



the
REFORMATION
herald

Vol. 50, No. 5

Taking the Truth to
New Territory

The Highest Goal \ Yes, It Matters \ A Journey of Faith

the REFORMATION herald

Volume 50, Number 5

IN THIS ISSUE

Good News

• **The Highest Goal**
God is to shine through humanity. 4

• **“Purge Out . . . the Old Leaven”**
As we submit to the Holy Spirit, we are changed. 7

Character Builder

• **Yes, It Matters**
What we say or don't say can make a difference. 10

Digging Into Doctrine

• **The Word Was Made Flesh**
The conclusion of a series on the nature of Christ. 12

• **Is the Standard Being Raised Up—Or Trodden Down?**
God has given a standard for His people to live by. Do we appreciate it? 16

The Prophetic Word

• **Taking the Truth to New Territory**
This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world. 19

To Your Health!

• **Strike Out Stroke!**
A sudden death of brain cells can be permanently disabling. 23

Meet Today's Reformers

• **A Journey of Faith**
The testimony of a seeker after truth. 26

Home & Family

• **Communication**
Your children love your companionship. 29

• **SDARM World News** 30

Children's Corner

• **God's Care** 32



Official Church Publication of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement

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

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Creative Services G. Robles, D Lee

THE REFORMATION HERALD® (ISSN 0482-0843) features articles on Bible doctrine that will enrich the spiritual life of those who seek to know more about God. It is published bimonthly by the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference, P. O. Box 7240, Roanoke, VA 24019-0240, U.S.A.

Web: <http://www.sdarm.org>
e-mail: info@sdarm.org

Printed and distributed by Reformation Herald Publishing Association. Manuscripts, inquiries, address changes, subscriptions, payments, and donations should be mailed to the address below. Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, Virginia 24022.

Subscription rates:
United States US \$14.95
Foreign (air mail) US \$20.00
Single issue US \$ 3.50

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Reformation Herald, P. O. Box 7240, ROANOKE, VA 24019.

Vol. 50, No. 5; Copyright © 2009 September–October Issue;
Illustrations: iStockphoto.com on front cover and pp. 2, 10-14, 16, 19, 23; Stockxpert.com on pp. 2, 4, 21, 23, 25; SermonView.com on pp. 2, 5, 7, 12, 15, 23, 26, 28, 29; Gerson Robles on p. 3; Getty Images on pp. 30, 31; Dreamstime elsewhere unless specified.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

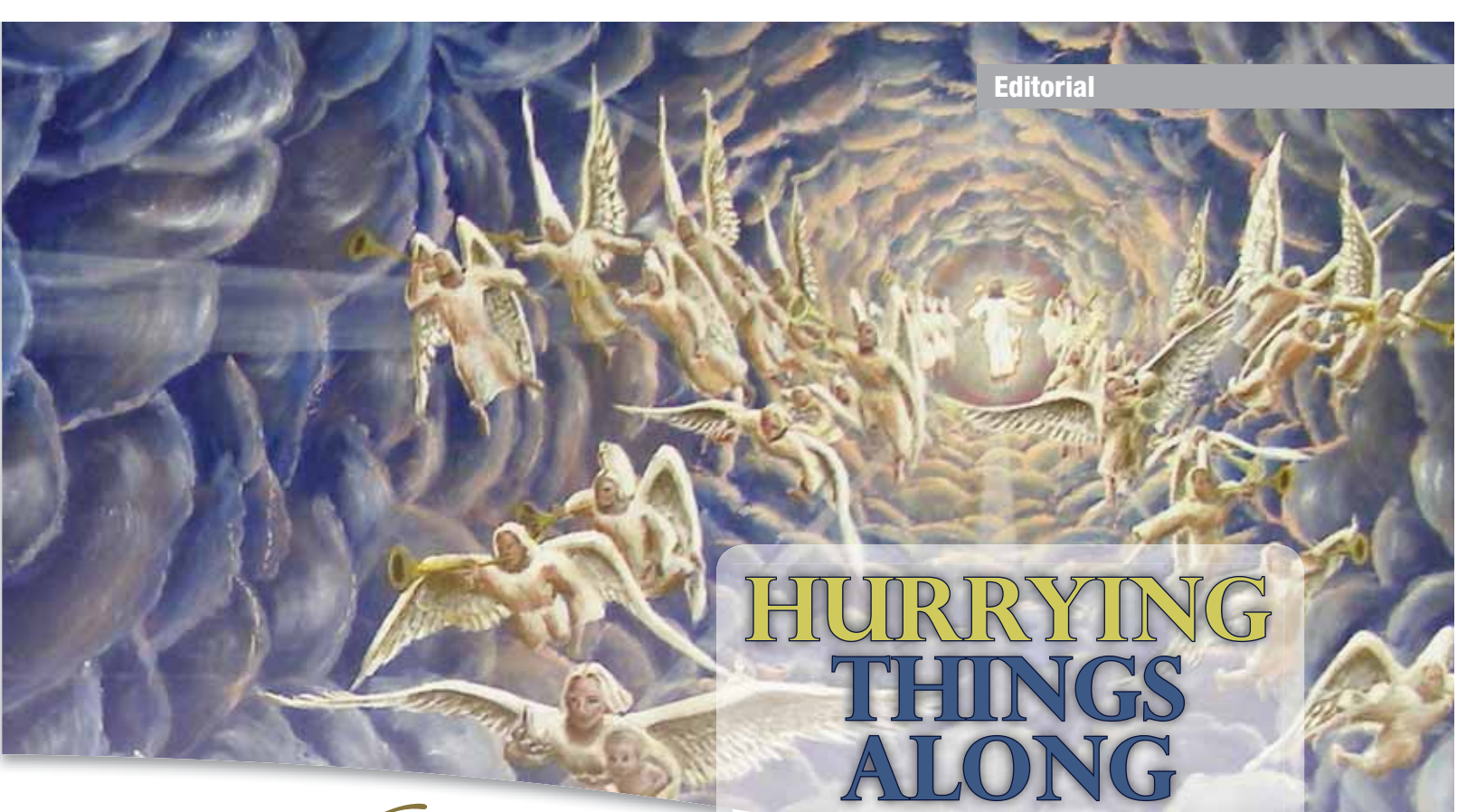
1. Title of Publication: The Reformation Herald
2. Publication No: USPS 0482-0843
3. Filing Date: September 29, 2009
4. Frequency of Issue: Bimonthly
5. Number of Issues: 6
6. Price: \$14.95 in US, \$20.00 in all other countries
7. Mailing Address: PO Box 7240, Roanoke, VA 24019-0240
8. Headquarters: 5240 Hollins Road, Roanoke, VA 24019
9. Publisher: Reformation Herald Publishing

Assn, P.O. Box 7240, Roanoke, VA 24019
Editor: D. Sureshkumar, 1373 Carlos Drive, Roanoke, VA 24019
10. Owner: Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference, 5240 Hollins Rd., Roanoke, VA 24019
11. Bondholders, Mortgage, and Other Security Holders: None
12. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and exempt status for federal income tax has not changed during preceding 12 months

13. Publication Title: The Reformation Herald
14. Issue Date: Vol 50, No. 5
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:
Average Actual
a. Total Number of Copies: 10,000 10,000
b. Paid and/or Requested:
(1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions 1,210 1,185
(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions 0 0
(3) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales, Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution 3,750 4,110

(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS 3,785 3,569
c. Total Paid and/or Requested [Sum of 15b(1),(2),(3),and(4)] 8,745 8,864
d. Free Distribution by Mail:
(1) Outside-County 0 0
(2) In-County 0 0
(3) Other Classes Mailed through the USPS 115 97
(4) Free Distribution Outside the Mail 489 459

e. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d&e) 604 556
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c & f) 9,349 9,420
g. Copies not Distributed 651 580
i. Total (Sum of 15g, and h.) 10,000 10,000
j. Percent paid and/or requested circulation: 94% 94%
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: Vol. 50, Number 5
17. Signature of Business Manager: Orlando Estevez



HURRYING THINGS ALONG

Would you like to reduce the level of suffering in this world? The best thing to do is to hasten the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. Do we really have that ability? Yes!

“By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord’s return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God. 2 Peter 3:12, margin. Had the church of Christ done her appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would before this have been warned, and the Lord Jesus would have come to our earth in power and great glory.”¹

The parable of the talents is widely known by most believers. Many diligently strive for excellence and thrift as a result of its noble teaching. Yet we oftentimes overlook the real purpose of these gifts. Talents are not given for personal ambition. They are designed for service, to be used as tools in the salvation of souls.

“In using the gifts that [God] has entrusted to our care for the salvation of souls, we transfer our wealth to the treasury of heaven. When we are seeking the glory of God and hastening unto the day of God, we are colaborers

with Christ, and our joy is not a base and fleeting emotion; but it is the joy of our Lord. We are elevated above the corroding, perplexing cares of this frail fickle world.”²

A more exalted work

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father’ (John 14:12). By this, Christ did not mean that the disciples would make more exalted exertions than He had made, but that their work would have greater magnitude. He did not refer merely to miracle working, but to all that would take place under the agency of the Holy Spirit. . . .

“As Christ’s representatives the apostles were to make a decided impression on the world. The fact that they were humble men would not diminish their influence, but increase it; for the minds of their hearers would be carried from them to the Saviour, who, though unseen, was still working with them. The wonderful teaching of the

apostles, their words of courage and trust, would assure all that it was not in their own power that they worked, but in the power of Christ.”³

As we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, He is able to do more than we ask or think. The one who seeks the promotion and exaltation of self will perish, while humble service for Christ and humanity will uplift and endure even unto eternity.

We believe in and love the second advent of Christ—so, let us seek to be part of the hastening process. When God’s love and the abiding principles of His law shine through frail earthen vessels, His glory is made known and the return of Christ may come much sooner. Maranatha! ❧

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- ¹ *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 633, 634.
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- ³ *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 22, 23.

THE HIGHEST Goal

*A*mong all the goals set before Christians, there is one that is considered the greatest. This perspective is found in the words uttered by Christ, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

This matter has aroused the thoughts of many professed Christians today. Some think that it is not necessary to strive to achieve such a level, so they do not even try. Others think it is impossible for sinful human beings to face this duty set before them.

Therefore, in what sense are we required to be perfect as God? Are there any other statements in the Word of God which confirm this point? Let us, from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, consider the character of God and His requirements with regard to our character.

God's character

When asked by Moses to see His glory, God revealed to him His true character: "The Lord passed by before [Moses], and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and

transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:6, 7).

This is the very character that Jesus Christ revealed to humanity when He came to this earth (John 1:14). "By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. . . . In His prayer for His disciples He says, 'I have declared unto them Thy name'—'merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.'"¹

A great task

As His work on earth was drawing to an end, praying to His Father, Jesus declared, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:18). By these words, Christ entrusted to His disciples the same work that He came to accomplish on this earth, an assignment with which we are also charged. The Word of God has many requirements as to how our life should be in regards to the glory revealed to Moses. Let us therefore consider those recommendations and find out what God is expecting of us.

Merciful. Speaking to His disciples Jesus said, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36). "The word 'therefore'



A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments

by Jackson Zamy

“God is ‘merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.’”

implies a conclusion, an inference from what has gone before. Jesus has been describing to His hearers the unfailing mercy and love of God, and He bids them therefore to be perfect.² These words were uttered by the Saviour of the world to show us that we should have a spirit of mercy in our dealing with our neighbors.

“To us has been given a service of mercy to perform for our fellow man. In performing this service, we are laboring together with God. We do well, then, to be merciful, even as our Father in heaven is merciful. . . . Mercy is a manifestation of divine love and is shown by those who, identified with God, serve Him by reflecting the light of heaven upon the pathway of their fellow creatures. The condition of many persons calls for the exercise of genuine mercy. Christians, in their dealing with one another, are to be controlled by principles of mercy and love.”³

Gracious. The Bible describes someone that is gracious as also being upright. It says, “Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous” (Psalm 112:4). He is also wise: “The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious” (Ecclesiastes 10:12). Those who are called to be God’s representatives should be gracious in words and actions.

“Those who will receive the most abundant reward will be those who have mingled with their activity and zeal, gracious, tender pity for the poor, the orphan, the oppressed, and the afflicted. But those who pass by on the other side, who are too busy to give attention to the purchase of the blood of Christ, who are full of doing the great things, will find themselves least and last.”⁴

Long-suffering. Slow to anger. The apostle Paul describes long-suffering as being part of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23). This shows that all Christians who are maintaining a good relationship with God and have the Holy Spirit living in them will manifest these elements, and

long-suffering is a part. We find also in the book of James the admonition: “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (1:19).

Many that are now claiming to be Christians do not have a sense of what it means to be long-suffering; they are likely to become discouraged with the difficulties of this life or are ready to lose their self-control when reproached or disregarded. But the pen of inspiration says, “Never should we lose control over ourselves. Let us ever keep before us the perfect Pattern. It is a sin to speak impatiently and fretfully or to feel angry—even though we do not speak. We are to walk worthy, giving a right representation of Christ. The speaking of an angry word is like flint striking flint: it at once kindles wrathful feelings. Never be like a chestnut bur.”⁵

Goodness. If we want to receive God’s approval, goodness will be seen in our life. For it is written in the book of the Proverbs that “A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord” (12:2). This actually constitutes a sign by which people will know if we are of God, and the apostle says, “He that doeth good is of God” (3 John 11).

In his letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul says, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (6:10). “Yet many live in this world as useless machines, as though they hardly existed. They brighten the path of none, they are a blessing to none. They live only to burden others. So far as their influence on the side of right is concerned, they are mere ciphers; but they tell with weight upon the wrong side. Search the lives of such closely, and scarcely an act of disinterested benevolence can be found. When they die, their memory dies with them. Their names

soon perish; for they cannot live, even in the affections of their friends, by means of true goodness and virtuous acts. With such persons, life has been a mistake. They have not been faithful stewards. They have forgotten that their Creator has claims upon them, and that He designs them to be active in doing good and in blessing others with their influence. Selfish interests attract the mind and lead to forgetfulness of God and of the purpose of their Creator.”⁶

Truth. The Word of God says, “These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates” (Zechariah 8:16). Christ Himself, speaking to the Pharisees, declared that those who practice lies in their lives have the devil as their father (John 8:44). “When a falsehood is uttered, the heavenly angels turn away in sorrow, grieved that Christ’s heritage should so dishonor



“We are called to represent to the world the character of God as it was revealed to Moses.”

Him. One falsehood spoken prepares the way for another. The Lord desires all to adhere strictly to the truth, to be straightforward in every transaction. Never tell a lie, because thus you hurt your own soul, and disgrace yourself in your own eyes.”⁷

“May the Lord pity those who love and make a lie, for unless they change they will at last find themselves outside the city of God. . . . Let us be on our guard against untruthfulness, which grows upon him who practices it. I say to all, Make truth your girdle. Be true to your faith. Put away all prevarication and exaggeration.”⁸

Love. “Keeping mercy for thousands” (Exodus 34:7). The NIV translates this as “maintaining love to thousands.” God is a God of love. This love was shown in the death of His son on the cross (John 3:16). So Jesus, when He was about to finish His earthly mission, said to the disciples, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34). The same love that God manifested to the world through His Son must be seen in the life of a Christian. The Bible says, “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (1 John 4:7, 8).

“Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. . . . The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance. . . .

“Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. . . .

“Whatever the difference in religious belief, a call from suffering humanity must be heard and answered. Where bitterness of feeling exists because of difference in religion, much good may be done by personal service. Loving ministry will break down prejudice, and win souls to God.”⁹

Forgiveness. Being beneficent of God’s forgiveness, the Bible requires that we forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32). And Jesus in His conversation with His disciples presented to them the condition under which someone can expect forgiveness from God (Matthew 6:14, 15). When Peter asked Jesus, “How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” Not “Until seven times,” He said, “but, Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21, 22). Even when someone sins against us repeatedly, we should always be ready to forgive.

“He who is unforgiving cuts off the very channel through which alone he can receive mercy from God. We should not think that unless those who have injured us confess the wrong we are justified in withholding from them our forgiveness. It is their part, no doubt, to humble their hearts by repentance and confession; but we are to have a spirit of compassion toward those who have trespassed against us, whether or not they confess their faults. Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit.”¹⁰

Justice. “And that will by no means clear the guilty” (Exodus 34:7). While justice is being replaced by injustice in the world, God says: “It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.” “It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment” (Proverbs 24:23; 18:5).

Justice implies also the responsibility of the church in dealing with

sin (Matthew 18:15–17; Titus 3:10). Sometimes the church exercises too much mercy, making the sinner feel that he or she is safe. “The church does injustice to God when it allows to exist as part of itself elements that are bringing dishonor to His cause. . . . There should be those in the church who in the fear of God will act with justice and righteousness and faithfulness in administering reproof.”¹¹

Conclusion

“We are called to represent to the world the character of God as it was revealed to Moses. In answer to the prayer of Moses, ‘Show me Thy glory,’ the Lord promised, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before thee.’ And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin’ (Exodus 33:18, 19; 34:6, 7). This is the fruit that God desires from His people.”¹²

Though defiled by sin as we are, it is still possible to reveal God’s character to the world in our life. The apostle Paul declared: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Galatians 2:20). This experience may be ours, too. If we cling to Christ, if we dwell in Him and He in us, we will bear the fruit of the Spirit (John 15:5; Galatians 5:22, 23). And the very glory that was manifested to Moses will be seen in us—Christ in us, “the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). *✠*

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- ² *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 76.
- ³ *In Heavenly Places*, p. 238.
- ⁴ *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 340.
- ⁵ *In Heavenly Places*, p. 246.
- ⁶ *Counsels on Health*, p. 95.
- ⁷ *The Review and Herald*, January 12, 1911.
- ⁸ *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, pp. 30, 31.
- ⁹ *Christ Object Lessons*, pp. 384–386.
- ¹⁰ *The Faith I Live By*, p. 131.
- ¹¹ *The Review and Herald*, March 19, 1908.
- ¹² *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 221.

“Purge Out . . . the Old Leaven”

By A. Balbach


For the Passover Feast—the commemoration of the time when the destroying angel killed all the firstborn of the children of the Egyptians—the Jews had to remove all the leaven from their homes. The Passover was celebrated on the evening of the 14th day of the month of Nisan. By extension, the Passover was associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was celebrated for one week. During this time, anything that was fermented was strictly excluded from the diet of the Jewish people.

Not too many people understood the symbolical meaning of the seven-day festival, but those who did—and tried to live in harmony with it—had the promised blessings of God in their lives.

In connection with the festival, the people were taught that leaven was a symbol of sin. And as their homes were to be cleared of all leaven, so they were led to understand that all sins had to be cleared away from their hearts. How can that be accomplished?

A person cannot, by the exercise of his or her will power, put away sin from the heart. He is entirely dependent on a power coming from without, from God. “The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit.”¹ The purifying action of the Holy Spirit is represented by the sprinkling of clean water. The Lord says:

“I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an [new] heart of flesh, and I will put my Spirit within you, and



*“Purge out . . . the old
leaven, that ye may be a
new lump”
(1 Corinthians 5:7).*

We cannot change ourselves. Only God, through the Holy Spirit, can change our hearts with our consent and cooperation.

cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:25-27).

The Power of Confession

I repeat: We cannot change ourselves. Only God, through the Holy Spirit, can change our hearts with our consent and cooperation. The Holy Spirit is still active, leading men and women to find repentance and conversion as He did with a young man whose experience is still fresh in my mind.

After listening to a sermon on confession of sin, this young man turned to the pastor and asked for advice. I'm giving, in my own words, the gist of the conversation that followed.

"Pastor, I'm in trouble. I have sinned against another person and I don't know what to do. I would like to make a confession and make

amends, but I cannot muster up the courage to do that. I'm ashamed. I have built a boat for my boss, and, in my trade, I took advantage of him. I have used common nails (which are relatively cheap) instead of copper nails (which are expensive). Copper nails are used in boat-building because they do not rust in the water. In this case I was tempted to deceive my boss."

The pastor said to the young man that he must go to his boss, make a confession, and make it right.

"I cannot," said the young man. "I cannot tell him that I have robbed him. I cannot offer to compensate him for the wrong that I have done to him."

"Why not?" asked the pastor.

"He is an unbeliever and a scoffer. I have often tried to talk to him about God and about salvation, but I only got derisive answers. If I tell him what I have done to him, he will say that I am just a hypocrite. I'm afraid to represent an unfavorable image of Christian-

ity and Christians in general if I talk to him. But my conscience is bothering me. I have no peace of mind. I want to settle this problem and I don't know how to."

The pastor, again, insisted that he must talk to his boss, making a confession. That was the beginning of a fierce mental struggle. Positive decision and cowardly hesitation kept circling in his mind in a seemingly endless alternation. At the same time, however, the Holy Spirit kept rebuking his conscience and building up his courage to make a confession.

After a few days the young man met the pastor.

"Pastor," he said with an expression of joy on his face, "the matter is settled. My conscience is clear now."

"Tell me more about it," said the pastor.

"Well, I confessed to my boss. There was a queer look in his eyes. Then he said to me: George, I must tell you the truth. I have always had an unfavorable opinion about you. I have always thought you were just a hypocrite, like others, those that call themselves Christians. But now, after I've heard your confession, I have changed my opinion about you and your religion. Now I begin to see that there is something positive in Christianity. It must be good to follow such a religion."



Who are often Christ's most loyal followers?

The work of the Holy Spirit, which was seen in the experience of the young man, is illustrated in one of the parables of Christ. While Christ was teaching by the Sea of Galilee, a multitude of men, women, and children were attentively listening to Him. Most of His listeners belonged to the poorer and humbler classes of society. There were vagabonds, beggars, robbers, prostitutes, and also some educated and influential people. As these representatives of the higher social class looked upon the crowd, they started asking themselves an intriguing question:

"Is the kingdom of God"—that this Master called Jesus is trying to promote—is it "composed of such material as this?"²

The educated and influential men saw no future in the miserable human material that usually gathered around the Saviour. And He, who could read their thoughts, answered them by a parable—the parable of the leaven (Matthew 13:33).

Christ "drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him" (Luke 15:1). And, as a result, the Pharisees and scribes accused Him: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Verse 2). This accusation contained a malicious insinuation. They wanted people to form a negative opinion about Jesus. We often hear the warning: Tell me with whom you associate, and I will tell you who you are. Evidently the concept of this proverb was there.

The same Christ who taught by the seaside is ready to help us today.

The accusers of the Master hoped that the common people would judge the character, the mission, and the expected result of Christ's work by the intellectual, social, and moral condition of His followers. He could read their thoughts and He warned them:

"Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matthew 21:31).

On another occasion, when the Pharisees put a derogative question to the disciples—"Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" (Matthew 9:11)—He replied to them:

"They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Verse 12).

Good News

The Gospel is the good news that every sin-sick person that comes to the Great Physician can be healed. Praise be to God! "This Man receiveth sinners" in order to heal them and transform them into saints. It is true that "publicans and harlots" and all kinds of sinners will "go into the kingdom"—but only after they have been healed by the grace of God. The doors of heaven are open, not to unrepentant and unregenerate sinners, but only to former sinners. The apostle Paul clarified this point in these terms:

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of them-

selves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9–11, emphasis supplied).

New leaven, a new lump

From the parable on which Jesus spoke of the work of the Holy Spirit under the symbol of a bit of leaven introduced into the dough (Matthew 13:33), we learn that men and women can be changed only by the renewing power coming from God. All who desire to have a place in the kingdom "must submit to the working of this power."³

When a sinner submits to the Holy Spirit, he or she will be guided into all truth (John 16:13) and undergo a complete change. The mind will be changed (1 Corinthians 2:16), the thoughts will be changed, the disposition will be changed, the desires will be changed, the voice will be changed, the countenance will be changed.

"Christ abiding in the heart shines out in the faces of those who love Him and keep His commandments. . . . The sweet peace of heaven is revealed [in their looks]. . . .

"Man with his human nature becomes a partaker of divinity."⁴ ✎

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¹ *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 96.

² *Ibid.*, p. 95.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

Yes, IT MAT

A study from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
with comments provided
by Cheri Fritz
[Emphasis supplied throughout.]

Before 2001, I was the type of person living with the motto of "You've got to laugh!" In everything I did, I found ways to joke and jest or to bring some sort of levity either in my conversation or in what I was doing. Why? Because I believed we needed joy in our life and laughter brought on joy (so I thought).

BUT DOES LAUGHTER CREATE THE JOY? LET US CONSIDER FROM WHERE TRUE JOY COMES.

"A Christian is the highest type of a man, because he is Christlike, and when he departs from the principles that are after Christ's order he is often ignorant that he has done wrong. The Lord sets the case before him as it is, as he is. He does not specify all his wrongs but gives him a chance to manifest that he is a true child of God by his repentance and confession, not only of the sins speci-

fied but of those which conscience sets in order before him. In doing this work he reveals he has made an open rupture with Satan and with sin. *He feels his weakness, he lays hold with earnest purpose and living faith upon the strength of God, and is an overcomer.* **Great becomes his peace, his joy, for it comes from the Lord,** and there is nothing more acceptable in the sight of God than the continual humiliation of the soul before Him. These evidences are unmistakable proofs that the Lord has touched hearts by His Holy Spirit. More wonderful than miracles of physical healing is the miracle wrought in the child of God in wrestling with natural defects and overcoming them. The universe of God looks upon him with joy far greater than on any splendid outward display. The inward character is molded after the divine Pattern."¹

DOES JOKING, JESTING, AND FOOLISH TALKING POINT TO CHRIST JESUS? NO.

In my years of joking, jesting, foolish talking, and light-hearted conversation, these things often brought attention to

self or to demean another. Please understand I am not saying that we should not laugh. But rather we should provoke one another to love, because it is written in the Scriptures that we are absolutely taught *not* to talk foolishly or to jest.

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But

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fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, **nor foolish talking, nor jesting**, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks" (Ephesians 5:1-4).

SO, WHAT IS A LITTLE BIT OF JOKING, JESTING, LIGHT-HEARTED CONVERSATION, AND FOOLISH TALKING REALLY GOING TO DO?

During a visit with friends I met another who holds a position within the church. But I was taken aback because the person joked and jested ever so lightly. I found myself pondering why this was done when the Scriptures are so clear. Unfortunately, there was a wall of trust that was torn down and I found myself wondering, "If this person has disregarded the Lord's instructions here, will he disregard more instructions? Can I trust him?"

"There is a great and solemn work devolving upon ministers; but many have not felt its weight sufficiently to balance them, and lead them to walk circumspectly. Out of the desk, their ministerial labors cease almost entirely, and their example is not worthy of imitation. Their light, jesting conversation may entertain and provoke mirth; but **both** believers and unbeliev-

If we speak with foolish and light-hearted words, are we truly testifying that Christ died, and that He is first in our life?

ers lose confidence in them as Christ's ambassadors. Such ministers may present a theory of truth to the people; but they have not felt its sanctifying power on their own souls, and the word spoken has but little effect."²

If we speak with foolish and light-hearted words, are we truly testifying that Christ died, and that He is the most important aspect of our life?

"The example which Christ has given to the world forbids all levity and cheapness, and if the life is made fragrant by the grace of God, these elements will not appear. A genuine cheerfulness, an uplifting influence, will flow forth from all who love God and keep His commandments. And this carries with it a convincing, converting power. 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling' (Philippians 2:12), says the apostle. Why with fear and trembling? Lest you shall in any way misrepresent your holy faith by lightness, by trifling, by jesting or joking, and thus give others the impression that the truth which you profess has no sanctifying influence upon the character.

"As followers of Christ we should make our words such as to be a help and an encouragement to one another in the Christian life. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. We should speak of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, of the matchless depths of the Saviour's love.

Our words should be words of praise and thanksgiving. If the mind and heart are full of the love of God, this will be revealed in the conversation. . . . Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, yearnings for piety and holiness, will bear fruit in words that reveal the character of the heart treasure. When Christ is thus revealed in our speech, it will have power in winning souls to Him."³

DO WE, AS SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE MOST HIGH, HAVE A SPECIAL PRIVILEGE? YES!

"To our ministers, physicians, teachers, **and** all others engaged in any line of service for the Master, I have a message to bear. The Lord bids you to come up higher, to reach a holier standard. You must have an experience much deeper than you have yet even thought of having."⁴

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). *R*

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³ *That I May Know Him*, p. 138.

⁴ *Christian Service*, p. 238.



The Word Was Made Flesh

Part 4

A 4-part Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments

by Peter D. Lausevic

[Emphasis supplied throughout.]

The Scripture records that “the child [Jesus] grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. . . . And he went down with [Joseph and his mother], and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke 2:40, 51, 52).

What was unique about Jesus' childhood?

Jesus was not like all other children in every sense.

“It is **not correct** to say, as many writers have said, **that Christ was like all children. He was not like all children. Many children are misguided and mismanaged. But Joseph, and especially Mary, kept before them the remembrance of their child's divine Fatherhood. Jesus was instructed in accordance with the sacred character of His mission. His inclination to right**

was a constant gratification to His parents. The questions He asked them led them to study most earnestly the great elements of truth. His soul-stirring words about nature and the God of nature opened and enlightened their minds. . . .

“[Luke 2:40 quoted.] He was an example of what all children may strive to be if parents will seek the Lord most earnestly, and if children will cooperate with their parents. In His words and actions He manifested tender sympathy for all. His companionship was as a healing, soothing balm to the disheartened and depressed.

“**No one, looking upon the child-like countenance, shining with animation, could say that Christ was just like other children. He was God in human flesh.**

When

“Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation.”

urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God’s commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong. **It was this keen discrimination between right and wrong that often provoked Christ’s brothers to anger.** Yet His appeals and entreaties, and the sorrow expressed in His countenance, revealed such a tender, earnest love for them that they were ashamed of having tempted Him to deviate from His strict sense of justice and loyalty.”¹

Can form of religion transform character?

“Jesus was misunderstood by His brothers because He was not like them. His standard was not their standard. In looking to men they had turned away from God, and they had not His power in their lives. The forms of religion which they observed could not transform the character. They paid ‘tithes of mint and anise and cummin,’ but omitted ‘the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith’ (Matthew 23:23). The example of Jesus was to them a continual irritation. He hated but one thing in the world, and that was sin. He could not witness a wrong act without pain which it was impossible to disguise. Between the formalists, whose sanctity of appearance concealed the love of sin, and a character in which zeal for God’s glory was always paramount, the contrast was unmistakable. Because the life of Jesus condemned evil, He was opposed, both at home and abroad. His unselfishness and integrity were commented on with a sneer. His forbearance and

kindness were termed cowardice.”²

Sin would torture His soul. “As one with us, [Jesus] must bear the burden of our guilt and woe. The Sinless One must feel the shame of sin. The peace lover must dwell with strife, the truth must abide with falsehood, purity with vileness. *Every sin, every discord, every defiling lust that transgression had brought, was torture to His spirit.*”³

Why did Christ have to be constantly on guard?

“*The life of Jesus was a life in harmony with God.* While He was a child, He thought and spoke as a child; but **no trace of sin marred the image of God within Him.** Yet He was not exempt from temptation. The inhabitants of Nazareth were proverbial for their wickedness. The low estimate in which they were generally held is shown by Nathanael’s question, ‘Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ (John 1:46). Jesus was placed where His character would be tested. It was necessary for Him to be constantly on guard in order to preserve His purity. He was subject to all the conflicts which we have to meet, that He might be an example to us in childhood, youth, and manhood.

“Satan was unwearied in his efforts to overcome the Child of Nazareth. From His earliest years Jesus was guarded by heavenly angels, yet His life was one long struggle against the powers of darkness. That there should be upon the earth one life free from the defilement of evil was an offense and a perplexity to the prince of darkness. He left no means untried to ensnare Jesus. **No child of humanity will ever be called to live a holy life amid so fierce a conflict with temptation as was our Saviour.**”

“The parents of Jesus were poor, and

dependent upon their daily toil. He was familiar with poverty, self-denial, and privation. This experience was a safeguard to Him. In His industrious life there were no idle moments to invite temptation. No aimless hours opened the way for corrupting associations. So far as possible, He closed the door to the tempter. Neither gain nor



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"We are commanded to crucify the flesh. . . . How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body?"

pleasure, applause nor censure, could induce Him to consent to a wrong act. He was wise to discern evil, and strong to resist it."

What was it like to be around the young Jesus?

"Christ was the only sinless one who ever dwelt on earth; yet for nearly thirty years He lived among the wicked inhabitants of Nazareth. This fact is a rebuke to those who think themselves dependent upon place, fortune, or prosperity, in order to live a blameless life. Temptation, poverty, adversity, is the very discipline needed to develop purity and firmness.

"Jesus lived in a peasant's home, and faithfully and cheerfully acted His part in bearing the burdens of the household. He had been the Commander of heaven, and angels had delighted to fulfill His word; now He was a willing servant, a loving, obedient son. He learned a trade, and with His own hands worked in the carpenter's shop with Joseph. In the simple garb of a common laborer He walked the streets of the little town, going to and returning from His humble work. **He did not employ His divine power to lessen His burdens or to lighten His toil.**"⁴

"Jesus was the fountain of healing mercy for the world; and through all those secluded years at Nazareth, His life flowed out in currents of sympathy and tenderness. The aged, the sorrowing, and the sin-burdened, the children at play in their innocent joy,

the little creatures of the groves, the patient beasts of burden—all were happier for His presence. He whose word of power upheld the worlds would stoop to relieve a wounded bird. There was nothing beneath His notice, nothing to which He disdained to minister.

"Thus as He grew in wisdom and stature, Jesus increased in favor with God and man. He drew the sympathy of all hearts by showing Himself capable of sympathizing with all. The atmosphere of hope and courage that surrounded Him made Him a blessing in every home. And often in the synagogue on the Sabbath day He was called upon to read the lesson from the prophets, and the hearts of the hearers thrilled as a new light shone out from the familiar words of the sacred text."⁵

"Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, Christ 'suffered being tempted.' While He was free from the taint of sin, **the refined sensibilities of His holy nature rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to Him.** Yet with human nature upon Him, He met the archapostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of His throne. **Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation.**"⁶

In contrast to Christ, what is our human nature like?

Human nature is vile. This vileness was painful to Jesus.

"The infinite value of the sacrifice required for our redemption reveals the fact that sin is a tremendous evil. Through sin the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted. Sin has degraded the faculties of the soul.

Temptations from without find an answering

chord within the heart, and the feet turn imperceptibly toward evil.

"As the sacrifice in our behalf was complete, so our restoration from the defilement of sin is to be complete. There is no act of wickedness that the law will excuse; there is no unrighteousness that will escape its condemnation. The life of Christ was a perfect fulfillment of every precept of the law. He said: 'I have kept My Father's commandments' (John 15:10). His life is our standard of obedience and service."⁷

Contemplating Christ's sinless example, what is to characterize our new life in Him?

"The path from the manger to Calvary was shadowed by grief and sorrow. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, enduring such heartache as no human language can portray. He could have said in truth, 'Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow' (Lamentations 1:12). Hating sin with a perfect hatred, He yet gathered to His soul the sins of the whole world. Guiltless, He bore the punishment of the guilty. Innocent, yet offering Himself as a substitute for the transgressor. **The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer. The evil thoughts, the evil words, the evil deeds of every son and daughter of Adam, called for retribution upon Himself; for He had become man's substitute. Though the guilt of sin was not His, His spirit was torn and bruised by the transgressions of men, and He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.**"⁸

We sin because, when temptation comes, we have an answering chord within. Jesus did not have that. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: **for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me**" (John 14:30).

Jesus had no answering chord in His

The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Christ.

life that would be attracted to sin. As we abide in Him, the same experience will be ours. He took the exact same human nature to heaven. "By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son' (John 3:16). He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.' God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the 'Son of man' who shares the throne of the universe. It is the 'Son of man' whose name shall be called, 'Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace' (Isaiah 9:6). The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,' is not ashamed to call us brethren (Hebrews 7:26; 2:11). In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love."⁹

Hope for the hopeless

"By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey. It was Christ who from the bush on Mount Horeb spoke to Moses saying, 'I AM THAT I AM. . . . Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you' (Exodus 3:14). This was the pledge of Israel's deliverance. So when He came 'in the likeness of men,' He declared Himself the I AM. The Child of Bethlehem, the meek and lowly Saviour, is God 'manifest in the flesh' (1 Timothy 3:16). And to us He says: 'I AM the Good Shepherd.' 'I AM the living Bread.' 'I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth' (John 10:11; 6:51; 14:6; Matthew 28:18). I AM the assurance of every promise. I AM; be not afraid. 'God with us' is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven."¹⁰

This is the work of reconciliation. "Christ's work was to reconcile man to God through His human nature, and God to man through His divine nature."¹¹

A continual choice

The body of itself does not commit sin. "The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it. The words 'flesh' or 'fleshly' or 'carnal lusts' embrace the lower, corrupt nature; the flesh of itself cannot

act contrary to the will of God. We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every

thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the higher powers of the soul. The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne. Our bodies are to be regarded as His purchased possession. The members of the body are to become the instruments of righteousness."¹² ❧

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Is the Standard or Trodden Down?



standard

In a previous article in the *Reformation Herald*, we spoke of the historic example of a famous Peruvian soldier named Alfonso Ugarte Bernal. Rather than to allow his enemies to trample upon the banner of his nation, this young man gave his life for it, galloping on horseback straight into the cold Pacific waves in a final, determined effort to keep the noble standard uplifted.

Many ungodly people are ready to give up even their lives for their ideals.

Now the question comes to us: What and how much are we determined to give up for the bloodstained banner of Jesus Christ?

Self-denial vs. selfishness

A timeless instruction given by Jesus echoes down to us today: “Whosoever will come after me, **let him deny himself**, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Mark 8:34).

Thus He requires from all—the lowly as well as the privileged people within His church—a thorough surrender. Nonetheless this is not what we see in the life of some in our churches. What we see is that “the want of fervor, the **lack of self-denial**, on the part of many who bear Christ’s name, hinder the doing of the very work for which His church on earth was organized. The **selfishness** and **indifference** manifested by professing Christians soothes the consciences of many who would be aroused from their unbelief, had they before them in the lives of professing Christians, a **living witness** to the power of the gospel to transform the character.

“Self-sacrifice is the keynote of Christ’s teachings.”¹

Being Raised Up—

To lack self-denial means to be full of selfishness, the very defect that impedes us from taking up the cross of Christ. This actually expels the Lord Himself from our life, causing His bloodstained banner to be heavily trodden down and hidden from sight instead of being raised higher. To all who would be His disciples, Jesus commands: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness” (Matthew 6:33).

God appeals to us to seek His kingdom as the first priority in our life, displacing anything that could be suggested by a selfish heart. And surely this will be so if our conversion experience is genuine. Christ makes it clear that perfection is to be our target. He says, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

Hearers only

In order to achieve perfection, one must give earnest heed to God’s word. But what are we seeing among many who profess to be true disciples of Jesus? While the Holy Spirit is saying, “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22), God’s word is losing power and authority among the masses. It would do us well to take heed of Christ’s parable in Matthew 7. Jesus compared the “hearing-only” class of believers to a foolish man, saying, “Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand” (Matthew 7:26).

Let us think of ourselves and refrain from building the house-of-our-life’s-dream upon the sand of our own imaginations, opinions, and conclusions, when there is a Rock where to build upon! What foolishness! Jesus

ended His story saying that the house “fell: and great was the fall of it” (verse 27). By the shocking results in this story, can’t we realize how important it is to faithfully obey God’s word rather than to follow our own inclinations? Let us not forget that “It is the doing of the words and works of Christ that testifies to the **saving qualities** of [our] faith.”² Why then do so many act in opposition to God’s word? Inspiration explains that “some stumble at the word of truth. It does **not harmonize with their inclinations**, and therefore they refuse to be doers of the word.”³ Such do wrong not because they ignore God’s word, but because they love their own inclinations. Do they realize what is meant by their refusal to obey? By building upon the sand Jesus meant not giving heed to His word. Many professed believers think they can cherish the customs and practices of the world, discarding God’s word—and yet still be in God’s favor.

But the following is more astonishing! Another reason why the people love the world and “the things that are in the world” (1 John 2:15) is that even their leaders are entangled in Satan’s snares so that God can’t use them to work for the salvation of His people. “Will God send out a man to rescue souls from the snare of Satan, when his own feet are entangled in the net? . . . If their feet are sliding, how can they say to those of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong’? God would have His servants hold up the feeble hands and strengthen the wavering. Those who are not prepared to do this, would better first labor for themselves, and pray until they are endowed with power from on high.”⁴

“With many who claim to be Christians there is a painful certainty that they are not progressing heavenward

but are swayed by the customs and practices of the world. Fashions—the most unlovely, and unhealthful, the most contradictory to the laws of nature, are readily accepted by them. By eagerly beholding these fashions, they become changed to the likeness of what they so much admire. Thus they hasten to adopt the world’s standard, where pride and fashion complete in them the transformation which Satan delights to see accomplished, and they become unstable as water.”⁵

“God is displeased with the lack of self-denial in some of His servants. They have not the burden of the work upon them. They seem to be in a death-like stupor. Angels of God stand amazed and ashamed of this lack of self-denial and perseverance.”⁶

Too many venture to go along with the world’s current, forgetting that “Christians should not follow the customs and practices of the world.”⁷

Certainly we cannot venture into these easy practices, lest we be changed into the likeness of the world.

Keeping God’s favor

By the constraining power of the Holy Spirit, there are those who strive to do God’s will at any cost, of whom He says; “but to [these men] will I look, even to [them] that [are] poor and of a contrite spirit, and **trembleth at my word**” (Isaiah 66:2).

These souls are of great value in God’s sight. He bids them to be steadfast in the truth, saying, “Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them” (Jeremiah 15:19). They should stand against the evil influence with the might God has given them.

“The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their

“Our faith requires us to elevate the standard of reform and take advance steps.”

inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will **stand for the right** though the heavens fall.”⁸

This is the only way to be in God’s favor. Jesus says, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31). And He declares to every disciple: “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20). And He adds: “When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10). So He calls us to have a progressive spirit of reformation. However, when we see our spiritual condition, we find ourselves doing not even the least of what He has required. Is it appropriate for Christians to toy with worldly customs, practices, and ideals in open rejection of God’s will? Certainly it isn’t, brethren and sisters.

A distinct assignment

“Our faith requires us to **elevate the standard of reform** and take advance steps. The condition of our acceptance with God is a practical separation from the world. The Lord calls upon us as a people, ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate,’ ‘and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you’ (2 Corinthians 6:17). The world may despise you because you do not meet their standard, engage in their dissipating amusements, and follow their pernicious ways; but the God of heaven promises to receive you, and to be a Father unto you.”⁹

What a wonderful promise is this! It should be enough to encourage us to fight vigorously against our inclinations to meet the world standard.

This necessary separation from the world is not merely physical. It is spiritual. Many think that they are

separated from the world just because they no longer fellowship with worldly-minded persons. Yet, sadly, they are still craving worldly things and even dare to do them within God’s church, adversely affecting especially the young.

“The standard of piety is low among professed Christians generally, and it is hard for the young to resist the worldly influences that are encouraged by many church members. The majority of nominal Christians, while they profess to be living for Christ, are really living for the world.”¹⁰

But “The great Head of the church, who has chosen His people out of the world, requires them to be separate from the world. He designs that the spirit of His commandments, by drawing His followers to Himself, shall separate them from worldly elements.”¹¹

“The truly converted laborer in [God’s cause] will not be molded after the customs and practices of the world, but will stand in moral independence. He will set an example that will be consistent with his profession, coming out from the world, and maintaining a separation from its spirit and fashions. He will not be turned in the least from his steadfast purpose to be one with Christ, nor yield an iota from his stand of fidelity to God, in opposition to pride, to indulgence in selfish amusement, to expenditure of means for the gratification of inclination or love of display, but will be an example in spirit, deportment, and dress.”¹²

“Believers are to shine as lights in the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. A church, separate and distinct from the world, is in the estimation of heaven the greatest object in all the earth. The members are pledged to be separate from the world, consecrating their service to one Master, Jesus Christ. They are to reveal that they have chosen Christ as their leader. . . . The church is to be as God designed it should be, a representative of God’s family in another world.”¹³

Conclusion

Dear brethren and sisters, what happens if we do not elevate the standard of reform in our behavior, our attire, and in every aspect of our life? One thing we must realize: “It is [worldly] things that separate God from His people, that shut the ark away from them. [God’s professed people] have been asleep to the pride, and fashion, and conformity to the world, in the very midst of them. They advance every month in pride, covetousness, selfishness, and love of the world. . . . 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. They lust for the leeks and onions of Egypt, that is, desire to be as much like the world as possible; by so doing, those that profess to have put on Christ virtually put Him off, and show that they are strangers to grace and strangers to the meek and lowly Jesus.”¹⁴

And you, dear reader, who have gone through these lines, do not for a moment think that this applies only to someone else. Isn’t God speaking to all of us? It is not a trifling thing to cherish worldly fashions, pleasing Satan in his designs. As individuals as well as a church, we do not want to put Jesus out of our life. If we do, we will be discarded by God as His children. May God help us all! ☞

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Taking the Truth to New Territory

When the idea comes to mind of the present truth going to new territory, how many of us automatically just look to the employed Bible workers and ministers? Yes, that is their job. But do we let them do it without grumbling when they are gone? And then there is another question: Is this task only theirs—or does it actually belong to all of us?

More questions also come to mind: Have you recently taken a trip somewhere—perhaps to visit a relative or friend, to take a vacation or business trip, or to attend a seminar or educational function? If so, did you make it a point to squeeze in a chance to witness for Christ or leave truth-filled literature behind? If not, why not?

For those who do not travel much: Are you satisfied with the level of spiritual activity in your local church? If not, are you longing to see a real revival of outreach to a confused, degraded world?

For all of us who are seeking something more along these lines, do not

wait for someone else to take action! A revival of missionary zeal can begin with you and with me.

Learning from God and Gideon

Let us first consider a preliminary step. Judges chapter 6 opens with a compelling scene. The children of Israel are suffering from a horrible oppression at the hand of the Midianites. This is, as usual, due to Israel's own folly. Because of their sinful backsliding, the Lord has allowed them to taste the bitter results of their own doings. In His abundant mercy, however, He hears their cries for help in the midst of their suffering.

The angel of the Lord then appears to Gideon. Why does he choose Gideon? It is significant that Gideon does not consider himself to be anyone special. In fact, his first comment is to mention, in his view, the unworthiness of himself and even his family to be called to the noble assignment to deliver the nation from oppression. Nonetheless, he responds with immediate and reverent hospitality to the angel and builds an altar unto the Lord.



A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy compilation, with comments

by B. Monteiro

“Every man, woman, and child can sow each day the seeds of kind words and unselfish deeds.”

Before the great task of deliverance can begin, there needs to be some “house cleaning” first. The Lord tells Gideon he must destroy the altar of Baal. Interestingly, it is not Gideon’s altar; it is his father’s. For his own safety, Gideon carries out the task at night. Do the men of the city become angry? Yes, some of them certainly do. But by a miracle of God’s Spirit in the heart, Gideon’s father supports the bold action of his son. And, above all, God is pleased by his obedience.

Gideon continues in his attitude of humility. He beseeches the Lord for greater evidence of this calling. The evidence is granted under impossible conditions, so it is clear that Gideon has a task before him: To press forward against all odds.

Now here is a question for us today: What is the source of our security as God’s professed people? Is it in numbers? No. Remember the story of Gideon’s

army. Before the battle, the Lord actually has Gideon reduce the number of his army—more than once. After starting with 32,000, He directs Gideon to eliminate the fearful and all who evidently have too casual an attitude to be really trusted in an emergency. The remnant left over is only 300.

Would you and I be in that number?

The task at hand today

There is a work to be done. “This is no time to colonize. From city to city the work is to be carried quickly.”¹

Colonization is a comfortable thing. It rests on the laurels of our predecessors—often pioneers from previous generations. Years ago, someone may have planted a church near where you now live. You may be the offspring of that plant. Are you now ready to sow seeds in a new place? If not, why not?

The deandelion effect

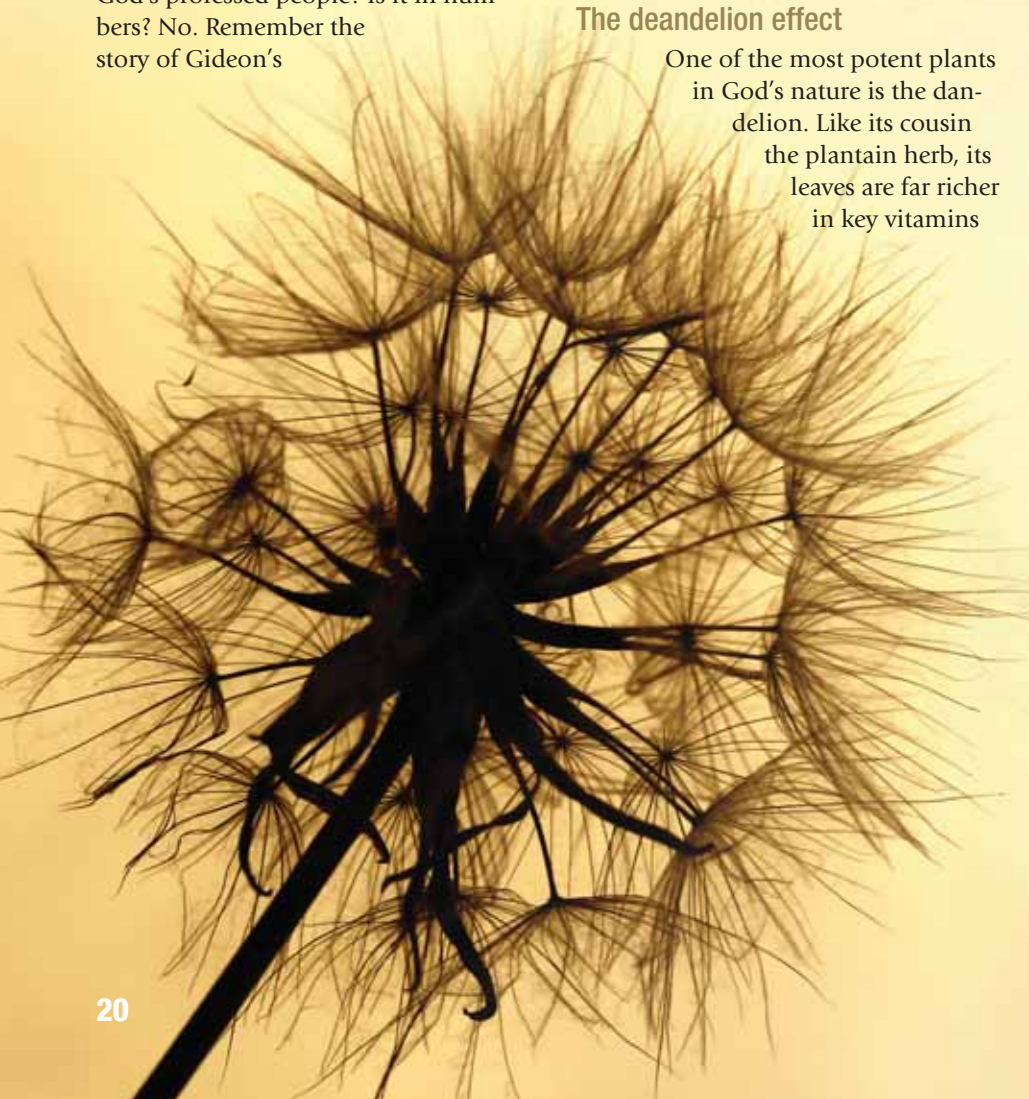
One of the most potent plants in God’s nature is the dandelion. Like its cousin the plantain herb, its leaves are far richer in key vitamins

and minerals than most other salad greens. The taste of it is bitter—reminiscent of our bitterest trials in life. Yet through God’s mercy, this lowly weed offers great nourishment, often at no cost to the consumer. The fluffy balls of seeds are easily broadcasted with the slightest puff of wind. God takes care of where they go and His grace produces the next harvest.

Here is an object lesson: Like the taste of dandelion, the bitter experiences you have suffered in life may have already provided you with the vitalizing fortitude you need in order to spread the everlasting gospel in many more ways than you ever imagined possible. We can turn the discipline of our hardest disappointments into a personal training ground to help others who may be going through similar trials as we ourselves have suffered. If the Lord has ever lifted you up out of disaster through His word, you have a powerful testimony to share. He “comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Corinthians 1:4).

“Where are the men who will work and study and agonize in prayer as did Christ? We are not to confine our efforts to a few places. If they shall persecute you in one city, flee ye to another. Let Christ’s plan be followed. He was ever watching for opportunities to engage in personal labor, ever ready to interest and draw men to a study of the Scriptures.”² If we fail to be active, it shows that we do not really believe that the end of all things—the great Advent of Christ—is at hand.

“The Lord desires His people to arise and do their appointed work. **The responsibility of warning the world rests not upon the ministry alone. The lay members of the church are to share in the work of soul saving. By means of missionary visits and by a wise distribution of our literature, many who have never been warned may be reached.** Let companies be organized to search for souls. Let the church members visit their neighbors and open to them the Scriptures. Some



“As Jesus went from place to place, He blessed and comforted the suffering and healed the sick. This is our work.”

may be set to work in the hedges, and thus, by wise planning, the truth may be preached in all districts.

“With perseverance in this work, increasing aptitude for it will come, and many will see fruit of their labors in the salvation of souls. These converted ones will, in turn, teach others. Thus the seed will be sown in many places, and the truth be proclaimed to all. . . .

“Our churches, large and small, are not to be treated in such a way that they will be helplessly dependent upon ministerial aid. The members are to be so established in the faith that they will have an intelligent knowledge of medical missionary work. They are to follow Christ’s example, ministering to those around them. Faithfully they are to fulfill the vows made at their baptism, the vow that they will practice the lessons taught in the life of Christ. Through sanctification of the truth as it is in Jesus they are to plant in hearts the living principles of saving faith. . . .

“By being good and doing good Christ’s followers expel selfishness from the soul. To them the most costly sacrifice seems too cheap to give. They see a large vineyard to be worked, and they realize that they must be prepared by divine grace to labor patiently, earnestly, in season and out of season, in a sphere which knows no boundaries. They obtain victory after victory, increasing in experience and efficiency, extending on all sides their earnest efforts to win souls for Christ. They use to the best advantage their increasing experience; their hearts are melted by the love of Christ. . . .

“Life is full of opportunities for practical missionaries. Every man, woman, and child can sow each day the seeds of kind words and unselfish deeds. . . .

“What doest thou here?”

“The world is not a croquet ground, on which we are to amuse ourselves; it is a school where we are to study earnestly and thoroughly the lessons given in the word of God. There they may learn how to receive and how to impart. There they may learn how to seek for souls in the highways and

byways of life. How earnestly the games of this world are engaged in! If those who engage in them would strive as earnestly for the crown of life which fadeth not away, what victories they would gain! They would become medical missionaries, and they would see how much they could do to relieve suffering humanity. What a blessing they would be! What we need is practical education. Ministers and people, practice the lessons Christ has given in His word, and you will become Christ-like in character.”³ *Did you catch that? Missionary work even helps us overcome sin!*

“There is a great work to be done. How shall we reveal Christ? I know of no better way . . . than to take hold of the medical missionary work in connection with the ministry. Wherever you go, there begin to work. Take an interest in those around you who need help and light. You may stand and preach to those here who know the truth; you may preach sermon after sermon to them, but they do not appreciate it. Why? Because they are inactive. Everyone who is able to go out and work should bring to the foundation stone, not hay, wood, or stubble, but gold, silver, and precious stones. . . .

“Christ sought the people where they were, and placed before them the great truths in regard to His kingdom. As He went from place to place, He blessed and comforted the suffering and healed the sick. This is our work. . . .

Opportunities for everyone

“[The disciples] went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following’ (Mark 16:20).

“The words spoken to the disciples are spoken to us also. None need think that the day for working as the apostles worked is past. Men and

women can today work as Christ has given them example. To all will come opportunities to minister to sin-sick souls and to those in need of physical healing. Physical healing is a science of heavenly birth, bound up with the gospel commission. . . .

“Get the young men and women in the churches to work. Combine medical missionary work with the proclamation of the third angel’s message. Make regular, organized efforts to lift the church members out of the dead level in which they have been for years. Send out into the churches workers who will live the principles of health reform. Let those be sent who can see the necessity of self-denial in appetite, or they will be a snare to the church. See if the breath of life will not then come into our churches. . . .

“As religious aggression subverts the liberties of our nation, those who would stand for freedom of conscience will be placed in unfavorable positions. For their own sake they should, while they have opportunity, become intelligent in regard to disease, its causes, prevention, and cure. And those who do this will find a field of labor anywhere. There will be suffering ones, plenty of them, who will need help, not only among those of our own faith, but largely among those who know not the truth. The shortness of time demands an energy that has not been aroused among those who claim to believe the present truth. . . .

The privilege of paying our own way

“The Macedonian cry is coming from every quarter. Shall men go to the ‘regular lines’ to see whether they will be permitted to labor, or shall they go out and work as best they can, depending on their own abilities and on the help of the Lord, beginning in a humble way and creating an interest in the truth in places in which noth-

“Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.”

ing has been done to give the warning message?

“The Lord has encouraged those who have started out on their own responsibility to work for Him, their hearts filled with love for souls ready to perish. A true missionary spirit will be imparted to those who seek earnestly to know God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. The Lord lives and reigns. Young men, go forth into the places to which you are directed by the Spirit of the Lord. Work with your hands, that you may be self-supporting, and as you have opportunity proclaim the message of warning. . . .



Would you like to see some of the *Sabbath Bible Lessons* back issues like this one?

Please visit www.sdarm.org/backissues/sbl_backissues.php

You will find more than 65 years' worth of lessons in more than 200 different subjects.

“We shall have to labor under difficulties, but because of this, let not our zeal flag. **The Bible does not acknowledge a believer who is idle, however high his profession may be.**”⁴

But what about the latter rain? Won't that automatically energize us?

The answer is no—it is not so simple as that! The latter rain will not even come upon us without some serious, diligent activity on our part. We are told:

“There are some who, instead of wisely improving present opportunities, are idly waiting for some special season of spiritual refreshing by which their ability to enlighten others will be greatly increased. They neglect present duties and privileges, and allow their light to burn dim, while they look forward to a time when, without any effort on their part, they will be made the recipients of special blessing, by which they will be transformed and fitted for service. . . .

“Near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest. . . .

“But unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

“Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special

endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.”⁵

Dear fellow pilgrims entrusted with the light of present truth: Do we realize what this means? If we are not engaged in active missionary effort in behalf of souls in darkness, we will miss out on the latter rain! Just as a rain shower can totally pass you by while its refreshing showers drench a neighboring area, we could entirely fail to receive the latter rain simply by neglecting to seize upon missionary opportunities existing before us right now.

Now, in most places the avenues of transportation are still open. Now missionary literature is just as affordable as it ever has been. Now—and we do not know for how long—in most places we can still go safely from city to city. If your resources are limited, you may not even need to go very far. There is plenty to do. Professed believers travel for their own personal pleasure and ambition. They run errands in their neighborhood. They speak to others. The question now comes to us: Why not do these things for God? Think of what Jesus has done for you and me. Think of how far He traveled and inconvenienced Himself. Think of the price He paid. Think of what He suffered. Now He declares: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father” (John 14:12). The opportunity is here; the time is now—why miss out on the action? ✍

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¹ *Medical Ministry*, p. 302.

² *Ibid.*, p. 303.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 313–318. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 319–325. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁵ *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 54, 55. [Emphasis supplied.]



Strike Out STROKE!

Research compiled from various sources as submitted by Janet Sureshkumar Roshan

This article is compiled for general informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat or cure any disease(s). Always consult qualified physicians or other healthcare practitioners whenever experiencing physical symptoms that concern you.

Stroke ranks as the third leading killer disease in the United States, behind heart disease and all forms of cancer.

It is one of the most dreaded and disabling diseases. "Each year about 700,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke in the United States, of these over 150,000 people die, making stroke the third leading cause of death. About 5.7 million U.S. stroke survivors are alive today, many of them with permanent stroke-related disabilities. Women account for about 6 in 10 stroke deaths."¹

What causes a stroke?

Stroke is the sudden death of brain cells due to a lack of oxygen and nutrients from the blood. A stroke known as apoplexy or cerebrovascular accident (CVA), also called a "brain attack," is caused by the disturbance in the blood supply to the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, spilling blood into the spaces surrounding brain cells.² Stroke can cause permanent neurologic damage, complications, and death.

Like all organs, our brain needs the oxygen and nutrients provided by our blood in order to function properly. When blood flow to the brain is impaired, oxygen and glucose cannot be delivered to the brain, causing brain cells to dysfunction (medically called

"ischemia"). This can be due to a lack of blood supply caused by the formation of a blood clot inside a blood vessel, obstructing the flow of blood through the circulatory system (thrombosis) or due to the rupture of a blood vessel leading to dysfunction of the brain tissue in the affected area (hemorrhage).

There are many reasons why blood flow can be compromised. It can be due to a narrowing of the small arteries within the brain and blockage of a single arteriole, causing blood clots to form within the heart and bleeding to occur within the brain substance because of leak or rupture.³

Who is at risk of a stroke?

Risk factors can include one or more of these following conditions.

1. High blood pressure (hypertension)
2. High cholesterol
3. Diabetes
4. Increasing age
5. Family history
6. Previous stroke attack



The good news about stroke is that it is preventable. Know and take notice of the symptoms and the risk factors.

Warning signs

Symptoms of stroke appear suddenly, and the severity of the stroke depends on the area of the brain that has been affected. Common symptoms can include one or more of these combinations:

Sudden dizziness, trouble in walking, numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, loss of balance and coordination, spasticity, rigidity, stiffness of muscles, painful muscle spasms, speech problems, vision problems such as blurred, blackened, or double vision; severe headache, sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding. Smaller strokes or silent strokes may not cause any symptoms, but they can still damage brain tissue. Not all the warning signs occur in every stroke. Don't ignore the signs of a stroke, even if they go away.⁴

Stroke types

A stroke is mainly categorized into two types. One is caused by the blockage of an artery in the brain by a clot. This is known as an *ischemic stroke*, which is similar to a heart attack. The other is caused by a blood vessel in the brain that breaks and bleeds into the brain. This type is called a *hemorrhagic stroke*.

Ischemic strokes begin with tiny injuries to brain arteries that have been previously narrowed due to high blood pressure, smoking, a high-fat, and/or high-cholesterol diet. In due course of time, these injured areas become covered with cholesterol-rich deposits called *plaques* that narrow the injured arteries. Sometimes a plaque ruptures, causing a blood clot in the artery and cutting off the blood supply to part of your brain. This is an ischemic stroke, which is now called brain attack. A clot formed in any part of the body other than the brain may travel through blood vessels and become wedged in a brain artery causing a stroke. A blood clot

may form in one of the cerebral arteries, which then stays attached to the artery wall until it grows large enough to block blood flow resulting in a stroke.

A *hemorrhagic stroke* is caused by a blood vessel in the brain that breaks and bleeds into the brain. One common cause of hemorrhage is a bleeding aneurysm, a weak or thin spot on an artery wall. Over time, these weak, thin walls of ballooning aneurysms may rupture and spill blood into the space surrounding brain cells. It may also be caused by a tangle of defective blood vessels and capillaries within the brain.

A *Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA)* is a clinical syndrome with symptoms lasting less than twenty-four hours and which is thought to be due to inadequate blood supply.

Can strokes be prevented?

The good news about stroke is that it is preventable. One way to prevent a stroke is to know and take notice of the symptoms and the risk factors of stroke and treating underlying risk factors. There are some risk factors that you can control by monitoring blood pressure and cholesterol levels, treating diabetes, and knowing if you have atrial fibrillation. The risk factors that are beyond our control are aging, gender, race, and a prior stroke.⁵

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle

The Bible says, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Proverbs 21:23). Your lifestyle is not only your best defense against heart disease and stroke, but it is also your responsibility. The primary method of stroke and heart attack prevention is possible by living a healthy lifestyle. Watch what you eat and what you do. Controlling the risk factors that can be managed is the first step in preventing a stroke.

Eliminate the use of alcohol, caffeine, drugs, and tobacco. Do not eat foods with saturated fat and trans fat. Minimize the salt in your cooking, as sodium increases fluid volume in your vascular system, which affects blood pressure. Keep your cholesterol level under control because cholesterol level plays a major role in the development of *carotid atherosclerosis* (build up of fatty materials in the carotid arteries). Do not eat fried or processed foods. Avoid egg, meat, butter, and cream, which are high in fat and cholesterol. Eliminate most "fast food." Do not use white flour or sugar. Throw away the saltshaker—don't add to the problem by sprinkling more salt on top of your food.

Your diet should have high fiber from whole-grains. Eat the foods that are rich in folic acid. Folic acid can be found in spinach (the king of vegetables), asparagus, chickpeas, and beans. Eat foods that contain vitamin B₆, and nutrients that are found in many green leafy vegetables and fruits. It is also essential to include almonds, walnuts, and sesame seeds in your diet. Choose foods that are rich in potassium and essential fatty acids. Eat more fruits, vegetables, cereals, dried peas, and beans. Enjoy onion and garlic regularly. Onions contain protein, vitamins B₁, B₂, C, and potassium. Polysaccharides also are present, as are peptides, flavonoids, and essential oil. Red onions contain valuable antioxidants.⁶

Engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate **physical activity and graded exercises** on a daily basis like walking, riding a bike, working in the yard, and maintaining healthy weight.

Beneficial food for stroke

To prevent ischemic stroke, physicians try to prevent arterial blood clots by prescribing anticoagulants (blood-thinning) medications. These properties are available richly in nature. You can derive it from the food consumed or in some herbs commonly available almost everywhere.

Garlic is an anticoagulant that helps prevent ischemic stroke in three ways.

Your lifestyle is not only your best defence against heart disease and stroke, but it is also your responsibility.

Garlic is a wonder drug for the cardiovascular system and blood pressure. It also prevents oxidation of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), the “bad” cholesterol and triglycerides.

Onion, a cousin of garlic, contains essential oil that is good for lowering the blood pressure. It also contains adenosin, a blood thinner which prevents the formation of blood clots. Onion and garlic contain compounds that reduce serum cholesterol level.

Ginger is a cardiac tonic, as it decreases cholesterol and helps poor circulation. Ginger prevents blood from clotting excessively. Ginger also contains the same benefits as garlic.

Tomatoes are high in gamma butyric acid (GABA) which lowers blood pressure.

Saffron contains a compound called crocetin which also lowers blood pressure. Fennel, oregano, and basil carry most of the same benefits.

Turmeric lowers the blood cholesterol and prevents the formation of blood clots.

Cayenne pepper lowers cholesterol, dilates arteries, improves circulation and heart function without raising blood pressure and inhibits blood platelets from collecting. At the same time, it also enhances the power of other herbs taken.

Carrots are rich in beta-carotene and other carotenoids. Harvard University studies show that people can reduce their risk of stroke by eating foods that are rich in beta-carotene and vitamins C and E.

Spinach, cabbage, endive, asparagus, papaya, okra, and pigweed have

folate (folic acid). Studies at Tufts University in Boston and the University of Alabama in Birmingham have demonstrated that folate can help prevent both heart disease and stroke.

Legumes contain genistein, a cancer-preventive nutrient. In addition to guarding against cancer, genistein also appears to have a significant anti-clotting effect.

English pea and scurvy pea are excellent sources of genistein.

Pineapple contains an enzyme known as bromelain that is best known for its ability to break down proteins. It has an anti-clotting action that might help prevent ischemic stroke and heart attack.

Bilberries, blueberries, and huckleberries contain compounds known as anthocyanidins. Bilberries are also shown to maintain capillary flow.

Evening primrose oil is rich in gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), which has potent anti-clotting and blood pressure lowering actions. It is believed to be useful in the prevention of stroke and heart disease.⁷

Our bodies are the temple of God, which needs to be diligently taken care of. Through the wrong use of our body temple in our lifestyle and through ignorance on this matter, we may have to face fatal consequences that are preventable with proper knowledge. Failure to care for our bodies is an insult to the Creator. “The Lord helps those who help themselves.”⁸ Let us all engage in careful examination of our life and make the needed reformation to prevent those ailments which can be prevented, that we may present our life for the proper administration of the Lord’s work. *R*

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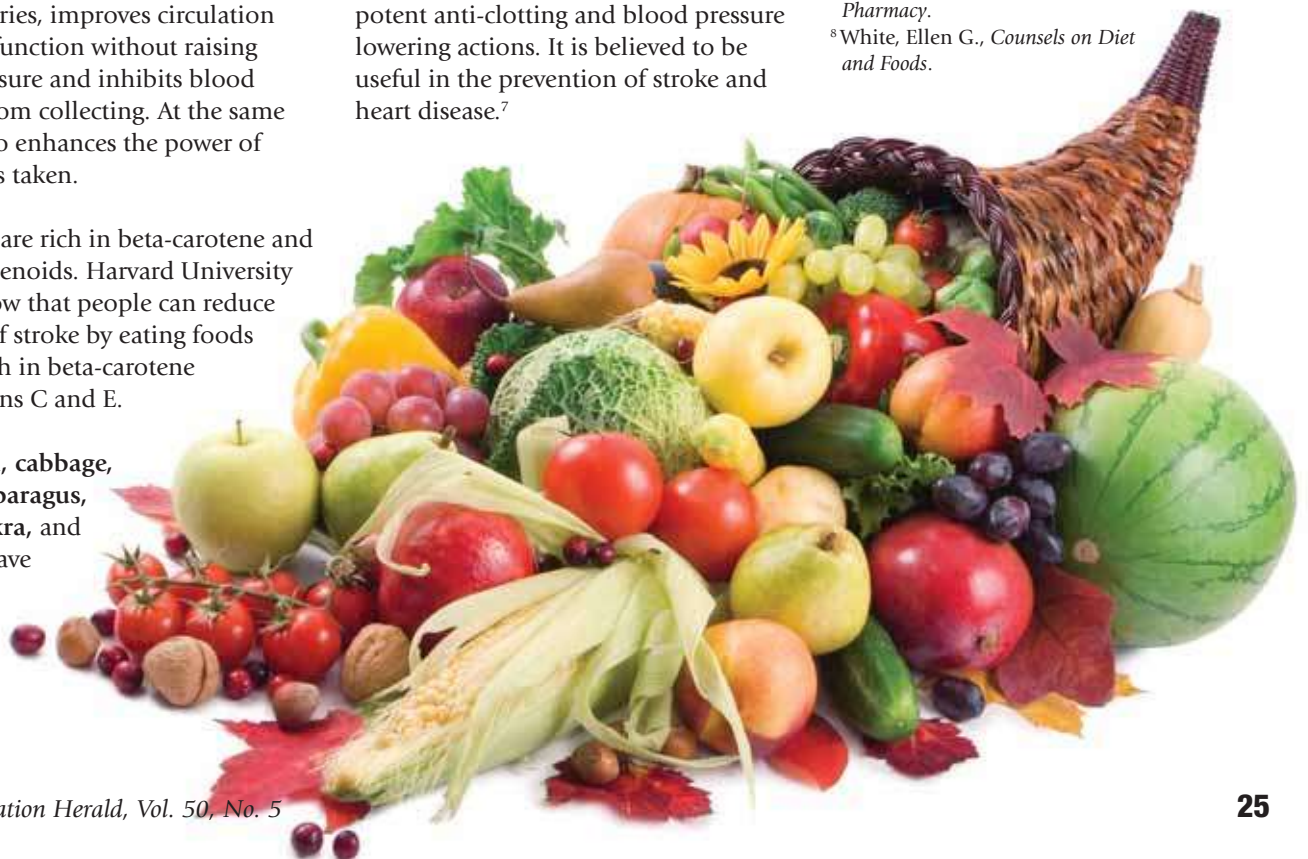
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A Journey of Faith



One of my earliest memories as a child growing up is the peal of the church bell on Sunday mornings—a reminder for the parishioners to come out to worship. My older sister and I were sent off to church, then a 200-year-old grandiose house of worship of the Episcopal faith.

Beautiful scenes—depicting the virgin Mary holding the baby Jesus, the Lord's Supper, Jesus praying in the garden of Gethesemane, Jesus' crucifixion and the ascension—were all radiantly highlighted by the eastern sunrise. Hanging over the wide semicircle altar were the Ten Commandments, etched in two tables of stone. It seemed that as I would try to memorize the ten precepts, it was then that the gigantic pipe organ would start playing the processional hymn. We would arise to sing as the "Father" dressed in his priestly robe marched up the aisle, along with his laymen and the choir behind. The priest would offer prayers in chants, to which the congregation responded. We sang hymns, listened to Scripture readings, took the holy Eucharist, received a short sermon from the New Testament and were dismissed. Sunday school was held only in the evenings at 4:00 p.m. for the children. There I learned wonderful Bible stories and some Bible verses.

By June Cummings

As I sat quietly in the oversized mahogany pews, I loved to watch the sunbeams streaming through the many multicolor window panes.



Seeds of truth planted

"Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even thy salvation, according to thy word" (Psalm 119:41).

As I grew older, the Ten Commandments became of great interest to me. I often wondered why we did not obey these laws. Part of the priest's chants included a reminder that "Christ is risen from the dead on the first day of the week (Sunday) and is now ascended into heaven and will return to judge both the quick and the dead." So I knew then that Saturday is the Sabbath. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" was not part of the teachings. None of the other laws that I can remember were emphasized. No obedience to God seemed necessary. Eventually, I shared my thoughts with a beloved Sunday school teacher, who lovingly told me that "Saturday worship is for the Jews." "Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday, so Christians now worship the risen Lord on the first day of the week," she added. Not quite happy with her reasoning, I accepted this. But, strangely, the truth of Sabbath sanctity was planted in my heart in those traditional worship services—seeds of truth that would take root and grow about 20 years later. "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart" (Psalm 119:34).

Love grown cold

I loved Jesus. I loved the Bible stories and the beautiful hymns I learned. I loved attending church. However, on becoming a wife and mother of three children, I soon became a visitor. My family and I had no time for church attendance. Our prayers were said only for quick favors from God or if we faced some disappointments. God's love and goodness were taken for granted. My love had grown cold. I had no concept that God's commandments came with blessings or curses. I did not know how to be faithful to God, how to truly serve Him. My life was built on sinking sand!

I had my family, a home, a good job; I traveled for leisure, I had good friends and good health. Divorced and remarried. It was at this "good time" in my life that I unexpectedly became a widow and faced great financial ruin. I had

*"Show me the right path," I asked the Lord.
"I desire to serve you wholeheartedly."*

built my successes on the shifting sand and not on Jesus Christ, our "Rock of Ages."

Reconnecting with Christ

The Scriptures present the compelling invitation: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16).

Empty and alone, I called on the Lord in fear. I even started to attend a Sunday church but found no joy or peace. I experienced more disappointments than I can remember during this period of my life. But God through His grace and mercy carried me. My prayers became more personal and my walk with Him got closer. Then one dark night, driving back to my home after a visit with my daughter, I felt an overwhelming need to be saved. I cried to the Lord to break me, melt me, mold me, and fill me with His Holy Spirit. I repented of all my sins and shortcomings.

As a result, I then felt renewed for the first time in years. The ten beautiful commandments hanging over the altar in the old church came to mind. I knew now that if I love the Lord, I must follow His ways and not human traditions. I had to find the keepers of God's truths. "If from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29).

My search for truth delayed

Looking back, I do not quite understand why my many attempts were unsuccessful in connecting with a Sabbathkeeping church. But in the fullness of time, God used my brother (not a SDA member) to direct me. He needed my assistance to transport an elderly couple to a church meeting. I agreed to help and later found out that first night, that the SDA Church was having a crusade for souls. For four weeks, I did not miss any scheduled meeting. I asked to be baptized after hearing the three angels' messages and the truths of the

Spirit of Prophecy. With great joy I was baptized into the SDA faith, and eagerly started working for the church.

My journey delayed further

"In every generation and in every land the true foundation and pattern for character building have been the same. The divine law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . and thy neighbour as thyself," the great principle made manifest in the character and life of our Saviour, is the only secure foundation, the only sure guide (Luke 10:27)."¹

Within a few years of being a Seventh-day Adventist, I realized that the truth I had wholeheartedly accepted at the crusade was being compromised. My spiritual growth was retarded. My faith was faltering, and my works seemed dead. I watched my local church struggling for survival until it eventually closed, as the few faithful members sought other Sabbath churches to worship.

It was at this low spiritual time in my Advent faith that my employer offered me a job in a new city. In faith, I left my family (now grown) behind and relocated. I continued to be faithful to the church in this new city, but again, God's standards of living were not truly practiced. Some faithful souls tried to remain on the old pathway, but most of us (including myself) fell short. Once again, I felt lost. Conversations with my pastors left me more discouraged.

Revival

"Blessed are the undefiled in the way" (Psalm 119:1).

"Show me the right path," I asked the Lord. "I desire to serve you wholeheartedly," I prayed. Again, God used his agent—a church brother—to direct me to the SDA Reform Movement Church. On my first visit, I **saw** (not just heard) a sermon of love for God and for each other displayed among these people. With open hearts of love I was wel-



Help Hasten Their Journey!

comed. I also saw a church endeavoring to uphold the banner of God's truth in reading from the Testimonies of the Spirit of Prophecy. Above all, the Bible truth found fresh new ground in my heart. I was revived and encouraged beyond my expectations. I desired to be part of these Reform keepers of truth. With much deeper study and prayers, I was rebaptized into the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement.

Reformed and restored

"Amidst all life's perplexities and dangers and conflicting claims, the one safe and sure rule is to do what God says."²

As I continue my Christian journey, I rely wholly on the Holy Spirit for direction. I accept Christ's imputed righteousness to make me whole. I trust daily in His living Word to keep me satisfied. I live daily to sing my Redeemer's praise for leading me to a reformed life and for restoring me to an even better lifestyle.

As the Lord leads me healthy and straight, I do service for my children and grandchildren (all of whom are attending churches, though not of the Advent faith). I continue to pray that as I abide in Christ and He abides in me, my witness will inspire my children to come to a higher calling in the Lord. "If you love me, keep my commandments," Christ declares in John 14:15—that we all may be overcomers and hear someday soon the precious words of commendation: "Well done, good and faithful servant[s]" (Matthew 25:23).

As I bond together in the unity of the faith with my church brethren and sisters, I pray also that we will all be overcomers, to sing the song of the redeemed and enter into the Holy City. "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). *✠*

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² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

They're everywhere—they're all around:
Souls in darkness to be found.
In Heaven's book, they still are lost;
They must be found whate'er the cost!

Some will find the truth in books;
Some will see in words and looks—
The love of Jesus shining through
From hearts of people such as you.

Your care, your kindness in a thought:
This is what they long have sought.
They've seen enough of sinful man;
They'd love to see a Jesus fan.

A Christian true is oh-so-rare.
The woes of souls he'll gladly bear.
Corrupting sin and worldly strife
Will be not found in this one's life.

The tenderness of Christian love
Can only come from Heav'n above.
Shall we not seek this precious jewel
And let the Holy Spirit rule?

The time is short and pain abounds;
The gospel trumpet clearly sounds
In action, word, and attitude,
So let's be Christlike, never rude.

Shall we then live the Scripture text
Exemplifying what comes next?
As flower blooms from opening bud,
The Saviour calls through His shed blood.

The opportunity is here.
Reveal the truth and never fear!
Show yourself to be a friend,
And some will thank you in the end.

—B. Monteiro

Communication

By Lizy Thiel

*F*rom the moment we hold our dear little babies for the first time, we start communicating with them.

At first there is no response, but soon we see their little faces light up and respond with a smile, and then follows the usual “baby talk” we all love to hear.

All babies who are talked to develop into happier, well-adjusted adults. It has been known that babies raised in orphanages, where the caregivers have too much to do other than prop up a bottle in the baby’s mouth and care for its basic needs without any affection or communication, grow up lacking proper social skills and cannot adjust properly into society. So, mothers, as well as fathers, take the time to communicate with your children when they are babies and young children. You are not wasting time, but are developing a lifelong communication for which you will ever be grateful.

Communication is a two-way experience. A parent should not dominate and not allow the baby/child to say anything. How will they ever confide in you when they are in their turbulent teens if you haven’t learnt to listen to their side of the story while they were little, and you thought their problems were so trivial or time consuming? Be ready to acknowledge your mistakes if you have incorrectly admonished them. Children are so forgiving. They don’t hold grudges, and they will respect you more for it. No wonder Jesus said, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3).

Some of our family’s happiest times happened around the meal table. We

always sat at the table for our meals and talked, and did we all love to talk! As the children got older, we would come home at night from a visit or social gathering, put the two little ones to bed, and we would both sit up (many times for more than an hour if necessary) and talk to the older children and listen to what they had experienced, both positive and negative. Much needful advice was given and taken, joys and sorrows shared, and a bonding developed that has helped them so much through those years when peer pressure is so great and parental advice often disregarded.

One thing we must realize is that our young people are living in a more depraved world than in which we grew up. There is so much more exposure to immorality and wrong practices that we have to take a different approach than our parents took with us, that is, “Don’t do this” or “You are not allowed to do that” with no explanation given. We always explained why and would look for examples to illustrate why. Children are more ready to listen when you explain from cause to effect and illustrate it from experiences that have happened to people they come in contact with. All behaviour, whether good or bad, has consequences, and we were quick to point these out to them. We encouraged the good and, if they did something wrong (they weren’t

perfect), we talked to them and helped them sort out the wrong and encouraged them to make right choices in the future. They especially found it helpful when we told them stories of how we ourselves struggled in our teens with a similar situation. This made them realize that we have their best interests at heart and that if we fall, God is merciful and will forgive and help us to do better next time.

Through all of your family’s communication, never forget that the most essential communication is with God. Pray with and for your children and teach them to tell God everything just the way it is and seek His leading in the choices they have to make.

Praise God for the gift of communication with Him and with our children. *✠*





Angola

Public meetings in Huambo, June 2009 (left and above).

Brazil

National colporteur congress in Curitiba, September 2009 (below).



United States

Missionary training program, September 2009



India

Colporteur seminar in Courtallam, Tamil Nadu, August 2009 (right).

Italy

Attendees at the baptism near Milan, July 2009 (below).





Children's
Corner

God's Care

"He that keepeth thee will not slumber" (Psalm 121:3).

By Frances Ridley
Havergal

(19th century hymnwriter
in England.)

Sometimes little children wake in the night, and feel lonely, and a little bit afraid. This is not because of the darkness; for if others are with them, talking and moving about, they do not mind it at all. But it is the stillness, the strange silence when everybody is fast asleep.

Everybody? No! The One who loves you best of all is watching you all the time; the One who careth for you never sleeps—"He that keepeth thee will not slumber." He is there all the time, never leaving you one moment alone, never going away at all. It makes no difference to Him that it is very dark, for "the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee" (Psalm 139:12). And all through the dark hours He "keepeth thee;" keeps you from everything that could hurt or even frighten you, so that you may safely and quietly take the sweet sleep He gives you.

He "keepeth thee;" only think who is your Keeper! The mighty God, who can do everything, and can see everything. Why need you ever fear with such a

"He will take care of you!

All through the night

Jesus, the Shepherd,

His little one keeps:

Darkness to Him is

the same as the light:

He never slumbers and

He never sleeps."

Keeper? It is very nice to know that "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee" (Psalm 91:11); but it is sweeter and grander still to think that God Himself keeps us. As if He wanted us to be very sure of it, and to leave us no excuse for ever being afraid any more, He even says it three times over, "He that keepeth thee will not slumber." "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." "The Lord is thy Keeper" (Psalm 121:3-5). What could He say more?

Now what will you say to Him if you wake in the night and feel lonely in the stillness? Will you not say to Him, "I will trust and not be afraid"? ✪



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