemn rites fascinate the senses of the people and silence the voice of reason and of conscience. The eye

is charmed. Magnificent churches, imposing processions, golden altars, jeweled shrines, choice paintings, and exquisite sculpture appeal to the love of beauty. The ear also is captivated. The music is unsurpassed. The rich notes of the deep-toned organ, blending with the melody of many voices as it swells through the lofty domes and pillared aisles of her grand cathedrals, cannot fail to impress the mind with awe and reverence."¹

"And this is the religion which Protestants are beginning to look upon with so much favor, and which will eventually be united with Protestantism. This union will not, however, be effected by a change in Catholicism; for Rome never changes. She claims infallibility. It is Protestantism that will change. The adoption of liberal ideas on its part will bring it where it can clasp the hand of Catholicism. 'The Bible, the Bible, is the foundation of our faith,' was the cry of Protestants in Luther's time, while the Catholics cried, 'The Fathers, custom, tradition.' Now many Protestants find it difficult to prove their doctrines from the Bible, and yet they have not the moral courage to accept the truth which involves a cross; therefore they are fast coming to the ground of Catholics, and, using the best arguments they have to evade the truth, cite the testimony of the

Fathers, and the customs and precepts of men. Yes, the Protestants of the nineteenth century are fast approaching the Catholics in their infidelity concerning the Scriptures. But there is just as wide a gulf today between Rome and the Protestantism of Luther, Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, and the noble army of martyrs, as there was when these men made the protest which gave them the name of Protestants."²

"Some urge that the Catholic religion is not what it once was; that the principles to which Protestants could not concede, and indignantly rose up to war against, were held by Catholics in the days of their ignorance and barbarism. They say that the present high mental development of the people would never allow them to adopt the plan of action carried out in the past—compelling the conscience upon religious subjects. But there is nothing in the Scriptures to assure us against the reinstatement of popery. Protestants today are a self-sufficient, world-loving people; but they must have some religion, and prefer that consisting of forms and outward display, rather than the simplicity of the true religion of Jesus Christ."³

The purpose of the unity among the churches is not realized by most Christians. They declare that there is strength in unity, and by uniting their efforts they will evangelize the whole world. But in the following paragraphs, the true motive of their unity is clearly stated. They will form a confederacy against the people that keep the commandments of God, especially the seventh-day Sabbath. In this confederacy Protestants, Catholics and the civil powers will unite.

"The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to supremacy; and when the world and the Protestant churches accept a Sabbath of her creating, while they reject the Bible Sabbath, they virtually admit this assumption. They may claim the authority of apostles

and Fathers for the change; but in so doing they ignore the very principle which separates them from Rome—that 'the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.' The papist can see that they are deceiving themselves, willingly closing their eyes to the facts in the case. As the Sunday institution gains favor, he rejoices, feeling assured that it will eventually bring the whole Protestant world under the banner of Rome." ⁴

"Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium." ⁵

"The Revelator, looking down the ages to the close of time, declared by inspiration, 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the

testimony of Jesus Christ.' In the near future we shall see these words fulfilled, as the Protestant churches unite with the world and with the papal power against commandment-keepers. The same spirit that actuated those who persecuted the true church in ages past, will lead Protestants to pursue a similar course toward those who will maintain their loyalty to God. Church and state are now making preparations for the last great conflict." ⁶

"Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation." ⁷

"The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and, in this work, papists and Protestants unite. As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment keepers." ⁸

"The Word of God plainly declares that His law is to be

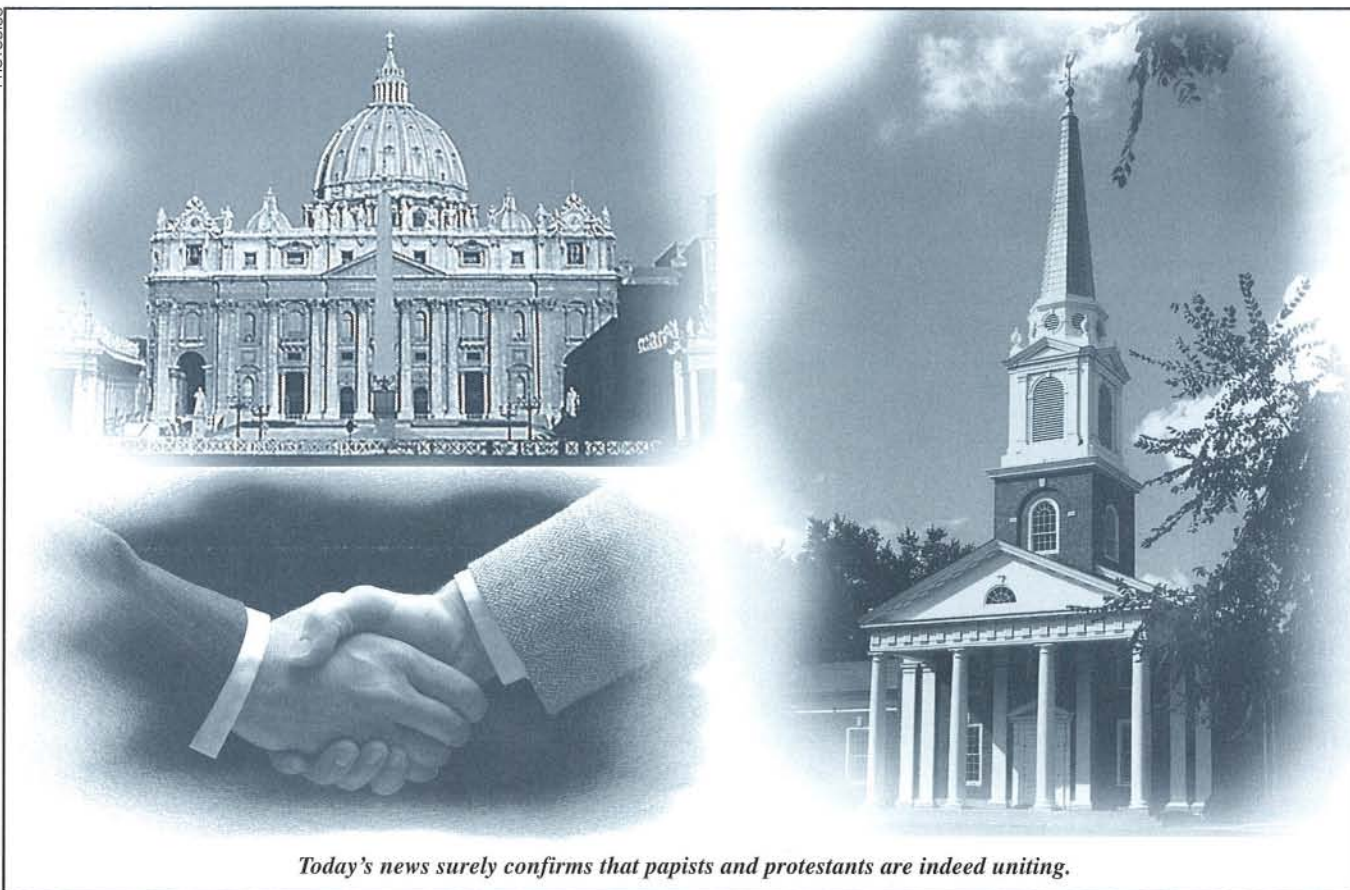
scorned, trampled upon, by the world; there will be an extraordinary prevalence of iniquity. The professed Protestant world will form a confederacy with the man of sin, and the church and the world will be in corrupt harmony." ⁹

"How strange it is that the church and the world are joined together in a confederacy to do a work that God has especially prohibited! They disobey the commandments of God with impunity." ¹⁰

"God is true. He reigns, and will reign, notwithstanding that the church and the world have entered into a confederacy to abolish His law. Age after age Satan has been blinding men by his wiles. He has co-operated with human agencies in an effort to make falsehood truth." ¹¹

"Fallen men and fallen angels are, through apostasy, in the same confederacy, leagued to work against good. They unite in a desperate companionship. Satan knows that if he can induce men, as he

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Today's news surely confirms that papists and protestants are indeed uniting.

induced the angels, to join in rebellion under the guise of servants of God, he will have in them his most successful allies in his enterprise against heaven.”¹²

“The world is represented in the apostate churches who are trampling upon the Word of God, transgressing His holy law.”¹³

God’s remnant church will take no part in any ecumenical movement. They have nothing to do with the apostate churches. They will not form a confederacy with those who are trampling underfoot God’s holy law. Because of their unflinching loyalty to God’s commandments they will be proscribed and persecuted. But they will maintain their peculiar character, separated from the world and from the fallen churches. They will be united only with those that believe in the perpetuity of God’s holy law and are preparing themselves for the great day of the Lord.

“We are to strive for unity but not on the low level of conformity to worldly policy and union with the popular churches.”¹⁴

“Any confederacy with the world is strictly forbidden by the Scriptures. God would have His people distinct from all worldly confederacy.”¹⁵

“While we are to love the souls for whom Christ died, and labor for their salvation, we should not make a compromise with sin. We are not to unite with the rebellious, and call this charity. God requires His people in this age of the world to stand, as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the right, in opposition to soul-destroying errors.”¹⁶

“We are authorized to hold in the same estimation as did the beloved disciple those who claim to abide in Christ while living in transgression of God’s law. There exist in these last days evils similar to those that threatened the prosperity of the early church; and the teachings of the apostle John on these points should be carefully heeded. ‘You must have charity,’ is

the cry heard everywhere, especially from those who profess sanctification. But true charity is too pure to cover an unconfessed sin.”¹⁷

“God’s people are to be distinguished as a people who serve Him fully, wholeheartedly, taking no honor to themselves, and remembering that by a most solemn covenant they have bound themselves to serve the Lord and Him only.”¹⁸

“We are to separate ourselves from the enemies of the Lord. Those who will firmly take their stand upon God’s word, and obey his commandments, will be called old-fashioned and singular. But God designed that his people should be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, purifying unto himself a peculiar people.”¹⁹

“It was by associating with idolaters and joining in their festivities that the Hebrews were led to transgress God’s law and bring His judgments upon the nation. So now it is by leading the followers of Christ to associate with the ungodly and unite in their amusements that Satan is most successful in alluring them into sin. . . . God requires of His people now as great a distinction from the world, in customs, habits, and principles, as He required of Israel anciently. If they faithfully follow the teachings of His word, this distinction will exist; it cannot be otherwise.”²⁰

“Satan has a large confederacy, his church. Christ calls them the synagogue of Satan because the members are the children of sin. The members of Satan’s church have been constantly working to cast off the divine law, and confuse the distinction between good and evil. Satan is working with great power in and through the children of disobedience to exalt treason and apostasy as truth and loyalty. And at this time the power of his satanic inspiration is moving the living agencies to carry out the great rebellion against

God that commenced in heaven.”²¹

“If we wish to be adopted into the family of God, to become children of the heavenly King, we must comply with His conditions; we must come out from the world and stand as a peculiar people before the Lord, obeying His precepts and serving Him.”²²

“The Lord has singled us out and made us subjects of His marvelous mercy. Shall we be charmed with the pratings of the apostate? Shall we choose to take our stand with Satan and his host? Shall we join with the transgressors of God’s law? Rather let it be our prayer: ‘Lord, put enmity between me and the serpent.’ If we are not at enmity with his works of darkness, his powerful folds encircle us, and his sting is ready at any moment to be driven to our hearts. We should count him a deadly foe. We should oppose him in the name of Christ. Our work is still onward. We must battle for every inch of ground. Let all who name the name of Christ clothe themselves with the armor of righteousness.”²³

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¹ *The Great Controversy*, p. 566.

² *The Review and Herald*, June 1, 1886.

³ *Ibid.*, January 1, 1889.

⁴ *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 280, 281.

⁵ *The Great Controversy*, pp. 588, 589.

⁶ *The Review and Herald*, January 23, 1908.

⁷ *The Great Controversy*, p. 581.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 607.

⁹ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 975.

¹⁰ *The Signs of the Times*, June 18, 1894.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, April 7, 1898.

¹² *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 366.

¹³ *Ibid.*, vol. 19, p. 165.

¹⁴ *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 559.

¹⁵ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 8, p. 108.

¹⁶ *The Sanctified Life*, p. 65.

¹⁷ *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 554, 555.

¹⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 17.

¹⁹ *The Review and Herald*, May 13, 1890.

²⁰ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 458.

²¹ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 16.

²² *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 110.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 595, 596.



Delegates at the reorganization of the South Brazilian Union in December 1996.



One of our new chapels in Romania



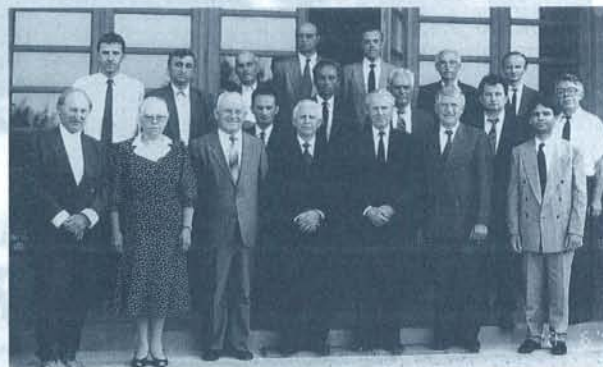
Delegates at the reorganization of the North Brazilian Union in December 1996.



Delegates at the Philippine Union Conference



Missionary school choir singing at the Natural Health Seminar in Sao Paulo, Brazil, November 1996.



Delegation of the Yugoslavian Union held in Budapest, Hungary, July 1996.



Our elementary school in Brasilia, North Brazil.



Conference meeting in Gabrovo, Bulgaria

PICTORIAL NEWS

*"They're coming
one by one" in
Kenya.*



*"They're coming one by
one" in Mozambique.*



*"They're
coming one by
one" in the
Netherlands.*



*"They're coming one
by one" in England.*



New believers in Mexico



Portion of candidates for baptism in Kenya.



*Brethren from Kakelo near Kisumu, Kenya, who have recently
joined our church.*



A group of believers in Bunyore, Kenya.

The Beauty of the Body

by Rubens J. Araujo

Long before any physician could ever dream of gazing inside a cell through the powerful electron microscope, the amazed patriarch David had already declared: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Ps. 139:14. I am sure that if he would witness what we can see today, his words would be even more eloquent and powerful.

The more that scientists study about the human body, the more they realize how much still needs to be explored. More than any other organ, the brain, for example, continues to fascinate the wise of this world. Men cannot reach "the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God;" and with Paul can declare, "How unsearchable are his judgments!" Rom. 11:33. More complex and sophisticated than any man-made computer, our brain weighs little more than one kilogram, which means only 2% of our total body weight. Nevertheless, it is from here that the whole body is controlled. From this "center of operations," daily proceeds more than 100 billion connections with the nervous system. This means that it is able to make more connections than all the telephone systems of the entire world. It is amazing to think that each of the 100 trillion cells that a person normally has, can accommodate 10,000 private lines! "The nerves proceeding from the brain control the body. By the brain nerves,

mental impressions are conveyed to all the nerves of the body as by telegraph wires; and they control the vital action of every part of the system. All the organs of motion are governed by the communications they receive from the brain." ¹

A sick body

It is exactly when the body ceases to work in a harmonious manner that it starts to become sick. Therefore, disunity and rebellion put the whole being in danger, and need to be feared as a terrible, horrendous cancer. Let us consider how this develops on the cellular level.

Cancer is the new growth of tissue resulting from a continuous proliferation of abnormal cells that have the ability to invade and destroy other tissues. The most significant attribute of malignant tumors is their ability to spread beyond the site of origin. Cancer may invade neighboring tissues by direct extension or infiltration, or it may disseminate to distant sites, forming secondary growths known as metastases. So, these rebellious cells get wildly out of control.

Likewise, as professed Christians, we can also become cancerous cells. If we fail to serve the Head (Christ) faithfully, we will not only destroy ourselves, but contaminate others and become "spiritual metastases." How? By allowing the enemy to have access to our souls, suggesting that we, on our own, are able to control those things that belong only to

God. Unfortunately, it is human nature to seek power and try to control the work. That is why we do not tend to naturally have confidence in the methods of labor of our co-workers, simply because they do not reflect our own personalities. Therefore, we feel free to condemn or disdain the sincere efforts of our more simple and uneducated brethren. In doing so, we are retarding the advancement of the Lord's cause.

Especially in these last days, it will be Satan's main effort to lead us to work independently, without considering the ideas of others. Many believe that at this time we need no form of religious organization. However, this fancy theory has no other author than the devil, the originator of disorder and anarchy. He wants to misuse us, and as untrained horses, force us to pull in different directions, reaching nowhere. May I say there might be some very strong "horses" in our midst? However, they have not yet learned to pull the "chariot" in partnership with others, or to work as a team. Just as pride caused the fall of Lucifer, the same sentiments have often stolen the church's peace, prosperity, and harmony in our days. "Alas, that pride, unbelief, and selfishness, like a foul cancer, are eating out vital godliness from the heart of many a professed Christian!" ²

When men and women start acting independently, manifesting through pride that self-opinion is the only voice to be heard and followed, they are in real danger.

This is not in line with our Maker's purpose. By the way God has designed us, He manifests His plan to see His children interacting in harmony, because no one possesses all the abilities to build up a perfect body. If we really want to obey our Master's guidelines, we must "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Yes, we need to be watchful; "looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." Heb. 12:14, 15.

An organized body

God has organized the human frame in such a way that it is rightly called "body" only as it functions as a whole. As He "formed man," He "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. 2:7. The divine "breath of life" reached every cell, and not only the nostrils (in order that it be not more exalted than the other members—for man would not walk

with his nose in the air), but rather that the whole body could act like a "living soul."

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free. . . . 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. . . . 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 Cor. 12:12, 13, 21, 24–27.

Can you imagine the results if each of the 100 trillion cells decided to do what they wished without considering the brain's directions? The body could not be called "body," because it would not act like one. It could not survive for even a second. As we talked about the body, we could think only in terms of cells or isolated organs. But a single cell cannot accomplish even a simple work such as raising a glass of water to drink it. Each and every cell is part of a team. Similar cells grouped together are called tissues, while similar tissues are gathered to make the organs; and many organs that perform the same functions, make up body systems to compose the whole.

The twelve tribes of Israel with their peculiarities mingled together, are supposed to be a great power in the world. In spite of the different characteristics of each tribe, they are to act as a well

organized and disciplined body. Under the theocracy, Israel was an example of order and organization. That was why their enemies—although greater in number and might—could not prevail against them. Balaam, with all his enchantments, could not curse the people whom God Himself elected as His holy priesthood and chosen generation.

When the visible Head was manifested in flesh among the Jews, He also chose twelve disciples as the pillars of His Christian church. "In these first disciples was presented marked diversity. They were to be the world's teachers, and they represented widely varied types of character. In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these men, differing in natural characteristics and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ's object to secure. To this end He sought to bring them into unity with Himself. The burden of His labor for them is expressed in His prayer to His Father, 'That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us;' 'that the world may know that Thou has sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.' John 17:21, 23."³

Christ, the Head and center of conversion

Christ Himself organized His church, as He laid hands upon His disciples. He knew beforehand, that in order for His glory to be manifested, they were in need of being one with Him, as He was one with the Father.

"The Lord wants every one of us to have a deeper, richer experience in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He desires that we shall grow in knowledge, not earthward, but



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heavenward, upward to Christ our living Head. How high, how great is this knowledge to be?—To the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. We cannot grow too much, we cannot gather up too many of the precious rays of light that God sends us. The Lord wants every one of us to be sanctified through the truth. He wants us to stand in a position where Jesus can move, upon our hearts, where his Spirit shall be poured out upon us, where we shall be representatives of Christ as he is a representative of the Father. The Lord would have us to be lights amid the moral darkness that prevails in the world. We should not be light and trifling, but have solidity of character.

Christ would be represented by His children; Christ would be speaking through us to men, and we should carry an atmosphere about us that would breathe of heaven. We should not only be gathering light, but also diffusing light, constantly flashing new rays of glory among the churches.”⁴

In order to see His desire fulfilled in His followers—the perfecting of the body, Christ has made His Spirit available to us. He “gave gifts unto men.” “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come

and knowledge and the great multitude could accept their message. In this time of great diversity of ideas and faith, especially among so-called Christians, God yearns for His church to reflect its early condition. It is our privilege and duty to make this unity manifest before the world. “How desirable such a state of things now! But apostasy with its dividing and blighting influence marred the beauty of the fair church and clothed her in sackcloth. Division and disorder have been the result.”⁵

No walls of distinction

If Christ would be manifest in flesh in our midst today, perhaps His Spirit would be no less grieved than in the time of His last moments with the disciples. After more than three years with their Master, they had not yet learned the precious lesson of humility, the key to unity. They were still stubborn and selfish. They were striving among themselves as to who was the greatest.

Nothing else could cause greater pain to Jesus than to see His followers wrestling among themselves for distinction or supremacy. His heart starts bleeding again, as the sad memory of the original commotion in heaven is repeated again before Him. How could He convince His beloved ones that while they were looking for defects in one another, and were dwelling upon mistakes, giving place to unkind criticism, they were losing sight of their Saviour?

The enemy of our souls, together with his confederates, are watching with fiendish delight the disunity among the professed believers in the three angels' messages. They know that while walls of sectarianism, caste and nationalism exist, they

“It is the purpose of God that His children shall blend in unity. Do they not expect to live together in the same heaven?”

What faith must come in, what love one for another must exist! If we draw nigh to God, we shall draw nigh to one another. We cannot draw nigh to the same cross without coming into unity of spirit. . . . If this unity did but exist, it would speak to the world of the power of God manifested in his children. Christ has said: ‘By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one another.’ If this unity existed, we should bear to the world our divine credentials;

in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Eph. 4:8, 11–13.

Let us consider more on this point. These gifts were given for the perfecting of the body of disciples and they had the privilege of witnessing the fulfillment of this promise. As never before in history, the church of God in this world needs the divine credentials. The first Christians were one in faith

have nothing to fear, because the time and energy of the saints will be spent in fighting one another. Why should they fear the people that, instead of praying like John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20) are actually antagonizing each other, saying, "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas"? The great point that we are missing is: "Is Christ divided?" ¹ 1 Cor. 1:12, 13. Of course not! Nevertheless, professed Advent believers are dividing the holy body of Jesus, as the Roman soldiers did with His garment at Calvary!

"It is the purpose of God that His children shall blend in unity. Do they not expect to live together in the same heaven? Is Christ divided against Himself? Will He give His people success before they sweep away the rubbish of evil surmising and discord, before the laborers, with unity of purpose, devote heart and mind and strength to the work so holy in God's sight? Union brings strength; disunion, weakness. United with one another, working together in harmony for the salvation of men, we shall indeed be 'laborers together with God.' " ⁶

May the Holy Spirit awaken us to realize what is happening, and with bitter tears repent and confess our faults to one another. Unless we do so, we will not be ready for the outpouring of the latter rain. Now is the time established by God for us to put aside all our differences. Today is the day for a close relationship with our Lord, the Head, and with our fellow believers. All the barriers of caste, color, and nationality should melt down by the infinite power of heavenly love. "The plan of redemption embraces every soul that God has created. The walls of sectarianism and caste and race will fall down when the true mission-

ary spirit enters the hearts of men. Prejudice is melted away by the love of God. All will realize that they are to become laborers together with God. Both the Ethiopian and the white race are God's purchased possession." ⁷

"In regard to the question of caste and color, nothing would be gained by making a decided distinction, but the Spirit of God would be grieved. We are all supposed to be preparing for the same heaven. We have the same heavenly Father and the same Redeemer, who loved us and gave Himself for us all, without any distinction. We are nearing the close of this earth's history, and it does not become any child of God to have a proud, haughty heart and turn from any soul who loves God, or to cease to labor for any soul for whom Christ has died. When the love of Christ is cherished in the heart as it should be, when the sweet, subduing spirit of the love of God fills the soul-temple, there will be no caste, no pride of nationality; no difference will be made because of the color of the skin. Each one will help the one who needs tender regard and consolation, of whatever nationality he may be." ⁸

"The talents to be found among the English and Americans should be united with the talents of those of every other nationality. And each nationality should labor earnestly for every other nationality. There is but one Lord, one faith. Our effort should be to answer Christ's prayer for His disciples, that they should be one." ⁹

Let us make the prayer of Jesus in John 17 our daily study, because therein exists a science that every child of God must understand. When this prayer is fully believed and practiced, unity of action will be seen in our ranks. As the world sees this harmony and union among men

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of varied dispositions, it will be the strongest witness that God has sent His Son into this world to save sinners, and has transformed His children to reflect to His own moral image. The beauty of the body will appear before the whole universe . . . and Christ will come again. AMEN! R

¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 69.

² *That I May Know Him*, p. 167.

³ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 20.

⁴ *The Review and Herald*, March 4, 1890.

⁵ *Early Writings*, p. 140.

⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 240.

⁷ *The Southern Work*, p. 55.

⁸ *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, p. 85.

⁹ *The Publishing Ministry*, p. 201.

The Reformation of Asa

by B. Monteiro

In the days when Israel and Judah were divided, there was a certain period of about forty years of consistent evildoing in the land of Israel. Jeroboam had just died, and during this time of continued apostasy the culpable kings included Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri.

However, during much of this period, a brighter picture was found in the kingdom of Judah. We read in 2 Chronicles 14:2–5 about Asa, the ruler of Judah. “Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God: for he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the *sun* [margin] images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.”

Praise God for this step in the right direction! Asa took a stand and took action—and Judah was blessed with peace. But eventually, as is often the case when a person or nation shuns the powers of darkness and progresses toward heaven, a time of test was inevitable. We read in verse 9 that “Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots” came to invade Judah. On Asa’s part, every precaution had been taken; he had made practical preparation. He had built fenced cities in Judah, equipping

them with walls, towers, gates, and bars. His carefully trained army consisted of over half a million mighty men of valor.

But let’s face reality. Logically speaking, even 580,000 soldiers are no match for “a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots.”

“The opposing armies now stood face to face. It was a time of test and trial to those who served the Lord. Had every sin been confessed? Had the men of Judah full confidence in God’s power to deliver? Such thoughts as these were in the minds of the leaders. From every human viewpoint the vast host from Egypt would sweep everything before it. But **in time of peace Asa had not been giving himself to amusement and pleasure; he had been preparing for any emergency.** He had an army trained for conflict; he had endeavored to lead his people to make their peace with God. And now, although his forces were fewer in number than the enemy, his faith in the the One whom he had made his trust did not weaken.”¹

Brethren, how is it with us? How are we investing the fleeting moments of this present hour of relative peace? Day by day the signs of the end are fast fulfilling. Are we too caught up in the rush of things to be preparing for the emergency soon to come? Are we truly making our peace with God, searching our hearts to see that every sin is confessed—or are we chasing after as many “borderline” amusements and pleasures as

we can squeeze in before the great and powerful day of the Lord? Often there are places to go and things to do which are not entirely against our principles. They may be in “gray” areas where a divided heart will insist on loitering. Might we even be wasting time on “good” things to the neglect of the **best** things? The psalmist prayed, “unite my heart to fear thy name” (Ps. 86:11). He, like Asa, yearned to render wholehearted, undivided service to his Lord.

When the crisis came to Asa, “having sought the Lord in the days of prosperity, the king could now rely upon Him in the day of adversity. His petitions showed that he was not a stranger to God’s wonderful power.”²

As today we seek the Lord in days of peace and prosperity, enjoying the blessed privileges of health, comfort, and sound nutrition, our minds have every advantage for clear thought processes. Are we using these best energies to establish a closer walk with the Lord? Or are we frittering away precious moments, fraught with eternal weight? Can we echo the consistent experience of the apostle Paul: “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Phil. 4:11–13.

When the crisis came to Asa, what did he do? We learn in 2 Chronicles 14:11 that “Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.”

“Here is brought before us the fact that when ancient Israel trusted in the Lord their God He always

wrought for them. Here was a large army; thousands and thousands were brought up against them, and it looked to them that with their small army they would certainly be overcome. But here we see that Asa's trust was in the Lord God of Israel. It was not in their number, but he believed that the Lord could deliver them by few as well as by many. . . .

"This is an appropriate prayer for us to make. Our prospects are anything but flattering. There are vast numbers arrayed against the truth, whom we must meet in presenting the light to others. Our hope is not in our knowledge of the truth, and in our own ability, but in the living God. And if, like king Asa, we have educated ourselves, and educated and trained others, to be familiar with the truth, who wear the armor of righteousness, ready to meet the enemies of God and the truth, we have done our part of the work in the way of preparation; and then the living faith in God must be exercised to work with the efforts of the workers. God's glory is at stake. And there should be decided effort as far as human effort is concerned, and living faith for the mighty God to manifest His power, else all will prove a failure."³

How did the Lord reward the faith of Asa and his people? "The Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the Lord, and before his host; and they carried away very much spoil." 2 Chron. 14:12, 13. Thus, God intervened to disrupt the enemies to their own destruction.

How is it with us? Where is our battlefield? "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wicked-

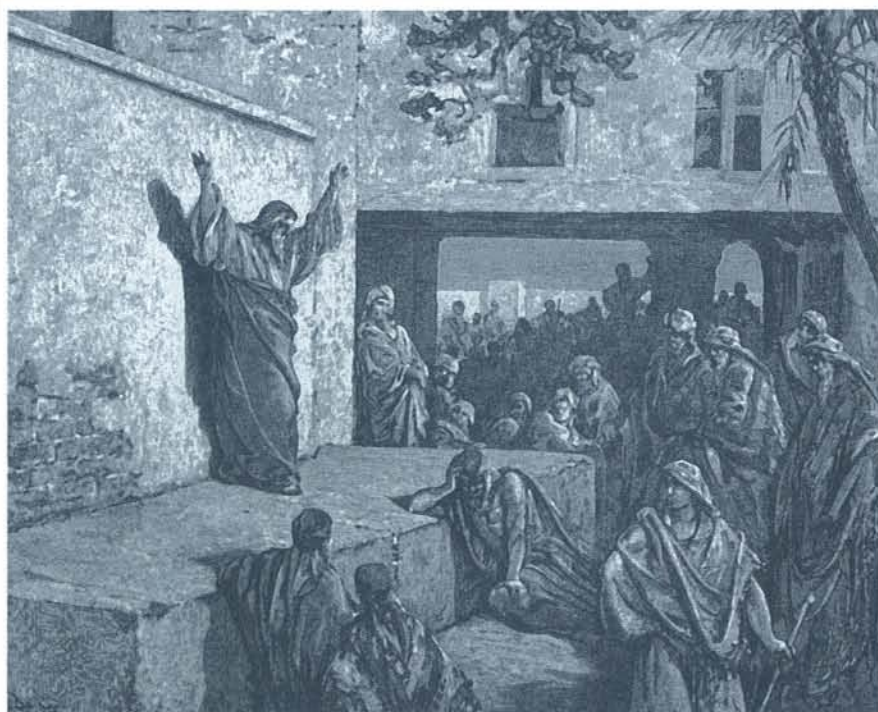
ness in high places." Eph. 6:12. The present warfare is heated, but we must remember that we are to "be not afraid nor dismayed by the reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." 2 Chron. 20:15.

The servant of the Lord elaborates: "Oh that we could take this point into consideration, that the work in which we are engaged is not our work, but God's work, and we as humble instruments are laborers together with Him; and with an eye single to God's glory, not mistake the beginning of the Christian life for its consummation, but see the necessity of training upon the earth to prepare us for doing God's will! We are not to lift up ourselves, not to be self-confident, but to trust in God, knowing that He is willing and able to help us. God will work with His people, but we want to be in that position where our trust and confidence will become firm in Him.

"I wanted to bring these things before you, that you might see the importance of our coming into working order individually. We

should examine our own hearts, and see that everything that is not in accordance with God's will is separated from us. There is with human nature one great difficulty: where the individual is not connected with God in any wise, the natural disposition reveals itself. Now, if Satan can crowd selfishness in among those connected with this precious work of God, if they become self-righteous, independent of their brethren, independent of God, we need not expect that the blessing of God will attend our work; but if our hearts are pure, and uncorrupted with selfishness, we shall present the truth as it is in Jesus; and then we will have the blessing of the Lord.

"There is constant danger of dropping Jesus out of your labor; but when the truth is presented in meekness and grace as it is in Jesus, it is then you reveal Jesus Christ in every effort you make, and as you seek to approach souls you are revealing Christ to all those with whom you are brought in contact. If you are resting upon the loving Saviour as your only hope, if self is



Azariah exhorting the Israelites to a higher standard

hid with Christ in God, God will be with you, and you will be with Him. You will feel and know the power of true religion; your influence will be used wholly for God's glory; you will not have a high estimate of yourselves. The path is narrow that leads to eternal life. You will find many difficulties in your way, which you must meet and overcome in the name of Jesus. What discouragements the disciples met when they saw Him in whom their hopes were centered mocked in the judgment hall, scourged, and suffering the most shameful death by crucifixion! And what triumph on the part of Satan as he bruised His heel when Jesus was nailed to the cross, amid the revilings of evil men who claimed the highest piety! After He had been inclosed in the tomb, His enemies expected to see the disciples discouraged, ashamed, and deny, as did Peter, all knowledge of Him. But when these disciples went forth in faith, in holy boldness preaching a risen Saviour, their enemies marveled; for they did not present Jesus but as a Prince of life, risen from the dead, ascended into the heavens to make intercession for His followers, when their enemies and others took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Thus should it be with believers of the truth.

"Here, then, is the power that the people of God are to have, and which will give them the victory in these last days. Every ism is existing. Every kind of false doctrine is prevailing everywhere, and the truth of God that is preached now involves a cross. But the truth must go to all cities and villages, into the highways and hedges. The apostle exhorts believers to 'fight the good fight of faith,' and 'run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.' Men are always trying to make an easier way to heaven than that which the Lord has provided. They do not want to run and to strive as the Lord has

commanded. But we can see that there were conditions that the children of Israel were to comply with on their part. They were to seek the Lord, the children with the parents. This is the very work we are to do. There is not one half the seeking of the Lord there should be with us. We know not how soon our cases may come up in the Judgment, and in our present condition many will be disowned of Jesus. We are too apt to let the little cares of this life take our attention, and as soon as we do this we are bereft of our strength.

"What we want at the present time is to examine our own hearts, to discover if there is anything in them that is not right before God. If we teach the truth according to our own ways, we shall see that there will not always be perfect harmony as there should be. But if we teach the truth as it is in Jesus, we shall teach it in the spirit of the true Educator; and we will not have various opinions, and cling to our own ideas with tenacity, but we will see eye to eye. And while we thus teach, believing that Jesus will help us to present the truth as it is in Him, then we may expect His help, and we will have it."⁴

Following the Judah's success, the prophet Azariah confirmed to Asa, "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them." 2 Chron. 15:2-4. As they sought the Lord still more fervently, He foiled the plots of their adversaries.

Greatly encouraged by seeing the fulfillment of God's sure promises, "Asa soon led out in a second reformation in Judah. He 'put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken

from Mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the Lord, that was before the porch of the Lord.'" ⁵

Dear brethren and sisters today, after enjoying many fruits of victory in Christ, is your heart now ready for a "second" reformation—**further** reformation? Have you come up one step toward higher ground, yet hesitate to go for the next? Are you afraid of following Jesus all the way up the narrow path—especially when the incline is steep?

"We must press the battle to the gate. There is no time for us to lose. There is no time for us to try to make a smooth path for our feet. We must take it as it is, with all its inconveniences and troubles, knowing that the God of Israel is by your side, and we shall see of His salvation.

"My brethren and sisters, let us remember here is the evidence that God will work. You are not to trust in any power but that of the Lord God of Israel. But if you have enmity in your hearts, you cannot expect that God will let His blessing rest upon you. No one will enter the city of God with anything that defiles. We must get ready for the latter rain. The earth is to be lighted with the glory of the third angel—not a little corner only, but the whole earth. You may think that the work you are doing now is lost; but I tell you it is not lost. When the message shall go with a loud cry, those who hear the truth now will spring to the front and work with mighty power. But you must have faith. It is no use to enter cities unless you have faith in God, and believe that a work is to be accomplished there. You must believe that it is Christ who is by our side, and is finding access to souls; and when you have done the best you can, you must believe, and commit it all to Jesus."⁶ **R**

¹ *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 110, 111 [Emphasis supplied].

² *Ibid.*, p. 111.

³ *The Review and Herald*, May 10, 1887.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Prophets and Kings*, p. 112.

⁶ *The Review and Herald*, May 10, 1887.

“This Is Life Eternal . . .”

[A sermon presented by Bro. A. C. Sas, at Roanoke, Virginia, U.S.A., on April 13, 1996.]

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” Eph. 3:14–19.

In these Bible verses the desire of the apostle Paul is made manifest, that the believers should understand the depth, the length, the breadth, and the height of the love of God and that they be filled with the fullness of God.

Jesus said in John 17:3: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

These Bible verses are not unknown to anyone of us. Life eternal depends on a complete and full knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ: “This is life eternal that they might know thee.”

Do we know God? There are many people that make a great issue of the name of God. They want to convince everyone that God’s name is Jehovah. Is that what Jesus meant here?

In the same chapter of John 17, verses 25 and 26, Jesus said: “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast

loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

The disciples of Jesus were Jewish people. They knew very well the meaning of the word Jehovah or YHWH. Jesus in His prayer to the Father says, Father, I have known Thee, but the world have not known Thee. And these that are with me have known Thee also. And yet He says: “I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.” Jesus knew the name of God; but that was not sufficient—just to know that His name is Jehovah. In order that we may know God, we must know His attributes. We must know His character.

The apostle Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 1:17: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever.” Our God whom we should know is invisible—cannot be seen by our natural eyes—immortal, and He is the only wise God.

If He is invisible, how do we know that He exists? How can we know His character? Hebrew 11:6 tells us: “Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” In order that we may know God, we must have a very important thing: faith. He that comes to God must believe. Without faith we cannot know Him, neither can we please Him.

What is faith? In the first verse of Hebrews chapter 11, the apostle tells us: “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” A substance is something that is tangible—something that one can touch. It has a substance. When I was in school learning grammar, I was taught that a noun may be concrete or abstract. An abstract noun is that which has existence between two things. For example, love, hatred, faith, etc., are classed as abstract

nouns. But the concrete nouns are those that have existence on their own. It has no relationship between two things.

The apostle Paul tells us that faith is a substance. A substance of what? “Of things hoped for.” It is a substance, and also an evidence of “things not seen.”

Do we believe that faith has great power? We have read in verse 6 that without faith we cannot please God, and if we have faith, we please Him. Reading the last part of verse five it tells us about the experience of Enoch, that “before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” He could not please God if he had no faith, and because he had faith, what was the result? He was translated from the earth without seeing death. He was the first one that was translated to heaven. Such a powerful faith had Enoch that he obtained the qualification to be translated from this earth.

Do we have such a faith? If not, why not? How do we obtain faith? In Romans 10:17 the apostle Paul tells us that “faith cometh by hearing.” Hearing what? The Word of God.

When the apostle wrote these verses—that hearing the Word of God produces faith—he was acquainted with the custom of the people of reading aloud. As they were walking they were reading, and passersby, whether they wanted or not, heard the reading, and many of them by hearing obtained faith.

We can obtain faith not only by hearing but also by reading. In John 5:39 Jesus tells us, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life.”

And what is eternal life? Knowing God, His character, His attributes, and Jesus Christ whom He had sent, not only in theory but by a personal experience.

Who is Jesus? The apostle Paul tells us who He was in heaven. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found

in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:5-8). In verse 6 Paul says that Jesus was "in the form of God."

In the gospel of John 1:1-4 the evangelist tells us: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

Jesus is represented here as the Word. He was with God, and He was God. And Paul says that, "he did not think it robbery to be equal with God." In other words, He did not usurp His right of being equal with God. What did He do? "He humbled himself, took upon him the form of a man, and he humbled himself being obedient to death."

In John 1:14 it tells us that that Word which was God was made flesh. For centuries the incarnation of Jesus Christ was a subject of discussion, and until now the full understanding of His accepting to become a man remains a great mystery.

How was God made flesh? Can we explain it? The apostle Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 3:16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

Life eternal is this: "That we may know Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Jesus is not known by the world. Life eternal depends on whether we know Jesus Christ whom God has sent.

Let us consider Jesus in heaven. We read from the word of inspiration: "Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity. God over all, blessed forevermore. The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father."¹

Here is another statement: "In speaking of His preexistence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that

there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him."²

This statement is powerful. There was never a time when Jesus was not with God; and Jesus was God. John tells us that in Him was life. That life was inherent. It was His Own. He had life unborrowed, underived. And yet, he did not think it robbery to leave His exalted position and come to this world and take upon Himself the form of a man, nor did He usurp the right of remaining in the realm of glory and staying with the holy angels, but He was made flesh. Jesus came to His own, as the apostle John says in the first chapter of his gospel, but His own received Him not. His own did not know Him.

What did they think of Jesus? Many thought, "Oh, this may be a prophet." Others said, "He is a good man." Others said, "He is a miracle performer." Still others opinioned: "Oh, He is a good supplier of food. If we are hungry, we should be with Him; He will feed us." Others thought, "He is a good physician. If we are sick, we will go to Him and He will heal our diseases." But there were also those who said, "He is a great deceiver. He deceives the people." Many of the Jews said, "He is an illegitimate."

Even the devils recognized that Jesus was divine, that He came from God. When on earth the devils said, "We know that thou art the son of the Most High."

In Luke 4:5-8 we read how Satan, who previously was Lucifer, who was a created being, asked the Creator to worship him. And what was Jesus' answer? Who is the only object of worship? God, the Creator.

Today there are many, even among those who call themselves Christians, who say that Jesus was created. They affirm that Jesus is a creature, and they try to find some Bible verses to support their wrong idea. If Jesus was a created being and not God, the Creator, He should not be worshipped, because He Himself said plainly that God alone is to be worshipped.

But we read in the Bible the

decree of God about Jesus: "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1:6.

In Revelation we read about the attitude of the angels regarding adoration.

"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." Rev. 22:8, 9.

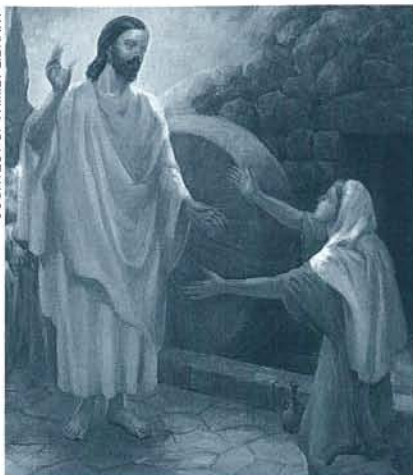
On two occasions John wanted to worship the angel, and the angel said, "Don't do it. I, too, am a created being. I am your fellowservant. Worship God because He is the only One to be worshipped." A created being cannot be worshipped, or must not be worshipped, only the Creator.

So, now we have a question in our mind, was Jesus worshipped when He was on earth? And if He was, did He, like the angel, refuse to accept the worship, or did He accept the worship? A few statements in this sense will answer the question: "And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Matt. 8:2.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." John 9:35-38.

There are about 13 Bible verses from the Gospels that tell us that Jesus was worshipped while on earth, and He never rebuked those who worshipped Him.

Jesus is not a created being. He is the Creator. He accepted worship, not only while on earth, but also in heaven. This is what the apostle Paul declares: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should



Mary Magdalene worshipped Christ at His resurrection.

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:10, 11.

Every knee should bow before Jesus in and on earth and every mouth should confess that Jesus is what? He is Lord. Jesus is Alpha and Omega.

Jesus says about Himself: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev. 22:12, 13.

If we know Jesus as God, as the Creator, and at the same time as One that made Himself of no reputation to set us free from the bondage of sin, and gave us an example of a willing obedience, if we know Him as such, then we have eternal life as a promise, which begins here on earth. It is a guarantee of God that we will have it. And if we continue steadfast to the end, it is ours. We have it.

Without faith it is impossible to know God. Faith is the substance, but in Hebrews 11:6 we read that God is a rewarder to all those who come to God by faith. What is this reward? It is everlasting life.

How strong should our faith be? How strong was our faith in the past when we first believed? How strong was the faith of the heroes described in Hebrews chapter eleven 11?

Let us read a few verses: "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire,

escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. 11:33–35.

The faith of our forefathers was very strong. They did that which, humanly speaking, was impossible. Do we have such faith? Why did many of our forefathers also accept mockings and scourgings, and imprisonment? Because they had faith. Their faith was unshakable. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented." Heb. 11:37.

By faith many of them did not perform miracles to escape from suffering, but they endured suffering. It is very easy to believe and have faith when everything is peaceful, and there is no controversy. When we have no problems, no difficulties it is easy to have faith. But when we have to face adversity, then our faith is tested to see whether we believe or not in God's promises.

When we have sickness in our family, when we are assailed with poverty, when we have domestic problems and struggles, then we show whether or not we have faith.

In the church we show when we have faith—not only when everything is smooth but when adversity comes, when we see how great the work we have to accomplish and how short we are of human and financial means. When we see these things, then we have to show our faith.

We often wonder about this Bible verse: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Jer. 12:5.

What do we understand from these Bible verses? If we have faith only when everything is peaceful and things run smoothly, what will happen when the time of adversity will come?

If we cannot keep pace with those that are walking, how shall we compete with horses?

On one occasion the disciples asked Jesus: "Increase our faith." Luke 17:5. And the centurion said, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Mark 9:24.

If we have faith, if we know God, and if we know Jesus Christ, not in theory only but through a personal knowledge, a personal experience with the Lord, and if we know this, we will say together with Job, "I know that my redeemer liveth." Job 19:25.

How did Job know his Redeemer? He had not seen him personally, but he said, "I know that he lives," because he had faith, and his faith was strong. The apostle Paul tells us of his own experience: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12.

Brethren, we must have this faith. We must know in whom we believe. And we must declare, I know in whom I believe. I know my Redeemer. I know that He is coming. I know that He is the Rewarder. I know that He is able to keep me. I know that He will provide the means that we need for the accomplishment of our task.

If we say, I know that the Lord will provide for all needs of His cause, then our faith will increase and will reach beyond the visible. We will have a personal experience with the Lord.

We have many examples in the Bible of heroes of faith. And why are their experiences written? So that we may learn a lesson; so that we may imitate their examples; so that we may know our God, that we may know Jesus Christ, and that we may have faith in Him and His promises.

We should unite our voices with the disciples "Lord, increase our faith," so that we may be able to trust. We should plead with the Lord to help us know Him better by personal experience. May God help us and bless us that we all may, by intimate experience, know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Amen. R

¹ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1126.

² *Lift Him Up*, p. 17.

Fun in Being a Friend

"I wish we had something *fun* to do," sighed eleven-year-old Ricky, with his freckled nose pressed firmly to the window pane.

"Did you finish your homework yet?" Mother asked, looking up from her sewing.

"Sure did. Now I'm ready for something different."

"Since you've already finished your chores for the day, why don't you pray that God will show you how to best use your free time?" Mother suggested.

"Okay," said Ricky.

A few minutes later, the shrill little voice of nine-year-old Judy rang through the living room. "Mom, Dad, look down the street!" she cried.

"What is it, honey?" Mother asked.

Darting back toward the front window, Ricky announced, "A moving van! Hey . . . not a bad looking vehicle!"

"But look at the ugly old car the people drove up in. Don't they have anything better than that?" said Judy.

"Interesting," Dad mused as he approached the window. "It looks like they're actually moving into the old Peterson house. That place has been abandoned for months. Great—now maybe they can spruce it up a bit and some of those dried-up weeds will finally be mowed."

"Mom, look! They have a little girl. But what about those strange old clothes she's wearing? . . . Hmmm . . .

I don't know if I'm really going to like her!" Judy said.

"Uh-oh," gasped Ricky. "The boy is in a . . . wheelchair! These kids are not going to be much fun to play with. . . ."

"Now, children," Father said. "Think for a minute. Is this the way Jesus would welcome new neighbors to His block?"

The children pondered for a moment.

"Well, not exactly," admitted Judy.

"But Dad," said Ricky, "What can we do to make the new neighbors feel welcome?"

"Well, after a long trip, maybe they're tired, hungry and thirsty," mentioned Mother.

"Let's take them some fruit juice and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!" Judy exclaimed, joyfully.

"That's a nice start," Mother smiled.

"Dad," Ricky noticed, "I don't see a father in the car. It's just a young-looking lady with the boy and girl, and a really old grandpa type of fellow was driving the rental van for them. Maybe . . . well, maybe we should give them a hand to unload."

"I think that's an excellent idea, son," agreed Dad.

"And after all their things are unpacked, we can plan on helping them with some of those old weeds."

"Mom, the Lord is good. Maybe the pretty pink dress that Aunt Sue gave me would fit that little girl exactly," Judy said. "And you know what else?"

"What, honey?"

"Ricky's prayer for something fun to do was answered!"

"For sure," said Ricky. "And now that you mention it, our Bible memory verse for this week was: 'He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.' Proverbs 14:21. Now that is *really* interesting—we're getting a chance to see our verse come to life! I like it when that happens!"

R

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