

A close-up photograph of a man and a woman holding hands. The man is on the left, wearing a dark suit jacket, and the woman is on the right, wearing a white dress. They are standing in front of a stained glass window with vibrant colors like purple, pink, and yellow. The background is softly blurred.

the
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THE GOSPEL OF
Restoration

Heavenly Dew in Due Season / God Wants You to Be His Vessel! / Love Makes the Home

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

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To Believe, or Not to Believe

The opening line of a heart-wrenching soliloquy from the turn of the 17th century makes a memorable declaration: “To be, or not to be: That is the question.”

For us in the 20th century considering the essence of Christian life, well might a more suitable declaration be coined: To believe, or not to believe: That is the question.

Christ bids us believe—and in His mercy He gives abundant evidence why we should do so: “If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him” (John 10:37, 38).

His word abounds with promises to all who will believe. The Lord declares: “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive)” (John 7:38, 39).

Slowness to believe in Christ was gently reproved in His comment to the nobleman: “Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe” (John 4:48).

The closing words of the same gospel extol the power of belief:

“Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs

truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:29–31). Precious promises to believe—to be living by!

What “believing” involves

In what are we to believe? All that God has said—the promises and warnings alike. Those who fail to believe the promises generally fail to believe the warnings and vice versa. Such miss out on “the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe” (Ephesians 1:19). “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4).

The peril of unbelief

We read in Romans 11:20 and Hebrews 3:19 that the children of Israel could not enter into Christ’s peace and rest due to unbelief. Are we in the same danger? Is our belief too superficial?

“It is important that we understand clearly the nature of faith. There are many who believe that Christ is the Saviour of the world, that the gospel is true and reveals the plan of salvation,

yet they do not possess saving faith. They are intellectually convinced of the truth, but this is not enough; in order to be justified, the sinner must have that faith that appropriates the merits of Christ to his own soul. We read that the devils ‘believe, and tremble’ (James 2:19); but their belief does not bring them justification, neither will the belief of those who give a merely intellectual assent to the truths of the Bible bring them the benefits of salvation. This belief fails of reaching the vital point, for the truth does not engage the heart or transform the character.

“In genuine, saving faith, there is trust in God, through the belief in the great atoning sacrifice made by the Son of God on Calvary. In Christ, the justified believer beholds his only hope and deliverer. Belief may exist without trust, but confidence born of trust cannot exist without faith.”¹

True belief is a life-changing phenomenon. “There are few who believe with heart and soul that we have a heaven to win and a hell to shun; but these few show their faith by their works.”² Let us therefore determine to echo the vow of the apostle:

“We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” (Hebrews 10:39)! *R*

References

¹ *The Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1890.

² *Special Testimonies on Education*, p. 131.

Heavenly Dew in Due Season

Part 1 of 2

*A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compilation, with comments by
Michel-Ange Ducheine*

*“Ask ye of the Lord
rain in the time of
the latter rain; so the
Lord shall make bright
clouds, and give them
showers of rain, to
every one grass in the
field” (Zechariah 10:1).*

New life needed

The prophet Ezekiel was shown a very well-known vision which is highly applicable for our day:

“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and

ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army” (Ezekiel 37:1–10).

The first application: The wicked in the world

“The souls of those whom we desire to save are like the representa-

tion which Ezekiel saw in vision—a valley of dry bones. They are dead in trespasses and sins, but God would have us deal with them as though they were living. Were the question put to us, ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ our answer would be only the confession of ignorance, ‘O Lord, Thou knowest.’ To all appearance there is nothing to lead us to hope for their restoration. Yet nevertheless **the word of the prophecy must be spoken even to those who are like the dry bones in the valley.** We are in no wise to be deterred from fulfilling our commission by the listlessness, the dullness, the lack of spiritual perception, in those upon whom the Word of God is brought to bear. **We are to preach the word of life to those whom we may judge to be as hopeless subjects as though they were in their graves.**¹

The second application: The church of God on earth

The prophet Ezekiel continues relating his vision: “Then [the Lord] said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel” (Ezekiel 37:11, 12).

“Not only does this simile of the dry bones apply to the world, but also to those who have been blessed with great light; for they also are like the skeletons of the valley. They have the form of men, the framework of the body; but they have not spiritual life. But the parable does not leave the dry bones merely knit together into the forms of men; for it is not enough that there is symmetry of limb and feature. The breath of life must vivify the bodies, that they may stand upright, and spring into activity. **These bones represent the house of Israel, the church of God,** and the hope of the church is the vivifying influence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord must breathe upon the dry bones, that they may live.”²

The importance of receiving new life from above

Jesus tells us, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5).

The great commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20 bids us teach whatsoever the Lord has commanded. We surely need His help in order to do that successfully. This is amply provided. The Lord gave this assurance: “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49).

“What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. Jesus knew their destitution and told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high. Every teacher must be a learner, that his eyes may be anointed to see the evidences of the advancing truth of God. The beams of the Sun of Righteousness must shine into his own heart if he would impart light to others.”³

“**We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today.** Moral darkness, like a funeral pall, covers the earth. All manner of false doctrines, heresies, and satanic deceptions are misleading the minds of men. Without the Spirit and power of God it will be in vain that we labor to present the truth.”⁴

“The Spirit of God, with its vivifying power, must be in every human agent, that every spiritual muscle and sinew may be in exercise. Without the Holy Spirit, without the breath of God, there is torpidity of conscience, loss of spiritual life. Many who are without spiritual life have their names on the

church records, but they are not written in the Lamb’s book of life. They may be joined to the church, but they are not united to the Lord. They may be diligent in the performance of a certain set of duties and may be regarded as living men; but many are among those who have ‘a name that thou livest, and art dead’ (Revelation 3:1)”⁵

Now is the time to receive this power

“I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory” (Revelation 18:1).

“John says, ‘I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory’ (Revelation 18:1). Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue. **God can breathe new life into every soul that sincerely desires to serve Him and can touch the lips with a live coal from off the altar and cause them to become eloquent with His praise.** Thousands of voices will be imbued with the power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God’s word. The stammering tongue will be loosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth. **May the Lord help His people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain so close a connection with Him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out.**”⁶

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in

“Let us see to it that our hearts are cleansed, emptied of self, and turned toward heaven, that they may be ready for the latter rain.”

“Let us be obtaining a fitting up to join in the proclamation of the angel who shall lighten the earth with his glory.”

obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. **This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.**”⁷

CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING THE LATTER RAIN:

Why have we not received it yet?

“Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness. Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore’s forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed” (Jeremiah 3:2, 3).

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

“God will have a people separate and distinct from 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. If they had acquainted themselves with Him, they would walk worthy of Him.”⁸

“The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out His Spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain—‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ (Genesis 4:9).”⁹

“This people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you” (Jeremiah 5:23–25).

“It is not the greatness of the act of disobedience that constitutes sin, but the fact of variance from God’s expressed will in the least particular; for this shows that there is yet communion between the soul and sin. The heart is

divided in its service. There is a virtual denial of God, a rebellion against the laws of His government.”¹⁰

“A slight deviation from truth, a little variation from the requirements of God, is thought to be, after all, not so very sinful, when pecuniary gain or loss is involved. But sin is sin, whether committed by the possessor of millions or by the beggar in the streets.”¹¹

What must we do?

1. REPENT

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you” (Acts 3:19–21).

“The work that God has begun in the human heart in giving His light and knowledge must be continually going forward. Every individual must realize his own necessity. **The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.** Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain.”¹²

2. OBEY

"It shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil" (Deuteronomy 11:13, 14).

"Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it."¹³

"The latter rain will never refresh and invigorate the indolent who do not use the powers God has given them."¹⁴

3. PURIFY OUR HEART

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:17-19).

"Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple of every defilement. Then the latter rain will fall upon us as the early rain fell upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost."¹⁵

"If we would receive the light of the glorious angel that shall lighten the earth with his glory, let us see to it that our hearts are cleansed, emptied of self, and turned toward heaven, that they may be ready for the latter rain. Let us be obtaining a fitting up to join in the proclamation of the angel who shall lighten the earth with his glory. Let us be collaborators with Christ. Now is the time for us to let self die, to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts, to deny the cravings of appetite and passion. The minds of many are channels for impure thoughts. They do not have a realizing sense of the offensive character of sin. I call upon you to clear the King's highway. Weighty responsibilities are resting upon you; for you are to represent the character of your Lord to the world. Faith without works is dead. There must be corresponding works, or the faith is worthless, a mere pretension, an empty profession. You are to manifest your faith by a life of integrity, making it evident that Christ is abiding in the heart, and that you are able to show forth what is the hope of His calling."¹⁶ *R*

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¹ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1165. [Emphasis supplied.]

² *Ibid.*, pp. 1165, 1166 [Emphasis supplied.]

³ *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 411.

⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 158. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁵ *The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1166.

⁶ *Gospel Workers* (1892), p. 383. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁷ *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 137. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁹ *The Review and Herald*, July 21, 1896.



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¹⁰ *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 51.

¹¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 311.

¹² *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 507. [Emphasis supplied.]

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *In Heavenly Places*, p. 338.

¹⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 214.

¹⁶ *The Signs of the Times*, August 1, 1892. [Emphasis supplied.]



Giants!

By Les Gibson

Most of us know the story of David and Goliath; we have heard it many times. But is it possible that there is more to the story?

David was a young shepherd boy. Goliath was a huge giant. A trained killer. Goliath had his armor, his helmet, his leggings, his sword, his spear, and another soldier to carry his shield. David had his trust in the Lord, a clean heart, and a slingshot.

As we pick up the story in the Bible, we find the giant shouting at the army of Israel.

“And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. When

Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid. . . . And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid” (1 Samuel 17:8–11, 24).

Why were the Israelites afraid?

“The armies of Israel were depressed. Their courage failed. They said one to another, ‘Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up.’ In shame and indignation, David exclaimed, ‘Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?’ (1 Samuel 17:25, 26).”¹

Hadn’t they seen this giant before? Of course they had:

“The Philistine drew near **morning and evening**, and presented himself forty days” (verse 16, emphasis added). The army had seen him eighty times already. For forty days and forty nights, it seemed that all they had thought about was the giant—specifically his size.

How big was he?

“For forty days the host of Israel had trembled before the haughty challenge of the Philistine giant. **Their hearts failed within them as they looked upon his massive form, in height measuring six cubits and a span.**”²



Why were they so scared?

“For forty days this [Philistine] proud boaster filled Israel with terror and made Saul greatly afraid; for no one dared to combat with the mighty giant. Israel, **on account of their transgressions**, had not that sacred trust in God which would lead them to battle in His name.”³

This giant was allowed to bother them because of their transgressions. No wonder then that they were having **GIANT problems!** Such bothersome can even prevent us from having morning and evening worship as we should. But wait, we still have not really figured out how big he was.

“The Philistines propose their own manner of warfare in selecting a man of great size and strength, whose height is **about twelve feet**; and they send this champion forth to provoke a combat with Israel, requesting them to send out a man to fight with him. He was terrible in appearance and spoke proudly and defied the armies of Israel and their God.”⁴

Let’s think this through. Today, a professional football player or all-star heavyweight wrestler would be about 6 feet tall and weight 250–300 pounds, more or less. Compared to a 300-pound specimen, Goliath at 12 feet would be twice as tall, twice as wide, and twice as deep. So this giant is as tall as 2 men and as wide as 2 men, making the equivalent of 4 men. Then if he is 2-men deep, front to back, that adds up to being as big as 8 men. So this giant will be 300 pounds times 8, which makes 2,400 pounds.

Remember also that this is not your ordinary soldier. He has been trained for years to do one thing well: Hurt, Kill, Destroy!

If God is not on your side because of your sins, do you want to fight this man?

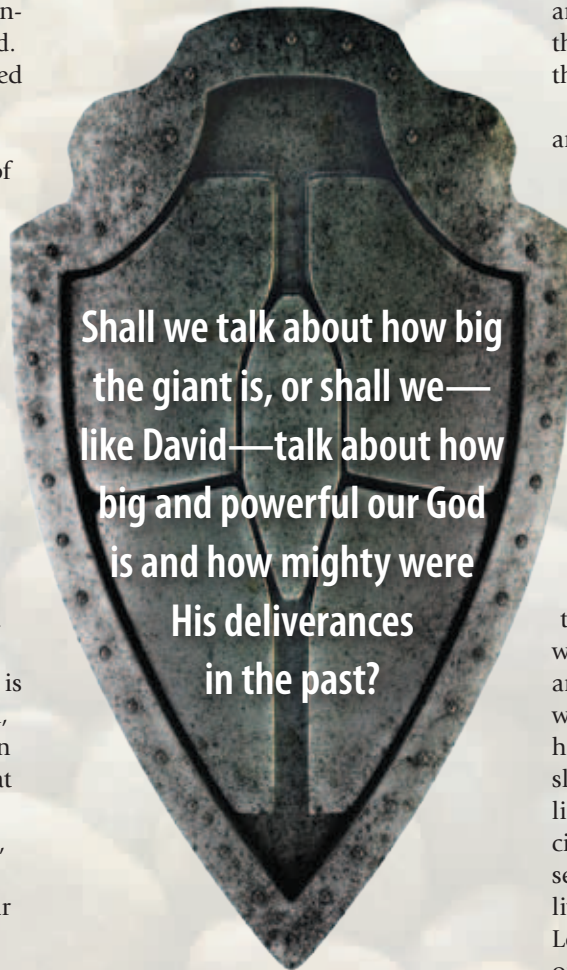
Consider the setting:

Beginning at 1 Samuel 17:3 we learn that the Philistines were camped out on a mountain. Israel was also camped out on a mountain with a valley between. Nobody wanted to go down into the valley first. Why not? Higher ground is vantage ground, especially in

hand-to-hand combat. Notice, however, that in verse 40, David stops at the brook and picks up five smooth stones. Incredible! Where is the brook? In the bottom of the valley, of course!

It is written that the only thing you can take to heaven is your character. What is character?

“If the thoughts are wrong the feelings will be wrong, and **the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character.**”⁵



What do you suppose David was thinking and feeling when he saw and heard this giant defy the army of the living God?

“When David saw that all Israel were filled with fear, and learned that the Philistine’s defiance was hurled at them day after day, without arousing a champion to silence the boaster, **his spirit was stirred within him. He was fired with zeal to preserve the honor of the living God and the credit of His people.** . . .

“In shame and indignation, David exclaimed, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?”⁶

Why wasn’t David afraid?

Notice: The whole camp was talking about THE GIANT. But what was David talking about?

“For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? . . . And [David] turned from [Eliab] toward another, and spake **after the same manner**: and the people answered him again after the former manner” (verses 26, 30).

David now understands the problem and seeks out a solution.

“And David said to Saul, Let no man’s heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth” (verses 32, 33). King Saul tells the shepherd boy that he can’t win the fight.

“And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee” (verses 34–37). David tells Saul that the Lord will win the fight!

“Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine

head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands" (verses 45–47). David tells Goliath that he will take off his head and defeat the whole Philistine army—and he gives all the glory to the Lord."

Notice that the whole army is talking about the giant in their life—his size, his strength, his ability, his skill, his expertise, and so forth. But what is David talking about? The Lord, the Lord, the Lord! Five separate times. David, the shepherd boy, can speak of nothing else!

David speaks of deliverance in the past, in the present, and in the future for the sheep of the Lord's pasture. No wonder he is not afraid! David knows what the Lord will do. He knew that the battle was not his, but the Lord's.

What about me?

Let us each ask ourselves the question: Do I have any giants in my life? The "giant" might be appetite, irreverence, money problems, or perhaps a love for display. Maybe it is covetousness or selfishness. It could even be a misunderstood relationship to the subject of righteousness by faith. Could I have let even that become a giant in my life? At a camp meeting in Rome, New York, Ellen G. White made this comment:

"On Sunday morning there was decided evidence that the Spirit of God was working great changes in the moral and spiritual condition of those assembled. There was a surrendering of the mind and heart to God, and precious testimonies were borne by those who had long been in darkness. One brother spoke of the struggle that he had experienced before he could receive the good news that Christ is our righteousness. The conflict was severe, but the Lord was at work with him, and his mind was changed, and his strength renewed. The Lord presented the truth before him in clear lines,

revealing the fact that Christ alone is the source of all hope and salvation."⁷

Why was this brother's conflict so severe? Why is this conflict so severe in my heart? Could it be pride? Could it be self-dependence? Could it be that we are too proud to admit that we can't do anything to save ourselves from ruin? Could it be that this ugly giant of pride comes to defy a person every morning and evening at worship time—and remain unchallenged right in the face of God's army, His church? Think about it. Is that possible? Could this history be repeated in my life or yours?

What can we do? What did David do? What did he talk about? Remember!

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24).

Why would David pray like that? Because he knew something that Jeremiah also did:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17:9, 10).

David knew that his heart was deceitful, so he wanted God to search it. David's prayer was, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:7, 10).

David knew that he was not able to stand up to the giant with sin in his heart—and neither can we!

Could a misunderstanding of the message "Christ our righteousness" become a menacing giant? If it does, if it can, what can we do about it? Talk about how big the giant is, or—like David—talk about the Lord and how

great He is and of His deliverances in the past, present, and future?

In what are we actually trusting?

"Goliath trusted in his armor. He terrified the armies of Israel by his defiant, savage boastings, while he made a most imposing



display of his armor, which was his strength. David, in his humility and zeal for God and his people, proposed to meet this boaster. Saul consented and had his own kingly armor placed upon David. But he would not consent to wear it. He laid off the king's armor, for he had not proved it. He had proved God and, in trusting in Him, had gained special victories.

To put on Saul's armor would give the impression that he was a warrior, when he was only little David who tended the sheep. **He did not mean that any credit be given to the armor of Saul, for his trust was in the Lord God of Israel.** He selected a few pebbles from the brook, and with his sling and staff, his only weapons, **he went forth in the name of the God of Israel to meet the armed warrior.**"⁸

What can we do? What must we do? Let us never forget how David overcame his giant!

"And this is the confidence that we have in [the Son of God], that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 John 5:14, 15).

"It is sad that every soul is not praying for the vital breath of the Spirit, for we are ready to die if it breathe not on us.

"We are to pray for the impartation of the Spirit as the remedy for sin-sick souls. The church needs to be converted, and why should we not prostrate ourselves at the throne of grace, as

representatives of the church, and from a broken heart and contrite spirit make earnest sup-

plication that the Holy Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high? Let us pray that when it shall be graciously bestowed our cold hearts may be revived, and we may have dis-

cernment to understand that it is from God, and receive it with joy. Some have treated the Spirit as an unwelcome guest, refusing to receive the rich gift, refusing to acknowledge it, turning from it, and condemning it as fanaticism.

"When the Holy Spirit works the human agent, it does not ask us in what way it shall operate. Often it moves in unexpected ways. Christ did not come as the Jews expected. He did not come in a manner to glorify them as a nation. His forerunner came to prepare the way for Him by calling upon the people to repent of their sins, and be converted, and be baptized. Christ's message was, 'The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.' The Jews refused to receive Christ, because He did not come in accordance with their expectations. The ideas of finite men were held as inflexible, because hoary with age.

"This is the danger to which the church is now exposed—that the inventions of finite men shall mark out the precise way for the Holy Spirit to come. Though they would not care to acknowledge it, some have already done this. And because **the Spirit is to come, not to praise men** or to build up their erroneous theories, **but to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment**, many turn away from it. They are not willing to be deprived of the garments of their own self-righteousness. They are not willing to exchange their own righteousness, which is unrighteousness, for the righteousness of Christ, which is pure, unadulterated truth. The Holy Spirit flatters no man."⁹

"The rainbow round about the throne is an assurance that God

is true, that in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We have sinned against Him, and are undeserving of His favor; yet He Himself has put into our lips that most wonderful

of pleas, 'Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us' (Jeremiah 14:21). When we come to Him confessing our unworthiness and sin, He has pledged Himself to give heed to our cry. The honor of His throne is staked for the fulfillment of His word unto us. . . .

"All who seek of Him shall find. All who knock will have the door opened to them. The excuse will not be made, Trouble Me not; the door is closed; I do not wish to open it. Never will one be told, I cannot help you. . . .

"Let your heart break for the longing it has for God, for the living God. The life of Christ has shown what humanity can do by being partaker of the divine nature. All that Christ received from God we too may have. Then ask and receive. With the persevering faith of Jacob, with the unyielding persistence of Elijah, claim for yourself all that God has promised. . . .

"He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart."¹⁰

Goliath trusted in his own armor. David trusted in the Lord's armor—the armor of God described in Ephesians 6:11–18. Let's ask ourselves: Where do I put my trust? Will I appear before God in my own righteousness, which is filthy rags—or would I rather appear before Him in the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness? *R*

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- ⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 218, 219. [Emphasis supplied.]
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GOD WANTS YOU TO BE HIS VESSEL!

By Rolly Dumaguit

Thomas Edward Lawrence, who became world famous as Lawrence of Arabia, was a British Army officer during World War I. He helped organize Arab revolts against Turkish domination. He made friends with many Arab sheiks, and, as he was passionately devoted to the Arab cause, he recruited them to fight against the Turks. After the war, he invited some of them to England.

The guests had a wonderful visit; they appeared before a joint session of Parliament and had an audience with the queen. On the last night of their visit, Lawrence offered his Arab friends anything they wanted to take back with them to their desert homes.

One of the sheiks led him up to the hotel room, into the bathroom, and pointed to the faucet in the bathtub, and said that he wanted to take

faucets with him that would provide him with running water in his desert home.

The amused British Army officer answered that the water did not come from the faucet! It is what is behind the faucet that gives the water! You cannot see it all, but everything is there nonetheless!

The faucet can be made of bronze, silver, or gold, but if not attached to a water supply, it is useless! If the reservoir, the pump, or the plumbing is broken or ever out of service, the faucet is useless! It's what's behind the faucet that gives the water!

So it is with us, if we are not connected to Jesus, we are nothing—we are useless, powerless creatures. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

"Man is dependent upon God for every breath he draws. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, are kept in order and activity by the power of an infinite God."¹

God works through unworthy human vessels

"[God] chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs. The priceless treasure is placed in earthen vessels. Through men His blessings are to be conveyed to the world. Through them His glory is to shine forth into the darkness of sin."²

Throughout history, God has chosen enfeebled and defective human instrumentalities. Let's look at a few examples:

- Abraham doubted God's promise and consented to his wife's plan.
- Jacob became a deceiver.
- Moses was a murderer. And he smote the rock while speaking words of self-exaltation.
- Aaron was pliable.
- Gideon made an ephod from golden rings, which became an object of idolatrous worship.
- Samson got involved with a harlot and nullified his vow.
- David was guilty of adultery and murder.

In most cases, God works through the most unworthy human vessels!

- Solomon loved many women and forgot God.
- Elijah challenged King Ahab but acted cowardly before the threats of Jezebel.
- Jonah tried to run away from God.
- Peter denied Christ.
- Mary Magdalene was under the control of seven evil spirits.
- Paul was an accomplice in murder.

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). But those who turned to God with true repentance came to the end of their life as overcomers, and their names remained written in the book of life.

"Many of us are rough stones from the quarry. But as we lay hold upon the truth of God, its influence affects us. It elevates us and removes from us every imperfection and sin, of whatever nature."³

With all our weaknesses, let us come to Jesus to be transformed into sanctified vessels.

"Let the repenting sinner fix his eyes upon 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1:29); and by beholding, he becomes changed."⁴

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature."⁵

Before the Lord can use us, He will change us with our consent and cooperation. The experience of Isaiah is an example.

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the

posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:1-8).

You are the faucet

God has ever been ready to pour down blessings on His people as His chosen channels. Jesus said:

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38).

"Every member of the church is to show his loyalty by inviting the thirsty to drink of the water of life."⁶

Jesus reveals here that He wants to use you and me as His vessels to convey the water of life to thirsty souls. Our responsibility is illustrated by the miracle that happened in the home of a poor widow.

"Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt

set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed" (2 Kings 4:1-6).

Among the vessels used in the home of the poor widow, some were big and some were small, and some were wide-mouthed while some were narrow-mouthed. But all were occupied. Likewise, in the church, all are to feel a heavy responsibility to promote the cause of God. The Lord needs human vessels—men and women—through whom He may impart blessings to others.

"As His representatives among men, God does not choose angels who have never fallen, but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took humanity that He might reach humanity. A divine-human Savior was needed to bring salvation to the world. And to men and women has been committed the sacred trust of making known 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' (Ephesians 3:8)."⁷

In Isaiah 43:13, the Lord said, "I will work, and who shall let it?"

Do you understand the important position you are holding in the work of God? He wants to use you and me, because His blessings will not flow where there are no vessels.

A timely warning

One of the dangers we are facing today is that of taking for ourselves the glory which belongs only to God. He blesses us with talents, and He wants us to use them and develop them in His work to the best of our God-given ability. But there is a danger. Preachers often get into trouble right when they learn how to preach eloquently! Singers get into trouble when they become famous! Doctors get into trouble when their names reach celebrity. Do you know why? It is because human beings, when they attain to the peak of their achieve-

ment, they have the tendency to forget that God is the one that gives them the power to do it. My friend, we should not become so smart that one day we come to feel—even unconsciously—that we don't need God any more.

"'Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not' (Jeremiah 45:5). The Lord has no place in His work for those who have a greater desire to win the crown than to bear the cross. . . .

"It is those who perform faithfully their appointed work day by day, who in God's own time will hear His call, 'Come up higher.'"⁸

Today most people measure their greatness and fame through their money, the beauty of their appearance, the education they have attained, and the achievement they have reached. It is common for people to become obsessed with breaking world records. That's why the *Guinness World Records* came into existence. The apostle Paul understood this concept:

"Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless" (Philippians 3:4–6).

"Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers

of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren" (2 Corinthians 11:22–26).

Once the apostle met Jesus on the way to Damascus, his orientation changed. Although he labored with extreme fidelity and efficiency when he commented how he had fought the good fight and had kept the faith (2 Timothy 4:7), he did it to give glory to Christ. Notice his declaration after knowing Christ:

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:7, 8).

The Lord is the potter. I'm just an earthen vessel. The power is of God—and without the touch of the Holy Spirit I am nothing. The Spirit of Prophecy assures that "without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ."⁹

Conclusion

John the Baptist was declared by Christ to be the greater of all prophets. The Lord said, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11). But as John the Baptist discovered that his fame was slowing down when Jesus Christ ministry had started, he said: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

The most valuable discovery that you and I can make will be this: No matter how far we may excel in any field, we are just poor sinners saved by grace. "For without me," Jesus said, "ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

If we want to be God's vessels we must be connected with the spring of living water. Bear in mind the words of our Saviour:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (verse 16). *R*

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How Will They Believe *What I'm Saying?*



By B. Monteiro

When God called Moses to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, the first concern of the tenderhearted shepherd was: How are they ever going to believe me? With what authority can I address this vast array of people?

As an amazing response, the Lord in turn asked a question of Moses: "What is that in thine hand?" (Exodus 4:2). The Creator then proceeded to imbue with divine power the simple rod held in the grasp of His willing servant. Thus a daily tool in the regular job of one meek, humble man was suddenly transformed into an awesome demonstration of heaven-sent authority.

How is credibility gained in today's environment?

We live in a cynical age. People are tired of being lied to by frauds and counterfeits. Civil legislation constantly has to be updated to safeguard the interests of innocent people who would fall prey to crooks. It seems that nearly everyone is somehow affected everywhere.

As Christians, we need to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. In the age in which we live, even we who desire to spread the gospel in all earnestness must beware of the natural human tendency to try to do the right thing the wrong way.

Competition: the ludicrous legacy of Lucifer

"I'm stronger than you are," beams the athlete as he flexes his



The practical life of the apostles was in exact harmony with what they believed. This is what made them convincing and gave them credibility.

powerful triceps before his scrawny comrades.

"But I'm smarter," retorts the bespectacled postgraduate.

"Who cares what you think—I'm richer!" boasts the slick, polished entrepreneur.

Finally, another pipes in as the prime example of conceit: "Look, all of you are losers. I'm the real one that comes out on top because . . . guess what I am? I'm HOLIER!!!"

Yet what does the actual Holiest in the universe say to all this pride? "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 9:23, 24).

Those who feel superior in their sanctimonious airs God describes as an annoying smoke irritating His nostrils. These are they "which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day" (Isaiah 65:5). No one likes to have to breathe smoke all day, so the Lord uses this vivid illustration to convey to us how despicable a self-righteous attitude is in His sight.

Unfortunately, every member of the human race has been bitten by the same "bug". It is the tragic legacy of that fallen angel that prevails on our planet. But our Creator calls for a transformation in our thinking:

"The men of the world are ambitious for fame. They desire houses and lands and plenty of money, that they may be great according to the measure of the world. It is the height of their ambition to reach a place where they can look down with a sense of superi-

ority upon those who are poor. These souls are building on the sand, and their house will fall suddenly. Superiority of position is not true greatness. That which does not increase the value of the soul is of no real value in itself.

"The qualities which shine the brightest in the world have no place in the kingdom of God. **Birth, position, wealth, and high-sounding titles find no special favor with Him.** Today, as when He walked among men, Christ passes these by and accepts the men and women in the humble walks of life, who have His glory in view. The words He uttered on the mount are truth for all time. 'Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 5:19). Whatever his learning, his wealth and position, heaven estimates the transgressor as the least of all God's creatures; and the humble and obedient are regarded as of more value than the most exalted and wealthy and honored of earth."¹

A subtle temptation

"Wait a minute," some may think.

"I'm not a worldly-minded heathen!"

"I'm not ambitious to be famous in the world or preoccupied with becoming rich!"

"What about if I am experienced and righteous in the things of God?"

"Suppose I have a higher standard of behavior and perhaps even hold a high position in the church?"

Perhaps all that may be true. Yet in such cases, the danger may be even subtler. There are many ways by which we can be trapped by the snare of self-righteousness. Here's just one example to provide food for thought: Has the Man of Calvary authorized any to use

religious titles such as "Reverend," "Father," or "Pastor" before one's name? We read in Psalm 111:9 that "holy and reverend is his name"—not the name of any man or woman. Jesus gives a clear warning against assuming honorary religious titles: "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But **all their works they do for to be seen of men:** they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, **and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.** And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 23:1-11, emphasis added).

This concept is opposite to that goal of Ignatius Loyola, whose aim was for the multitudes to become "*perinde acsi cadaver esset*" (just as though one were a corpse) in utter submission to religious "superiors." But God does not lead earnest souls in such a direction. In stark contrast to that type of mentality, Jesus assures us, "**I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture**" (John 10:9, emphasis supplied).

That means good, fresh pasture can be found directly through Christ. No human intercessor is to stand between the soul and the Saviour. The "green pastures" in which we are welcome to "lie down" (Psalm 23:2) are found in communion with the Majesty of heaven—the Lord Jesus Himself.

The real credibility of the apostles came from the sincerity of their walk

with Christ, having a conscience void of offense before God and humanity. They were not hypocrites (*hypo* meaning “lower” than their “credence”—what they believed.) Their life in practice was in exact harmony with their faith; they **lived** what they believed. **This** is what made them convincing and gave them credibility.

It is possible that since—according to the command of Christ—all are brethren, the title “Elder” might be used for a minister. But that would simply be an indication that he is an elder **brother**. To such the admonition comes: “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:1–3).

The Lord gives a blessed promise to those whom He calls to live the sacrificial life necessary to succeed as a true elder brother with genuineness in the sight of Heaven (not earth): “When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (verse 4). That crown of glory is given at the coming of Christ—not by pasting an extra title onto one’s name. **Real credibility in Christianity is something that is earned by the unselfish action of a charitable heart. Such an attitude will be genuinely appreciated and appropriately honored.**

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. **Yea, *all* of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility:** for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (verse 5, emphasis added).

The model Man

“Christ’s life on earth was meek and lowly. . . . For our sake He stepped down from His royal throne and clothed His divinity with humanity. He laid aside His royal robe, His kingly crown, that He might be one with us. He resigned His position as Commander in the heavenly courts, and for

our sake became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He hid His glory under the guise of humanity, that His divine, transforming power might touch humanity.

“While on earth Christ lived in the home of a peasant. He wore the best garments His parents could provide, but they were the humble garments of the peasants. He walked the rough paths of Nazareth and climbed the steeps of its hillsides and mountains. In His home He was a constant worker and left on record a life filled with useful deeds.”²

“Christ, the Lord of the whole earth, was a humble artisan. He was unrecognized, neglected, and despised. But He held His commission and authority from the highest power, the Sovereign of heaven. Angels were His attendants, for Christ was doing His Father’s business just as much when toiling at the bench as a carpenter, as when working miracles for the multitude. But He concealed the secret from the world. **He attached no high titles to His name to make His position understood, but He lived the royal law of God. . . .**

“His work was not the priestly office after the appointments of men. It was impossible for man to understand His exalted position, unless the Holy Spirit should make it known.”³

Yes, people who are not in tune with the Holy Spirit may misunderstand

your position in life or in the church as you follow in the Master’s footsteps. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for so they misunderstood your divine Master. It is written of Jesus that “the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:28, 29). What was wrong with the scribes? In Matthew 23:23–33, Christ vividly explains it. Their works did not harmonize with their profession. They failed to practice what they preached.

In contrast, what did Jesus do to win hearts?

“The Majesty of Heaven, whom angels worshiped, who was rich in honor, splendor, and glory, came to the earth, and when He found Himself in fashion as a man, He did not plead His refined nature as an excuse to hold Himself aloof from the unfortunate. He was found in His work among the afflicted, the poor, distressed, and needy ones. Christ was the embodiment of refinement and purity. His was an exalted life and character, yet **He was found in His labor, not among men of high-sounding titles, not among the most honorable of this world, but with the despised and needy.** ‘I came,’ says the divine Teacher, ‘to save that which was lost.’ Yes, the Majesty of Heaven was ever found working to help those who most needed help. May the example



of Christ put to shame the excuses of that class who are so attracted to their poor self that they consider it beneath their refined taste and their high calling to help the most helpless. Such have taken a position higher than their Lord, and in the end will be astonished to find themselves even lower than that class, to mingle with, and to work for whom, shocked their refined, sensitive natures. True, it may not always be agreeable or pleasant to unite with the Master and be coworkers with Him in helping the very class who stand most in need of help. But this is the work Christ humbled Himself to do. Is the servant greater than his Lord? He has given the example and enjoins upon us to copy it. It may be disagreeable, yet duty demands that just such a work be performed."⁴

Meanwhile, what is to be my attitude toward fellow members of Christ's flock?

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Romans 12:10). That does not mean to view our brethren as equals. It actually means to look up to them—all of them.

"True value is shown far more by works than by assertions, or by tearing one another down to build self up. . . .

"Mutual love must be cherished at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. **This is the credential which we bear to the world**, that God has sent His Son Jesus to die, to bring back the moral image of God in man: 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another' (John 13:35). This love cultivated, becomes an abiding principle, and is effectual in rooting out dissensions and divisions among brethren. . . . Professed Christian churches are often ruined by their own unchristian course toward one another."⁵

How can I achieve credibility in a doubting world?

"The call that [Christ] gave to the humble fishermen on the shores of Galilee He gives to each soul. 'Follow me,' He says, 'and I will make you fishers of men' (Matthew 4:19). . . .

"True value is shown far more by works than by assertions, or by tearing one another down to build self up."

"You will have some estimate of your own worth when you become a laborer together with Christ, to fill the world with His righteousness. The Lord expects you to proclaim the message, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matthew 10:7). You are to work to bless those who have no sense of their need of a new heart, a new life and purpose. Someone must tell sinners of their great need; and those whom God has accepted as His sons and daughters must work as Christ worked. 'If any man will come after me,' the Saviour said, 'let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me' (Matthew 16:24). **Those who heed this call will study the meekness and lowliness of Christ and will join with Him in His efforts to make the world better.**

"The commission Christ gave to the disciples He gives to all connected with Him. We are to make any and every sacrifice for the joy of seeing souls saved. Whatever work is done in the name of Jesus to bless and elevate and restore human beings to the image of God is as acceptable to the Lord as was the work of Moses or Joseph or Daniel. You who are the elect and chosen ones are to receive the divine commission to yoke up with Christ. You must never grow weary in well-doing. **The highest honor that can be conferred upon human beings, be they young or old, rich or poor, is to be permitted to lift up the oppressed, comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak. The world is full of suffering; go, heal the sick, pray for the hopeless, preach the gospel to the poor.**"⁶

Remember, when the call came to Moses, he "answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee. And the Lord said unto him, **What is that in thine hand?**" (Exodus 4:1, 2, emphasis supplied).

What is in your hand—and in mine? God is more than willing to empower

our daily life to promote deliverance of souls from the bondage of sin. Titles are vain, talk is cheap, but action carries authority! *R*

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“TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU”

PART 1 of 2

A compilation from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, with comments by
TONY MARAIZU

Jesus, who gave His life to save men, has given us a warning as to what shall come to pass in the last days. The disciples came to Him privately to ask Him concerning the end of the world, and Jesus said: ‘Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many’ (Matthew 24:4, 5).¹

This question is made clear in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew.

Why would Christ begin answering such a question with these words, “Take heed that no man deceive you”? The opening of Christ’s response should alarm any who profess to be His followers. How could the disciples’ inquiry trigger such a response?

First of all, what does the word “deceive” mean?

To deceive means to mislead the mind; to cause to err; to cause to believe what is false or disbelieve what is true; to impose on; to delude.

Every deception has a very sad result. Therefore, no one wants to be deceived.



Christ explains: “For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”

“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many” (Verse 11).

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall de-

ceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before” (Verses 24, 25).

“For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things” (Mark 13:22, 23).

Christ used the expression, “Take heed,” because He knew that His children would inevitably come in contact with these false prophets. It is unavoidable.

TAKING HEED

Any good vehicle driver who wants to arrive at his or her destination safely must pay careful attention to traffic signs on the highways—especially the “caution” signs which show there is possible danger ahead. Many lives have been lost by ignoring such signs, while many lives have been spared by observing them.

The pen of Inspiration explains Christ’s warning:

“The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our

“Are those who so boldly claim to be sanctified doing the works of Christ? Are they holding up before the people the law of God given on Mount Sinai?”

sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures.”²

Everyone living in this world will see clearly what Christ was speaking about. In the history of the earth there has never been a time when churches, ministries, prayer groups, Bible teachers and prophets have been as widespread as they are today. This is indeed the end of time. Antichrists, false pastors, false teachers, and false prophets are everywhere. Scripture alone shows how they can be identified.

THE FRUIT OF OBEDIENCE

Christ said, “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:16–23).

Verse 21 reveals that the necessary fruit is doing “the WILL of my Father which is in heaven.”

What is the WILL of God? It is obedience to His Ten Commandments.

Men and women can take any name upon themselves. They can say or write anything they like, but if they violate any of God’s commandments and teach men so, they are false prophets.

“This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).

“Christ’s sermon up on the mount was designed to enter into our everyday life. The commandments are so broad that they take hold of even our thoughts. But how few take heed to the words of our Saviour! Consequently we shall have objections to meet. Some will claim that they are wholly led by the Spirit, and consequently they have not much use for the law of God or any portion of God’s Word. Those who claim great light and are not sanctified through the truth are dangerous people, but they can be easily tested. ‘To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them’ (Isaiah 8:20).”³

“Are those who so boldly claim to be sanctified doing the works of Christ? Are they holding up before the people the law of God given on Mount Sinai? They declare that they have with them the power of God, but the Scriptures declare: ‘To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them’ (Isaiah 8:20).”⁴

“Our only safety is in preserving the ancient landmarks. [Isaiah 8:20 quoted.]”⁵

“The Spirit was not given—nor can it ever be bestowed—to supersede

the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, ‘Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world’ (1 John 4:1). And Isaiah declares, ‘To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them’ (Isaiah 8:20).”⁶

“You will meet, as I have, with people who profess to be sanctified, holy. Now, there is a bewitching influence carried with this doctrine. They will state to you wonderful exercises of mind to show you that the Lord is leading them and teaching them. Then how can you tell but that the Lord is leading them? Well, there is a test: [Isaiah 8:20 quoted.]”⁷

By the help of the Holy Scriptures false prophets can be identified. None need to be confused.

Jesus says, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:4).

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments” (1 John 5:2).

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments” (1 John 2:3).

Many who now claim that Christ nailed the law to the cross shall be bitterly disappointed.

Christ said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in

the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:17–19).

A PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION

A few months ago, I was showing a brother a very big church building which had recently been constructed close to my home. The congregation never engaged in any evangelistic campaign, but people are crowding there in such a way that there is no more room to receive them. What are these people looking for?

Inspiration has the answer:

“The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but what saith the word of God? Says the apostle James: ‘What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . . Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?’ (2:14, 20).”⁸

Yes, people these days are looking for places where their sins will not be mentioned. They want pastors who will comfort them, who will tell

them that all is well no matter what they do, no matter how they dress, no matter what they eat, no matter what they drink, no matter how they make their money. A smooth assurance is given that they will be in heaven with Jesus Christ.

“For the time will come when [the people] will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3, 4).

“The testimony of the word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted, it is presumption; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.

“Let none deceive themselves with the belief that they can become holy while willfully violating one of God’s requirements. The commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit and separates the soul from God. . . . ‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected’ (1 John 2:4, 5).”⁹

CONCLUSION

“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail” (Luke 16:16, 17).

“The truth and the glory of God are inseparable; it is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honor God by errone-

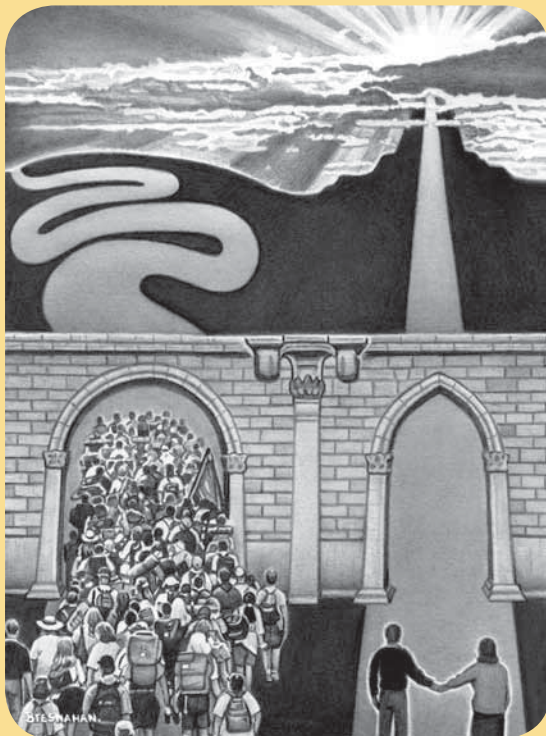
ous opinions. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth are within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light.

“‘There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death’ (Proverbs 16:25). Ignorance is no excuse for error or sin, when there is every opportunity to know the will of God. . . .

“God has given us His word that we may become acquainted with its teachings and know for ourselves what He requires of us. When the lawyer came to Jesus with the inquiry, ‘What shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ the Saviour referred him to the Scriptures, saying, ‘What is written in the law? how readest thou?’ (Luke 10:25, 26). Ignorance will not excuse young or old, nor release them from the punishment due for the transgression of God’s law; because there is in their hands a faithful presentation of that law and of its principles and claims. It is not enough to have good intentions; it is not enough to do what a man thinks is right or what the minister tells him is right. His soul’s salvation is at stake, and he should search the Scriptures for himself. However strong may be his convictions, however confident he may be that the minister knows what is truth, this is not his foundation. He has a chart pointing out every waymark on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything.”¹⁰ *R*

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THE GOSPEL OF *Restoration*

Part 1

*A compilation, with Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
comments by Davi P. Silva*

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

In Genesis chapter 1, we find several times the expression: "and God saw that it was good" (Verses 10, 12, 18, 21, and 25). In verse 31, **after creating everything during the six days of the week, God said that it was very good.**

Man and woman were created after the image and likeness of God. The new home was a very blessed and happy institution. A special diet had been established for the full development of humanity. Finally, God gave them a special time for rest and worship: the Sabbath of the seventh day. Creation was completed.

But after sin had entered in the history of the world, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5, emphasis added).

The beautiful institution of marriage had been corrupted. Men and women were eating flesh food. The Sabbath of the seventh day was disregarded. Corruption and violence had filled the earth. Then God destroyed the world with a flood. After that, sin again had almost full control of the world.

A divine plan for restoration

Peter referred to the work of restoration when he declared under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until **the times of restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:19–21, emphasis supplied).

"In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored. The breach made in the law at the time the Sabbath was changed by man, is to

be repaired. **God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God.** In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to cooperate with Him in building up the waste places. They are to be repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in."¹

God's plan for the family

"God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multi-

ply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26–28).

"God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. 'Marriage is honourable' (Hebrews 13:4); it was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the Fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise. When the divine principles are recognized and obeyed in this relation, marriage is a blessing; it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man's social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual, and the moral nature."²

"He who gave Eve to Adam as a helpmeet, performed His first miracle at a marriage festival. In the festal hall where friends and kindred rejoiced together, Christ began His public ministry. Thus He sanctioned marriage, recognizing it as an institution that He Himself had established. He ordained that men and women should be united in holy wedlock, to rear families whose members, crowned with honor, should be recognized as members of the family above.

"Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, 'Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee' (Song of Solomon 4:7)."³

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:5, 6).

"The great reformatory movement must begin in presenting to fathers and mothers and children the principles of the law of God. As the claims of the law are presented, and men and women are convicted of their duty to render obedience, show them the responsibility of their decision, not only for themselves but for their children. Show that obedience

to God's word is our only safeguard against the evils that are sweeping the world to destruction. Parents are giving to their children an example either of obedience or of transgression. By their example and teaching, the eternal destiny of their households will in most cases be decided. In the future life the children will be what their parents have made them.

"If parents could be led to trace the results of their action, and could see how by their example and teaching they perpetuate and increase the power of sin or the power of righteousness, a change would certainly be made. Many would break the spell of tradition and custom.

"Let ministers urge this matter upon their congregations. Press home upon the consciences of parents the conviction of their solemn duties, so long neglected. This will break up the spirit of pharisaism and resistance to the truth as nothing else can. Religion in the home is our great hope and makes the prospect bright for the conversion of the whole family to the truth of God."⁴

"The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home. The work of parents underlies every other. . . . The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences."⁵

Divorce fractures!

The Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence. "The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. . . . Therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously" (Malachi 2:14–16).

"The Pharisees also came unto [Jesus], tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said,

For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.** They say unto him, **Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?** He saith unto them, **Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.** And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matthew 19:3–9, emphasis added).

"Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery" (Mark 10:11, 12).

"Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery" (Luke 16:18).

"Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Romans 7:1–3, emphasis supplied).

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased

to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace" (1 Corinthians 7:10–15).

"The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39).

"In the youthful mind, marriage is clothed with romance, and it is difficult to divest it of this feature, with which imagination covers it, and to impress the mind with a sense of the weighty responsibilities involved in the marriage vow. **This vow links the destinies of the two individuals with bonds which nought but the hand of death should sever.**"⁶

"When the Pharisees . . . questioned [Jesus] concerning the lawfulness of divorce, Jesus pointed His hearers back to the marriage institution as ordained at creation. 'Because of the hardness of your hearts,' He said, Moses 'suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so' (Matthew 19:8). He referred them to the blessed days of Eden, when God pronounced all things 'very good.' Then marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity. Then, as the Creator joined the hands of the holy pair in wedlock, saying, A man shall 'leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one' (Genesis 2:24), **He enunciated the law of marriage for all the children of Adam to the close of time.** That which the Eternal Father Himself had pronounced good was the law of highest blessing and development for man.

"Like every other one of God's good gifts entrusted to the keeping of humanity, marriage has been perverted by sin; but it is the purpose of the gospel to restore its purity and beauty. In both the Old and the New Testament the



marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people, the redeemed ones whom He has purchased at the cost of Calvary. . . .

"In later times Paul the apostle, writing to the Ephesian Christians, declares that the Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife, to be her protector, the house-band, binding the members of the family together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Therefore he says, 'As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives' (Ephesians 5:24–28).

"The grace of Christ, and this alone, can make this institution what God designed it should be—an agent for the blessing and uplifting of humanity. And thus the families of earth, in their unity and peace and love, may represent the family of heaven.

"Now, as in Christ's day, the condition of society presents a sad comment upon heaven's ideal of this sacred relation. Yet even for those who have found bitterness and disappointment

where they had hoped for companionship and joy, the gospel of Christ offers a solace. The patience and gentleness which His Spirit can impart will sweeten the bitter lot. The heart in which Christ dwells will be so filled, so satisfied, with His love that it will not be consumed with longing to attract sympathy and attention to itself. And through the surrender of the soul to God, His wisdom can accomplish what human wisdom fails to do. Through the revelation of His grace, hearts that were once indifferent or estranged may be united in bonds that are firmer and more enduring than those of earth—the golden bonds of a love that will bear the test of trial."⁷

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1–4).

Works published during Sr. White's lifetime

"And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. **If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works.** Are there any points of interest concerning which she has not written, do not eagerly catch up and report rumors as to what she has said."⁸ *R*

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Love Makes the Home— *Not Just Organization!*

*Excerpts from the Spirit of
Prophecy, with comments
by Pam Stemmler*



*I*n a recent issue of the *Reformation Herald*, we spoke of the blessings of having an orderly home.

But before we discuss some practical steps in the making of an organized home, we need to understand and apply a strong foundation-principle. That is LOVE! Without

this ingredient, an organized home will be a prison, not a palace. Love is what will motivate us to want order and to work for it consistently. Love will help keep the balance, so that we are not only focused on order but on people and their heart needs. Love will enable us to use order to help people, not use people to have

order. This is vital. I believe this is why God has described Heaven's first law as being order and love. They must be intertwined; in fact, true love and true order ARE intertwined.

"Cleanliness and order are Christian duties, yet even these may be carried too far and made the one essential, while matters of greater importance are neglected. Those who neglect the interests of the children for these considerations are tithing the mint and cummin, while they neglect the

“Fathers and mothers, teach your children that the only way to be truly happy is to love and fear God; and emphasize this lesson by your example.”

weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, and the love of God.”¹

“Mutual kindness and forbearance will make home a paradise and attract holy angels into the family circle.”²

Who sets the atmosphere or the tone of the home? Mom does, much like the thermostat of the furnace that controls the temperature of your house. How can we make our homes like a paradise when there are many things to test our patience?

“In the family, fathers and mothers should ever present before their children the example they wish to be imitated. They should manifest one to the other a tender respect in word, and look, and action. They should make it manifest that the Holy Spirit is controlling them, by representing to their children the character of Jesus Christ. The powers of imitation are strong; and in childhood and youth, when this faculty is most active, a perfect pattern should be set before the young. Children should have confidence in their parents, and thus take in the lessons they would inculcate. Parents should make manifest in their daily life what it is to love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves. Where religion is a practical thing in the home, great good is accomplished. Religion will lead the parents to do the very work God designed should be done in the home. Children will be brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.”³

“If fathers and mothers love the Bible and talk of the lessons Christ has given; if they love Jesus and make Him the theme of conversation, a heavenly atmosphere will pervade the home. As the wax receives the impress of the seal, so the soul will receive and retain the moral image of God. By beholding, we become changed. If we allow the mind to dwell upon the imperfections and moral deformities of others, we

ourselves shall become depraved in character, and mentally one-sided and unbalanced. But if the mind dwells upon the perfect life of Christ, and the thoughts and conversation are centered upon Him, we shall be changed to the same image.”⁴

“By a faithful discharge of duty you may make this a happy year for your children. Home should be to them the most attractive place on earth; and it may be made such by kind words and deeds, and, underlying all, a steadfast adherence to the right. Fathers and mothers, teach your children that the only way to be truly happy is to love and fear God; and emphasize this lesson by your example. Let the children see that the peace of Christ rules in your hearts, and that His love controls your lives.”⁵

“The mother can and should do much toward controlling her nerves and mind when depressed; even when she is sick, she can, if she only schools herself, be pleasant and cheerful, and can bear more noise than she would once have thought possible. She should not make the children feel her infirmities and cloud their young, sensitive minds by her depression of spirits, causing them to feel that the house is a tomb and the mother’s room the most dismal place in the world. **The mind and nerves gain tone and strength by the exercise of the will.** The power of the will in many cases will prove a potent soother of the nerves.”⁶

“Parents, when you feel fretful, you should not commit so great a sin as to poison the whole family with this dangerous irritability. **At such times set a double watch over yourselves, and resolve in your heart not to offend with your lips, that you will utter only pleasant, cheerful words. Say to yourselves: ‘I will not mar the happiness of my children by a fretful word.’ By thus controlling yourselves, you will grow stronger.** Your nervous

system will not be so sensitive. You will be strengthened by the principles of right. The consciousness that you are faithfully discharging your duty will strengthen you. **Angels of God will smile upon your efforts and help you.** When you feel impatient, you too often think the cause is in your children, and you blame them when they do not deserve it. At another time they might do the very same things and all would be acceptable and right. Children know, and mark, and feel these irregularities, and *they* are not always the same. At times they are somewhat prepared to meet changeable moods, and at other times they are nervous and fretful, and cannot bear censure. Their spirit rises up in rebellion against it. Parents want all due allowance made for their state of mind, yet do not always see the necessity of making the same allowance for their poor children. They excuse in themselves that which, if seen in their children who have not their years of experience and discipline, they would highly censure. Some parents are of a nervous temperament, and when fatigued with labor or oppressed with care, they do not preserve a calm state of mind, but manifest to those who should be dearest to them on earth, a fretfulness and lack of forbearance which displeases God and brings a cloud over the family. Children, in their troubles, should often be soothed with tender sympathy.”⁷

Ask the Lord to grant you His love in your heart and in your home, so that His Spirit is manifest in all that you do and create there. Ask Him to help with your family, that each would want to be part of creating a little Heaven on Earth.

May the Lord help you and answer that prayer. Amen. *R*

References

¹ *Child Guidance*, p. 109.

² *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 386, 387. [Emphasis supplied.]

³ *The Review and Herald*, March 13, 1894.

⁴ *The Signs of the Times*, May 4, 1888.

⁵ *Ibid.*, January 7, 1903.

⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 387. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 386, 387. [Emphasis supplied.]

BOOSTING YOUR Oxygen

Excerpts from the Spirit of Prophecy, with
comments by HAROLD MONTROSE

According to a news release from the American Physiological Society, a recent study has produced preliminary findings that a brisk walk can increase blood flow to the brain. Researchers at the Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas found that, over a period of three months, women aged 60 and older who took a brisk walk for 30–50 minutes three or four times a week experienced as much as a 15-percent boost in blood flow to the brain. Other studies suggest that exercise improves brain function in older adults, but scientists are not sure exactly why. Yet there are some things that we do know:

The brain is not the only organ that benefits from increased oxygen. The heart, the lungs—and virtually every cell is recharged by this essential element.

What can I do to boost the oxygen level in my bloodstream?

- 1** Health professionals recommend eating fresh, raw foods rich in complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, and their juices)—especially those high in chlorophyll, antioxidants, and vitamin F (Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids), including dark leafy greens, sprouts, avocados, and walnuts.
- 2** Breathing fresher air by opening the windows of your office, home, car, and allowing the air to circulate more freely.
- 3** Frequent aerobic exercise—especially outdoors—thereby increasing the heart's capacity to pump more blood into the tissues.
- 4** Practicing good habits of posture and deep breathing exercises to

inflate the lungs more fully. This is especially important if confined indoors for long hours, such as in computer-related work.

- 5** Being aware of the air quality in our environment. Websites such as www.scorecard.org can provide surprising information about the level of pollutants in specific localities. Sometimes a relatively small move can make a big difference in what you are breathing.

Confirmed by the pen of Inspiration

"The lungs are constantly throwing off impurities, and they need to be constantly supplied with fresh air. Impure air does not afford the necessary supply of oxygen, and the blood passes to the brain and other organs without being vitalized. Hence the necessity of thorough ventilation. To live in close, ill-ventilated rooms, where the air is dead and vitiated, weakens the entire system. It becomes peculiarly sensitive to the influence of cold, and a slight exposure induces disease."¹

"The strength of the system is, in a great degree, dependent upon the amount of pure, fresh air breathed. If the lungs are restricted, the quantity of oxygen received into them is also limited, the blood becomes vitiated, and disease follows."²

"The chief if not the only reason why many become invalids is that the blood does not circulate freely, and the changes in the vital fluid, which are necessary to life and health, do not take place. They have not given their bodies exercise nor their lungs food, which is pure, fresh air; therefore it is impossible for the blood to be vitalized, and it pursues its course sluggishly through the system. **The more we exercise, the better will be the**

circulation of the blood. More people die for want of exercise than through overfatigue; very many more rust out than wear out. Those who accustom themselves to proper exercise in the open air will generally have a good and vigorous circulation. **We are more dependent upon the air we breathe than upon the food we eat.** Men and women, young and old, who desire health, and who would enjoy active life, should remember that they cannot have these without a good circulation. Whatever their business and inclinations, they should make up their minds to exercise in the open air as much as they can. They should feel it a religious duty to overcome the conditions of health which have kept them confined indoors, deprived of exercise in the open air."³

"Air, air, the precious boon of heaven which all may have, will bless you with its invigorating influence if you will not refuse it entrance. Welcome it, cultivate a love for it, and it will prove a precious soother of the nerves. Air must be in constant circulation to be kept pure. The influence of pure, fresh air is to cause the blood to circulate healthfully through the system. It refreshes the body and tends to render it strong and healthy, while at the same time its influence is decidedly felt upon the mind, imparting a degree of composure and serenity. It excites the appetite, and renders the digestion of food more perfect, and induces sound and sweet sleep."⁴ *R*

References

¹ *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 274.

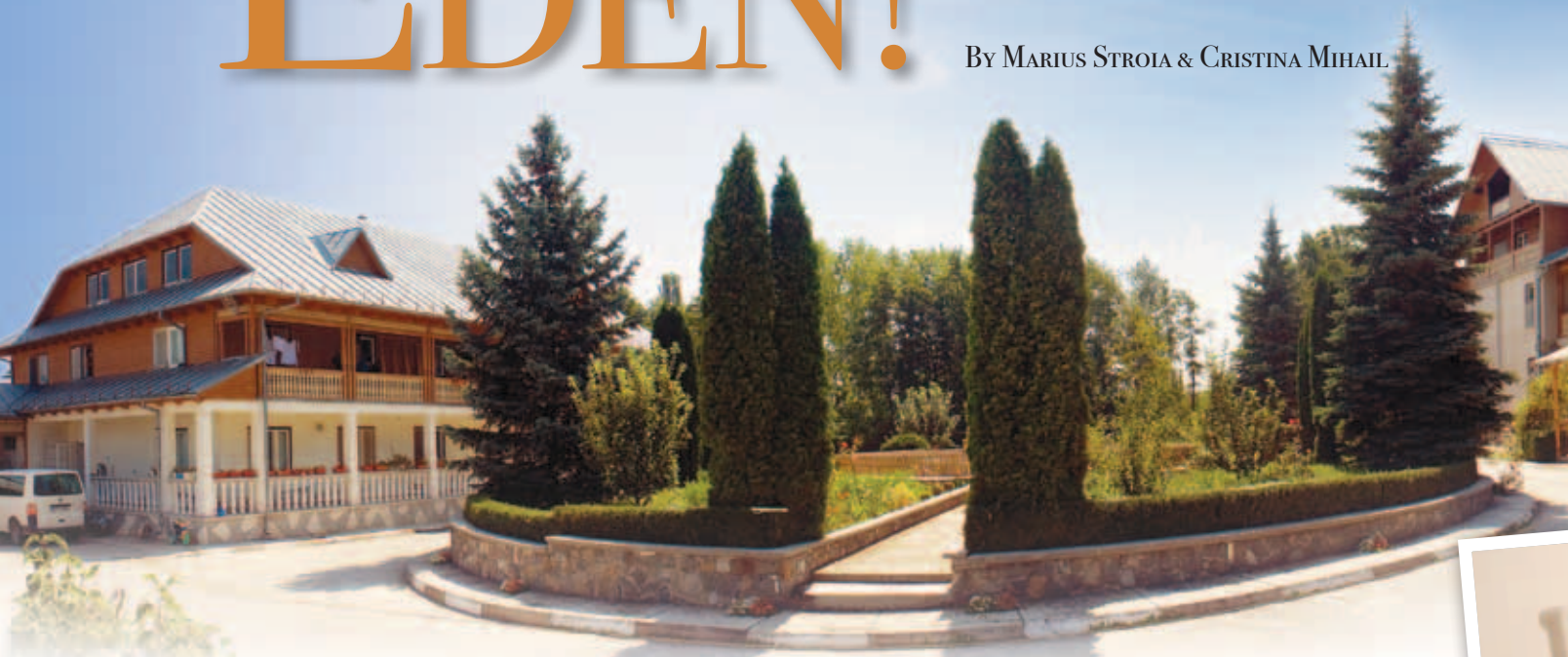
² *Healthful Living*, p. 171. [Emphasis supplied.]

³ *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 525, 526. [Emphasis supplied.]

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 702. [Emphasis supplied.]

Greetings from EDEN!

BY MARIUS STROIA & CRISTINA MIHAIL



We are not far from the close of human probation and of the work of spreading the Gospel on this earth. The people of God, to whom this mission has been entrusted, are using the means the Lord has given in order to perform this work as effectively as possible. The medical missionary work will hold a distinct place in the task of spreading the message of salvation throughout the whole world, as it can reach all classes of society, and soon it will be the only work that will still be possible.

The Lord's messenger has written: "I wish to tell you that soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work."¹

Within the scope of this work, health institutions belonging to our church are entrusted with a special role. They have to alleviate physical suffering and present to people the truth in a convincing way, both theoretic-

cally and practically, by the personal example presented by the staff of the institution.

"Our sanitariums have been in the past, and will continue to be, if rightly conducted, a means of blessing and uplifting to humanity."²

Why are sanitariums so important?

"Some have asked me, 'Why should we have sanitariums? Why should we not, like Christ, pray for the sick, that they may be healed miraculously?' I have answered, 'Suppose we were able to do this in all cases; how many would appreciate the healing? Would those who were healed become health reformers, or continue to be health destroyers?'"³

Although confronted with some financial difficulties which have required sacrifices—both from the employees of the institution and from the church (especially the Romanian Union)—we are glad to inform the believers worldwide, and especially

those facing health problems, and those who rejoice over the well-being and the prosperity of the church and its institutions, that the Eden Sanitarium in Breaza, Romania, continues to operate according to schedule. The number of patients admitted is on the rise compared to the winter months of last year. We praise God that He is giving us wonderful experiences in this branch of His work. In the treatment programs of February 2011, we had nearly a "full house" (32 patients out of 36 beds). For the current treatment period, 2/3 of the available beds were already booked well before its start. We have many patients scheduled for this year's upcoming treatment periods as well.

We are convinced that the medical missionary work will continue successfully as long as God desires—in spite of all adversity.

Our dedication to the work to which the Lord has called us remains steadfast. We believe that our God in whom



we have trusted will continue to fulfill the promises written in His word regarding the medical missionary work.

Recent news

The latest group of patients started the program on Tuesday, April 5, 2011. There are 26 persons, aged 23 to 80. Included among them are four families, of whom one seems to be very interested in the program. Two persons are from Ukraine, and two from Austria.

The oldest person is a lady who, God willing, is going to turn 81 during her stay here. She was here last October as well, with her daughter and her daughter's mother-in-law. They all

enjoyed themselves, so she, together with her daughter, returned to be here for her birthday. Surprisingly for us, the younger of the two has been very interestedly asking doctrinal questions during the Sabbath programs (particularly after the close of the Sabbath School lesson). She has come regularly to all our meetings both now and last October, and frequently, politely asks one thing or another. During both visits, she brought her relatives and colleagues from work as fellow patients.

During the last treatment program, for several days we had as a patient a young woman who was recently widowed. Back then, when the lady broke the news to us about the death of her husband, she was suffering a lot, but she would kindly decline all help we would offer her. Now, months later, she called one of our employees whom she had befriended and said she had made up her mind: She had decided to be converted and to come to our church. She also wanted to have a prayer for the blessing for her son, who at his father's funeral had been barely

3 weeks old. She spent two Sabbaths with us in March, and one Sabbath afternoon she shared her experience of how God had helped her get over her husband's death and to have hope in eternal life.

Yesterday some of the patients attended the Sabbath School, the worship service, and the afternoon program. Last week the attendance of the morning and evening worship was greater in number from among the patients than those that attended our meetings on Sabbath.

Our real aim for the patients: Eternal life!

We are glad to have this news here, and—above all—we are thankful to the Lord that He cares for His work, that He gives us sufficient strength, the needed resources, and even advice on how to run things in His institutions. It is such a blessing to see how He provides for the opportunity for both diseased patients who do not know God and Christians to meet each other in an effort to regain lost physical and spiritual health. We hope to see as many of our patients as possible here and in heaven. We want to share the story of each one's salvation. We also hope to see many souls won to the truth by the influence of this work.

We are praying that the Lord will continue to bless this work, and we are thinking of you and the various branches of labor in His vineyard. May the Lord bless your efforts. May He help, strengthen, and guide you. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9).

May God bless you and keep you! *R*

References

¹ *Evangelism*, p. 523.

² *Medical Ministry*, p. 25.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

For information about the health programs and enrollment you can call in English at **40-727-300-727** (Dr. Raileanu Valerian). You are also welcome to visit our website <http://www.fundatiaeden.ro>



Fiji

*Believers and friends
in Koroviniva,
February 2011.*



Chile

*A conference held in
Santiago, January
7-9, 2011.*

Australia

*Delegation session in
the Australasian Union,
December 2010.*



Honduras

Baptism service during the youth convention in the Central American Union.



Brazil

Northern Brazilian Union's staff and friends at the church-owned vegetarian restaurant in Brasilia, December 2010.



Romania

Youth convention in Brasov, December 2010.



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CHILDREN Speaking Up

By B. Monteiro

The Bible has a lot to say about the value of children. But the children in the Bible did not always have a lot to say. Not much is written about what they said, yet we do know that they were not always silent. Here are a few examples:

A missionary maid

The little girl in Naaman's household witnessed for God. She was not a doctor to heal the Syrian captain from leprosy, but by pointing him toward the prophet in Israel, she will be rewarded in heaven for the words that she spoke to help him learn about

God's power. "The Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy" (2 Kings 5:2, 3). By speaking of her faith in God's power, she was able to make a big difference.

A mocking mob

This story is not as happy. . . . A group of children who heard that God had taken Elijah to heaven used their voices to make fun of Elisha. The prophet "went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them" (2 Kings 2:23, 24). It is very wrong to make fun of God's faithful servants. In this case, the naughty act meant sudden death.

Musical voices

Praise is wonderful. "When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that [Jesus] did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" (Matthew 21:15, 16).

There are no voices more pure and sweet than these of young ones. And there is no better way for children to use their voices than to praise and honor their Creator and Redeemer. Be thankful for all that God does for you. Say it with words and sing it in song! *R*

