

The background of the cover features a hand holding a flaming torch, with the flames reaching towards the top of the page. Below the torch, a historical map of Africa is visible, with various geographical names and borders. The overall color scheme is dark, with the bright orange and yellow of the flames providing a focal point.

the REFORMATION

Vol. 59. No. 6

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AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

**Week of Prayer,
December 7–16, 2018**

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The Week of Prayer

In today's Information Age, it's relatively easy to get to know something about people by searching online to see who their friends are.

In Scripture, our Lord Jesus Christ declares, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit" (John 15:14–16).

As His friends, Christ trusts us to introduce Him properly to those who do not know Him. Are we taking this responsibility seriously? Have we appreciated this grand privilege as we should? Another year is drawing to a close and our Best Friend has showered many blessings upon every one of us. Is it not time to share more freely with others who have never met Him—or have perhaps forgotten about Him? In Matthew 28:19, 20, the Lord bids us: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This year's readings, *Ambassadors for Christ*, are to inspire and motivate us to deeper zeal in rightly representing the sublime government and unselfish policies of the third heaven—the sanctuary above, where our Master reigns. It is to equip us with essential tools to carry out our Lord's commission more effectively.

Let us each prayerfully tend to our spiritual need in this regard, sharing these readings also with others who may be isolated or homebound, and keeping in mind the following dates:

Prayer with fasting: Sabbath, December 15

Offering for missions: Sunday, December 16

It is our prayer that the Spirit of Christ may energize our hearts to take hold of this opportunity wholeheartedly—in eager anticipation to be more fervently about our Father's business (Luke 2:49).

Official Church Publication of the
Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement

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

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

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

Subscription rates:

United States	U.S. \$16.95
Foreign (air mail)	U.S. \$30.00
Single issue	U.S. \$ 4.50

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

Vol. 59, No. 6; Copyright © 2018 November–December issue.

Illustrations: Picture by GM on front cover; Sermon View on pp. 3, 8; Adobe Stock on pp. 4, 7, 11, 12–16, 18, 20, 24, 27; Advent Digital Media on p. 28; National Portrait Gallery - Preaching from a Waggon (David Livingstone) by Unknown artist p. 31.

Ambassadors for Christ

In 2 Corinthians chapter 5, the apostle Paul declares that “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (verse 17). In verse 18, he continues that Christ has committed to these new creatures the **ministry of reconciliation**. In verse 20, he affirms, “**we are ambassadors for Christ.**” Let us summarize:

1. Being born again, we become new creatures in Christ;
2. Being new creatures in Christ, we become **ministers of reconciliation** between humanity and God and between people and their neighbors;
3. As new creatures and therefore ministers, **we are ambassadors for Christ.**

Can we see high privilege of being ambassadors for Christ?

An ambassador is the highest government official representing his or her country to another nation. Therefore an ambassador must be one who is highly respected both by the home government and in the hosting nation. Whenever there is a serious crisis between the two nations, the ambassador is immediately consulted and in many cases acts as a minister of reconciliation between the two countries.

The Bible refers to all true Christians as ambassadors for Christ, representing the heavenly government before the world. They recognize the language of heaven and translate it into the language of earth. They are ministers of reconciliation, representing Christ’s character before the world; calling attention to Christ and interceding with Christ in behalf of sinners. In brief, they are high officers before the world, in the name of Christ.

The Christian doesn’t need to proclaim himself/herself as an ambassador; but by their behavior: their words and actions, they reveal that such a one is representing the

Lord’s character. Not all will serve in the same capacity or manner. But every child of God must be faithful to their responsibility.

When Peter and John were taken into the presence of the Sanhedrin, their boldness and fearless behavior before the highest authorities of the nation, caused that the listeners “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

Being an ambassador involves great privilege and responsibility. Representing the heavenly kingdom is not a minor position. What about the behavior of an ambassador? All that is said or done must reflect the kingdom being represented.

“Since His ascension Christ has carried forward His work on the earth by chosen ambassadors, through whom He speaks to the children of men and ministers to their needs. The great Head of the church superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His representatives.

“The position of those who have been called of God to labor in word and doctrine for the upbuilding of His church, is one of grave responsibility. In Christ’s stead they are to beseech men and women to be reconciled to God, and they can fulfill their mission only as they receive wisdom and power from above.”¹

Direct communication

Ambassadors must keep constant communication with the government they represent. They must work in perfect harmony with their superior in their country.

The same must happen with Christ’s ambassadors. They need to have permanent communication with their King, Jesus Christ.

“He who teaches the word must himself live in conscious, hourly communion with God through prayer and a study of His word, for here is the source of strength. . . . With an earnestness that cannot be denied, he must plead with God to strengthen and fortify him for duty and trial, and to touch his lips with living fire. All too slight is the hold that Christ’s ambassadors often have upon eternal realities. If men will walk with God, He will hide them in the cleft of the Rock. Thus hidden, they can see God, even as Moses saw Him. By the power and light that He imparts they can comprehend more and accomplish more than their finite judgment had deemed possible.”²

Are we conscious of our position in this world as ambassadors for Christ?

References

¹ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 360.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 362, 363.



Lights in the World

Compiled from the writings of E. G. White

The followers of Christ are to be coworkers with their Master; they must be “blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom,” says Paul, “ye shine as lights in the world.” We are to receive the bright beams from the Sun of Righteousness, and by our good works let them shine forth to others in clear, steady rays, never fitful, never growing dim. We cannot be sure that we are doing no harm to those about us unless we are exerting a positive influence to lead them heavenward.¹

The call of the hour

The unbelieving world is waiting for your testimony, and I beseech you by the mercies of God to arise and meet their expectation. Darkness is covering the earth, and gross darkness the people; and amid the

moral night that is settling upon the world, I beseech you who believe, to testify to those who sit in darkness that there is light, and that none need walk in darkness; for the true light now shineth.²

As nearly all around us are being enveloped in the thick darkness of error and delusion, it becomes us to shake off stupidity and live near to God, where we can draw divine rays of light and glory from the countenance of Jesus. As darkness thickens and error increases, we should obtain a more thorough knowledge of the truth and be prepared to maintain our position from the Scriptures.³

How readily do we speak in endearing words of our friends and relatives, and yet how slow we are to speak of Him whose love has no parallel, set forth in Christ crucified among you.

The love of our heavenly Father in the gift of His only begotten Son to the world, is enough to inspire every soul, to melt every hard, loveless heart into contrition and tenderness, and yet shall heavenly intelligences see in those for whom Christ died, insensibility to His love, hardness of heart, and no response of gratitude and affection to the Giver of all good things? Shall affairs of minor importance absorb the whole power of the being, and the love of God meet no return? Shall the Sun of righteousness shine in vain? In view of what God has done, could His claims be less upon you? Have we hearts that can be touched, that can be impressed with divine love? Are we willing to be chosen vessels? Has not God His eye upon us, and has He not bidden us to send forth His message of light? We need an increase of faith. We must wait, we must watch, we must pray,

we must work, pleading that the Holy Ghost may be poured out upon us abundantly, that we may be lights in the world.⁴

Led by the Spirit of God

What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the day of Pentecost?—The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the utmost bounds of the inhabited world. The hearts of the disciples were surcharged with the benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” As they proclaimed the truth as it is in Jesus, hearts yielded to the power of the message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with Christians in seeking the pearl of great price. Those who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. . . . Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of love and benevolence. One interest prevailed. One subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.

Notice that it was after the disciples had come into perfect unity, when they were no longer striving for the highest place, that the Spirit was poured out.⁵

The need of earnest labor for others

Christ did not tell His disciples that their work would be easy. He showed them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against them. They would have to fight “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Ephesians 6:12. But they would not be left to fight alone. He assured them that He would be with them. . . . So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they

could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe and be assured that My presence will be with you even there. Labor in faith and confidence; for the time will never come when I will forsake you. I will be with you always, helping you to perform your duty, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, sustaining you, giving you success in speaking words that shall draw the attention of others to heaven.⁶

Those who become children of God are under obligation to Him to do all in their power to seek and to save the lost. They are to make use of every possible means to give to sinners the word of life and the saving grace of Christ. Remembering the sacrifice that Christ made that He might give to men a perfect example, church members are to follow His example of self-denial and self-sacrifice, that they may save the souls that are perishing in unbelief and sin. . . .

And yet how many church members there are who feel little responsibility to make Christ known to their friends and neighbors. If all had carried the love of Christ in their hearts, and the truth on their lips, if we had been diligent in opening the word of life to those about us, showing what Christ is to us, and what He is willing to be to them, hundreds more would be rejoicing in the truth today. But we shut ourselves up within ourselves. We seem to think that it is well with us, and that it is not in our line to speak of Christ. Is He not all in all to us? If we obtain any victories, is it not through His grace that they are wrought? Then why should we not lift Him up? The parables of the lost piece of silver and the lost sheep teach most precious lessons. They deal with the subject of man lost and man recovered. Many, many more would be recovered if they were labored for as represented in these parables.

Growth in grace is shown in an increasing ability to work for God. He who learns in the school of Christ will know how to pray, and how to speak for the Master. Realizing that he lacks wisdom and experience, he will place himself under the training of the Great Teacher, knowing that only

God’s people are to stand as lights in the world.

thus he can obtain perfection in God’s service. . . .

Church members, ask God to give you a burden to open the Scriptures to others, and to do missionary work for those who need help. Some will be rescued in one way, and some in another, but the work must always be done as the Lord shall lead.

Let us prepare to raise the standard of the Lord, the standard of purity and holiness. Let every soul purify his own heart, and prepare for the Lord when He shall come in power and great glory. Let believers be quickened by the grace of Christ to work for the saving of their fellow beings. . . .

O, how solemn and important is the work entrusted to us! How far reaching this work is in its results! How are we to obtain strength and wisdom necessary for its successful accomplishment? As Daniel sought the Lord, so we are to seek Him. Daniel declares, “I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.” We are to seek the Lord in humility and contrition, confessing our own sins, and coming into close unity with one another. Brethren and sisters, pray, pray, for your own sakes, and for the sake of others.

We are to come to God in faith, and pour out our supplications before Him, believing that He will work in our behalf, and in behalf of those we are seeking to save. We are to devote more time to earnest prayer. With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our Heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. . . .

O that we might have a consuming desire to know God by an experimental knowledge, to come into

the audience chamber of the Most High, reaching up the hand of faith, and casting our helpless souls upon the One mighty to save. His loving-kindness is better than life.

If we but realized how earnestly Jesus worked to sow the world with the gospel seed, we, living at the very close of probation, would labor untiringly to give the bread of life to perishing souls. Why are we so cold and indifferent? Why are our hearts so unimpressible? Why are we so unwilling to give ourselves to the work to which Christ consecrated His life? Something must be done to cure the terrible indifference that has taken hold of us. Let us bow our heads in humiliation as we see how much less we have done than we might have done to sow the seeds of truth.

My brethren and sisters, I speak to you in word of love and tenderness. Arouse, and consecrate yourselves unreservedly to the work of giving the light of truth for this time to those in darkness. Catch the spirit of the great Master worker. Learn from the Friend of sinners how to minister to sin-sick souls. Remember that in the lives of His followers must be seen the same devotion, the same subjection to God's work of every social claim, every earthly affection, that was seen in His life. God's claims must always be made paramount. Christ's example is to inspire us to put forth unceasing effort for the good of others.

God calls upon every church member to enter His service. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted to others, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Everyone must learn to work, and to stand in his lot and place as a burden bearer. Every addition to the church should be one more agency for the carrying on of the great plan of redemption. The entire church, acting as one, blending in perfect union, is to be a living, active, missionary agency, moved and controlled by the Holy Spirit.

As surely as we seek the Lord earnestly, He will make the way plain before us. All around us are doors open for service. Let us prayerfully study the work to be done, and then enter upon it with full assurance of

faith. We are to labor in quietness and humility, in the meekness and lowliness of Christ, realizing that there is a trying time before us, and that we shall always need heavenly grace in order to understand how to deal with minds. It is the patient, humble, godlike worker who will have something to show for his labors.

As a people, and as individuals, our success depends, not on numbers, on standing, nor on intellectual attainments, but on walking and working with Christ. The more fully we are imbued with His Spirit, the greater will be our love for the work, and the greater our delight in following in the footsteps of the Master. Our hearts will be filled with the love of God; and with earnestness and power we shall speak of the crucified Saviour. And as He is uplifted before the people, as they behold His self-sacrifice, His goodness, His tender compassion, His humiliation, and His suffering, their hearts will be melted and subdued, and they will be won to His cause."⁷

Worthy of our best energies

What will be the gratitude of souls that will meet us in the heavenly courts as they understand the sympathetic, loving interest which has been taken in their salvation! All praise, honor, and glory will be given to God and to the Lamb for our redemption; but it will not detract from the glory of God to express gratitude to the instrumentality He has employed in the salvation of souls ready to perish.

The redeemed will meet and recognize those whose attention they have directed to the uplifted Saviour. What blessed converse they have with these souls! "I was a sinner," it will be said, "without God and without hope in the world, and you came to me, and drew my attention to the precious Saviour as my only hope. And I believed in Him. I repented of my sins, and was made to sit together with His saints in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Others will say: "I was a heathen in heathen lands. You left your friends and comfortable home, and came to teach me how to find

Jesus and believe in Him as the only true God. I demolished my idols and worshiped God, and now I see Him face to face. I am saved, eternally saved, ever to behold Him whom I love. I then saw Him only with the eye of faith, but now I see Him as He is. I can now express my gratitude for His redeeming mercy to Him who loved me and washed me from my sins in His own blood."

Others will express their gratitude to those who fed the hungry and clothed the naked. "When despair bound my soul in unbelief, the Lord sent you to me," they say, "to speak words of hope and comfort. You brought me food for my physical necessities, and you opened to me the word of God, awakening me to my spiritual needs. You treated me as a brother. You sympathized with me in my sorrows and restored my bruised and wounded soul so that I could grasp the hand of Christ that was reached out to save me. In my ignorance you taught me patiently that I had a Father in heaven who cared for me. You read to me the precious promises of God's word. You inspired in me faith that He would save me. My heart was softened, subdued, broken, as I contemplated the sacrifice which Christ had made for me. I became hungry for the bread of life, and the truth was precious to my soul. I am here, saved, eternally saved, ever to live in His presence, and to praise Him who gave His life for me."

What rejoicing there will be as these redeemed ones meet and greet those who have had a burden in their behalf! And those who have lived, not to please themselves, but to be a blessing to the unfortunate who have so few blessings—how their hearts will thrill with satisfaction!⁸

Let us purify our souls by obeying the truth, lifting up "holy hands, without wrath and doubting," that we may obtain this heavenly gift, and realize, by a blessed experience, what is the meaning of the words of the apostle: "filled with all the fullness of God."⁹

Starting here, right now

God's people are to stand as lights in the world. They are to realize that upon them rests the solemn responsibility of reflecting rays of light upon the pathway of those who are not keeping the commandments of God. Christ Himself has declared, "Ye are the light of the world." We are to seek to be light bearers. And when the light of divine truth shines forth with distinctness from the words and works of God's children, will there be seen any quarreling, any backbiting, among the light bearers? The world will see no dissension in the lives of those from whom the light of heaven is shed abroad. Brethren and sisters, as you let your light shine before men, they will "*see your good works, and glorify your Father* which is in heaven." As the result of these good works, an influence will go forth that will bring salvation to those who behold it. God desires us to keep our light constantly shining.

In the night season God has revealed to me the spiritual condition of the church members living in Oakland and the nearby cities. A large standard was uplifted at a time when

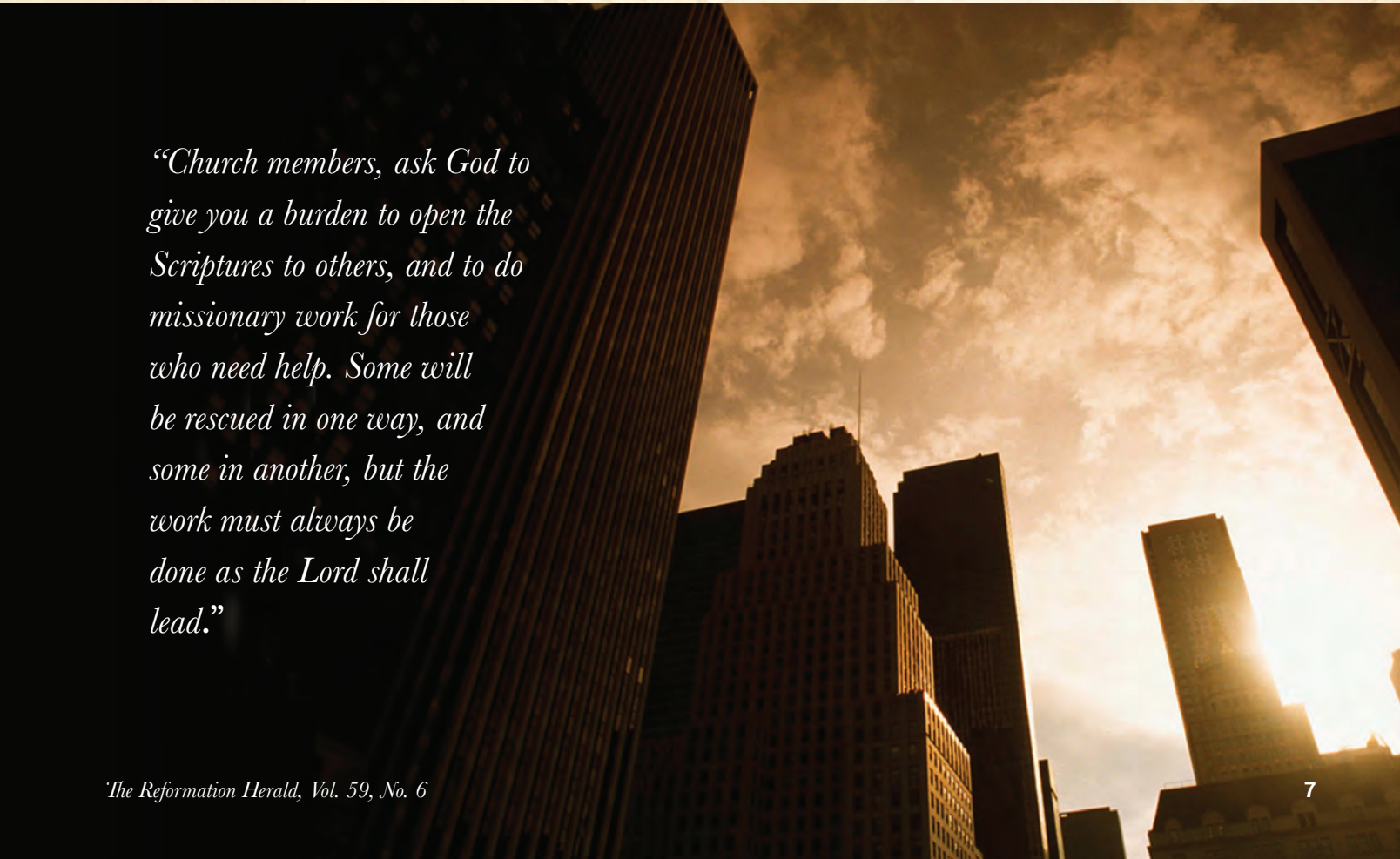
many were complaining and finding fault and speaking to the detriment of one another; and this standard was turned around until it appeared before them as a great looking-glass [mirror], from the face of which everyone who looked saw reflected himself with all his faults and sins. The whole erring company, convicted of the sinfulness of their course, prostrated themselves before God, and immediately began to confess their own wrongdoing; and, O, what a scene of repentance and confession there was! A most wonderful cleansing of the camp followed, and the mighty power of God was revealed.

I shall never be satisfied until just such an experience comes into the church here. We want to see the salvation of our God. We want the truth to go forth with mighty power; and why, O why, do we continue to stand in the way? Why do we grieve the Holy Spirit of God? Why do we put Him to open shame, by carrying with us our selfish, unconverted dispositions, and yet all the while claiming to be Christians? God grant that every one of us may have clear

eyesight to discern what we can do, by looking unto Jesus and by realizing how our course must appear in His sight, and how He must regard envy and strife. God help us to put away our individual defects of character. We want to see the power of God revealed in this community. If it were not for this, I should not leave my home and come down here to speak to you so often. But night after night I cannot sleep more than a few hours; and often, in the hours of the night I find myself sitting up in bed, praying to God in behalf of those who do not realize their spiritual condition; and then I arise and walk the room, and say, O Lord, set thy people in order, before it shall be everlastingly too late!¹⁰ *R*

References

- ¹ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 366, 367.
- ² *The Home Missionary*, September 1, 1892.
- ³ *Early Writings*, pp. 104, 105.
- ⁴ *The Review and Herald*, December 15, 1891.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, April 30, 1908.
- ⁶ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 29.
- ⁷ *The Review and Herald*, April 29, 1909.
- ⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 310–312.
- ⁹ *The Signs of the Times*, February 24, 1888.
- ¹⁰ *The Review and Herald*, December 13, 1906.



"Church members, ask God to give you a burden to open the Scriptures to others, and to do missionary work for those who need help. Some will be rescued in one way, and some in another, but the work must always be done as the Lord shall lead."



Organized for Service

By Marcelo Gines, Thailand

Throughout its entire existence, the Lord designed for the church to be His appointed agency for the salvation of souls. Not that the church is to be the Saviour—it is simply to be the instrument of carrying the gospel to the world and bringing people to faith in the only Saviour, “Jesus Christ of Nazareth” (Acts 4:10, 12).

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory.”¹

The church is not only to preach the crucified and risen Saviour, it is also commissioned to reflect to the world the beauty of His character—His glory. As the church goes forth to preach the gospel and reflect to the world the loveliness of Christ’s character, honest souls are enlightened and led to believe in Jesus. This is how the church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of humanity.

The human body—an illustration of Christ’s design for His church

The inspired apostle, in his letter to the church at Corinth, made a profound explanation to the believers regarding the church of Christ:

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. . . . For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:4–7, 12).

As the human body is composed of different organs and systems having different functions—yet all are working together for the good of the entire body—so is the church of Christ with its many members likewise working together for the

interest of the church body and the accomplishment of its mission. And as the human body has many parts, each with a specific function, so in the church with its many members, everyone has different work to do and a different position to occupy. Not all are to become ministers, prophets, or teachers; not all are to become president, treasurer, or any other position in the church. But everyone is to do the work assigned him or her in coordination and cooperation with the other members of the body, together in harmonious action.

In the early church, “every member was exhorted to act well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents entrusted to him. Some were endowed by the Holy Spirit with special gifts—‘first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues’ (1 Corinthians 12:28). But all these classes of workers were to labor in harmony.”²

Christ organized His church

Everything that Christ does is in order. From the work of creating the unnumbered worlds in the vast space to all the affairs and administration of the universe, He is perfectly organized. It is the same in the establishment of His church on earth. It was Christ Himself who laid out the first step in the organization of His church with a simpler form of organization fitted for the infant church, at that time having only a few members.

“It was at the ordination of the Twelve that the first step was taken in the organization of the church that after Christ’s departure was to carry on His work on the earth.”³

Then the next step was taken during the time of the apostles, not long after Christ’s ascension. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the apostles continued to carry on the work of Christ in preaching the gospel and in developing the church body.

When Jesus first organized His church among the twelve, for example, only Judas was given the specific

responsibility to serve as treasurer of the group. During the time of the apostles, other responsibilities were distributed to others, such as in the ordination of the seven deacons. As the church members have continued to increase and the burdens of responsibility have become greater, further development in church organization is needed to meet the demand in the work and mission of the church worldwide.

The purpose of church organization

The Spirit of Prophecy reveals Christ’s purpose in organizing His church:

- For missionary purposes: “The church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purposes, and the Lord desires to see the entire church devising ways and means whereby high and low, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth.”⁴
- To maintain order and harmony in the church worldwide: “Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, the organization of the church was further perfected, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained.”⁵
- To keep out spurious uprisings and refute claims not endorsed by the word of God: “Oh, how Satan would rejoice if he could succeed in his efforts to get in among this people and disorganize the work at a time when thorough organization is essential and will be the greatest power to keep out spurious uprisings and to refute claims not endorsed by the word of God!”⁶
- To provide for the support of the ministry
- For carrying forward the work in new fields
- For protecting both the members and the ministry from unworthy members
- For holding church property
- For the publication of the truth through the press
- For many other objects.⁷

The secret of success in the remnant church

When the remnant church was organized during the time of Sis. E. G. White, some were opposed, for they feared popery would result. Yet the servant of the Lord encouraged the members by supporting and helping to establish the system of church organization.

“We had a hard struggle in establishing organization. Notwithstanding that the Lord gave testimony after testimony upon this point, the opposition was strong, and it had to be met again and again. But we knew that the Lord God of Israel was leading us, and guiding by His providence.”⁸

It is the Holy Spirit that led the pioneers to organize the church, despite the opposition. They pressed forward with determination to obey God’s direction to establish the system of organization. According to the Lord’s servant, this was the secret of their prosperity:

“Our work was not sustained by large gifts or legacies; for we have few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard seed has grown to a great tree. The system of organization has proved a grand success. Systematic benevolence was entered into according to the Bible plan. The body has been ‘compacted by that which every joint supplieth.’ As we have advanced, our system of organization has still proved effectual.”⁹

The system of organization that God designed for His church

The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy have clearly laid out the system of organization that God has designed for His church. The Bible declares plainly that Christ “is the head of the body, the church” (Colossians 1:18).

This is opposite to the papal system when one man stands as the head of

the universal church. The Spirit of Prophecy declares:

“God has never given a hint in His Word that He has appointed any man to be the head of the church. The doctrine of papal supremacy is directly opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures. The pope can have no power over Christ’s church except by usurpation.”¹⁰

“The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its head. It is not to depend upon man, or be controlled by man. Many claim that a position of trust in the church gives them authority to dictate what other men shall believe and what they shall do. This claim God does not sanction. The Saviour declares, ‘All ye are brethren.’”¹¹

“Christ is the head of the church. The members of His body follow the directions of the Head, just as the members of the human body obey the impulses of the mind.”¹² If all the believers take this to heart, there will be a better picture of Christ’s organized church than in the past when church members were taught to depend upon man as their head.

In Christ’s organized church, those who are chosen as leaders have a degree of authority in their sphere, but they are not the highest authority in the church.

“When the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority that God has upon the earth, is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered.”¹³

“At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God’s work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General

Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work.”¹⁴

The servant of the Lord clearly outlined the system of organization and order that should be followed in Christ’s remnant church. The highest authority in the church is not to be given to one man (General Conference President) or to a small group of men (General Conference Executive Committee or General Conference Council) but rather to the representatives or delegates from all parts of the earth assembled in the General Conference session. They are the ones to plan for the work of the worldwide church, to elect the officers of the General Conference, to agree on doctrinal issues, as well as decide any difficult matter not settled in the various other levels of the organized church. Those who are chosen as officers of the General Conference are to act, during their term of office, as the implementing body to execute the decisions of the General Conference in session. Between sessions, they act in behalf of the General Conference and will be held accountable to the next General Conference session for anything they do during their term. This system is to be carried out in all levels of the church—Union, Conference, Field, and Mission. It is totally different from popery or kingly power. It is not a one-man dictatorship or even a small group of men possessing authority—but rather a man with his fellows who together act as servants to carry out the decisions made by the church during sessions as the voice of God.

Warning against the spirit of independence

The Lord’s servant warned the believers against the spirit of independence that creeps into the church. Satan is trying to destroy the

unity of the church by introducing deceptive theories and ideas to the members.

“Some have advanced the thought that, as we near the close of time, every child of God will act independently of any religious organization. But I have been instructed by the Lord that in this work there is no such thing as every man’s being independent. The stars of heaven are all under law, each influencing the other to do the will of God, yielding their common obedience to the law that controls their action. And, in order that the Lord’s work may advance healthfully and solidly, His people must draw together.”¹⁵

“The spirit of pulling away from our fellow laborers, the spirit of disorganization, is in the very air we breathe. . . . I have been instructed that it is Satan’s special effort to lead men to feel that God is pleased to have them choose their own course, independent of the counsel of their brethren.

“Herein lies a grave danger to the prosperity of our work. We must move discreetly, sensibly, in harmony with the judgment of God-fearing counselors; for in this course alone lies our safety and strength. Otherwise God cannot work with us and by us and for us.”¹⁶

Satan knows well that the strength of God’s people is found in their union with Christ and with one another. But if they are disorganized and divided they become weak and easily defeated.

“‘Counsel together’ is the message which has been again and again repeated to me by the angel of God. By influencing one man’s judgment, Satan may endeavor to control matters to suit himself. He may succeed in misleading the minds of two persons; but when several consult together, there is more safety. . . . In union there is strength. In division there is weakness and defeat.”¹⁷

There is no point in time when Christ will abolish the system of organization in His church on earth; rather it will continue until the end. The closer that God’s remnant people approach to the end, the more they need to be organized and perfectly united. The Lord’s messenger declared:



“We want to hold the lines evenly, that there shall be no breaking down of the system of organization and order that has been built up by wise, careful labor. License must not be given to disorderly elements that desire to control the work at this time.”¹⁸

The final calling and mission of the remnant

In the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, the final calling and mission of Christ’s remnant church is clearly presented in Isaiah 58:12: “They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”

The Spirit of Prophecy explains that this prediction refers to the remnant church:

“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. . . . 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.”¹⁹

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12).

This scripture does not refer to any other group of people than the final product of the third angel’s message. It is a description of the remnant church that will have gotten the victory in the last battle of God and His remnant people against Satan.

The members of the remnant church are to go forth to proclaim the last message of warning to all the inhabitants of the world. This message is to be focused on Christ as the living illustration of the righteousness of God’s character and of the sacredness and beauty of the law. But this last message of mercy is not to be presented to the world merely by eloquence of speech—but rather by the power of a transformed character and holy life after the similitude of Christ.

“The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.”²⁰

The reason the remnant church has accomplished but little despite all her efforts is the character defects in the lives of her members. We must first be transformed in character before the Holy Spirit can give us the efficiency needed in preaching the everlasting gospel. The honest souls in different parts of the earth who are still outside of Christ’s fold are waiting for the light to shine in the lives of God’s remnant people before they will be attracted to flock to their side.

Conclusion

From the beginning of her establishment to the end of time, the

church has been called to witness for Christ. God purposed through His church to manifest His character to the world and to represent His system of government.²¹ Through her members, the order and divine harmony existing in heaven is to be reflected to the world. God’s final remnant are the ultimate instruments to fully accomplish God’s purpose for His church. This is how the issue in the great controversy shall be finally and fully settled. This is how the beauty of the everlasting gospel shall be fully seen and fully preached to every creature. This is how the character of God and His law shall be fully vindicated before all created beings throughout the universe. The riches of Christ’s mercy, His grace, and His love shall be fully and finally displayed by a people called by His name—not only before the world but before all the celestial and terrestrial beings throughout the entire universe. *R*

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- ⁶ *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 489.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 27.
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- ¹¹ *The Desire of Ages*, p. 414.
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Like the Leaves of Autumn

*Compiled from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
with comments by Mario Liñares, Brazil*

Have you ever thought of how many leaves fall in autumn? The amount of leaves, the soft, gentle way they fall and how they cover the ground—it's an excellent illustration of how the word of God must be brought to the world and its wonderful results.

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isaiah 55:10, 11).

Silent messengers

The history of human culture is closely linked to media in different

ages. Although today, modern means allow us to communicate electronically almost instantly with any part of the world, there is a medium that is still the most effective in preaching the gospel. It is the printed page.

In the fifteenth century, Johannes Gutenberg (1398–1468) revolutionized the press with his invention of mechanical movable type to print on paper. This discovery played a key role in the development of the Protestant Reformation as well as the Industrial Revolution; laying the material foundations for our modern knowledge-based economy and for the spread of mass learning.

The first job that Gutenberg printed in multiple copies was the Bible. Currently, according to the United Bible Societies *Global Scripture Access Report 2017*, the New Testament has been translated

into 1515 languages, and the complete Bible into 674 languages, and remains the best-selling book in the world. It is estimated that more than five billion copies of the Bible have been distributed since the nineteenth century. In recent years, the United Bible Societies have distributed an average of 30 million Bibles per year, in addition to New Testaments and portions of Scripture.

A similar work should be carried out with our publications. The servant of the Lord declares, “From our books and papers bright beams of light are to shine forth to enlighten the world in regard to present truth.”¹

The Lord has given us the printed page as an excellent way to bring the gospel of salvation to the world. It can be produced and distributed with ease and brought to every home; literally to the ends of the earth.

The following truths about our publishing work apply to our publications in print and electronic form.

The beginning of our publications

The messenger of the Lord relates: "At a meeting held in Dorchester, Massachusetts, November, 1848, I had been given a view of the proclamation of the sealing message, and of the duty of the brethren to publish the light that was shining upon our pathway.

"After coming out of vision, I said to my husband: 'I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world.'"²

"The precious printed sheets were brought into the house and laid upon the floor, and then a little group of interested ones were gathered in, and we knelt around the papers, and with humble hearts and many tears besought the Lord to let His blessing rest upon these printed messengers of truth.

"When we had folded the papers, and my husband had wrapped and addressed copies to all those who he thought would read them, he put them into a carpetbag, and carried them on foot to the Middletown post office."³

The purpose of our publications

"Our publications have a most sacred work to do in making clear, simple, and plain the spiritual basis of our faith. Everywhere the people are taking sides; all are ranging themselves either under the banner of truth and righteousness or under the banner of the apostate powers that are contending for the supremacy. At this time God's message to the world is to be given with such prominence and power that the people will be brought face to face, mind to mind, heart to heart, with truth. They must be

brought to see its superiority over the multitudinous errors that are pushing their way into notice, to supplant, if possible, the word of God for this solemn time.

"The great object of our publications is to exalt God, to call men's attention to the living truths of His word. God calls upon us to lift up, not our own standard, not the standard of this world, but His standard of truth."⁴

"The publications sent forth from our printing houses are to prepare a people to meet God. Throughout the world they are to do the same work that was done by John the Baptist for the Jewish nation. By startling messages of warning, God's prophet awakened men from worldly dreaming. Through him God called backsliding Israel to repentance. By his presentation of truth he exposed popular delusions. In contrast with the false theories of his time, truth in his teaching stood forth as an eternal certainty. 'Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' was John's message. Matthew 3:2. This same message, through the publications from our printing houses, is to be given to the world today."⁵

Our health publications

"Our health literature is the helping hand of the gospel, opening the way for the truth to enter and save many souls. I know of nothing which so quickly unlocks hearts as this literature, which, when read and practiced, leads souls to the searching of the Bible for a better understanding of the truth."⁶

"The circulation of our health publications is a most important work. It is a work in which all who believe the special truths for this time should have a living interest. God desires that now, as never before, the minds of the people shall be deeply stirred to investigate the great temperance question and the principles underlying true health reform. . . .

"True religion and the laws of health go hand in hand. It is impossible to work for the salvation of men and women without presenting to

them the need of breaking away from sinful gratifications, which destroy the health, debase the soul, and prevent divine truth from impressing the mind."⁷

"Publications upon health reform will reach many who will not see or read anything upon important Bible subjects. . . . The truth must come to the people upon health reform. This is essential in order to arrest the attention in regard to Bible truth."⁸

"Many of those looked upon as hopelessly depraved, will, if properly instructed in regard to their unhealthful practices, be arrested with the truth. Then they may be elevated, ennobled, sanctified, fit vessels for the Master's use. Go with your hands full of proper reading matter, and your heart full of the love of Christ for their souls, reaching them where they are."⁹

"Health reform will reach a class and has reached a class that otherwise would never have been reached by the truth. There is a great necessity for labor being put forth to help the people, believers and unbelievers, at the present time by health talks, and health publications. I cannot see why the health books should not have a permanent place as well as the other publications notwithstanding human prejudices to the contrary."¹⁰

Our publications to go everywhere

"Our publications should go everywhere. Let them be issued in many languages. The third angel's message is to be given through this medium and through the living teacher."¹¹

"There are many places in which the voice of the minister can not be heard, places which can be reached only by publications—the books, papers, and tracts, that are filled with the Bible truth that the people need. Our literature is to be distributed everywhere. The truth is to be sown beside all waters; for we know not which shall prosper, this or that. In our erring judgment we may think it unwise to give literature to the very ones who would accept the truth most

readily. We know not what may be the good results of giving away a leaflet containing present truth.”¹²

“In enlightening and confirming souls in the truth, the publications will do a far greater work than can be accomplished by the ministry of the word alone.”¹³

“We are fast approaching the end. The printing and circulation of the books and papers that contain the truth for this time are to be our work.”¹⁴

“Publications must be multiplied, and scattered like the leaves of autumn. These silent messengers are enlightening and molding the minds of thousands in every country and in every clime.”¹⁵

“If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting our publications before the public, thus leading them to search the Scriptures.”¹⁶

“Let every believer scatter broadcast tracts and leaflets and books containing the message for this time.”¹⁷

“The end is near. Already much time has been lost, when these books should have been in circulation. Sell them far and near. Scatter them like the leaves of autumn.”¹⁸

A divine strategy

“God has ordained the canvassing work as a means of presenting before the people the light contained in our books, and canvassers should be impressed with the importance of bringing before the world as fast as possible the books necessary for their spiritual education and enlightenment. This is the very work the Lord would have His people do at this time. All who consecrate themselves to God to work as canvassers are assisting to give the last message of warning to the world. We cannot too highly estimate this work; for were it not for the efforts of the canvasser, many would never hear the warning.”¹⁹

“The canvassing work, properly conducted, is missionary work of the highest order, and it is as good and successful a method as can be

employed for placing before the people the important truths for this time.”²⁰

“I have been instructed that the canvassing work is to be revived, and that it is to be carried forward with increasing success. It is the Lord’s work, and a blessing will attend those who engage in it with earnestness and diligence.”²¹

“The book work should be the means of quickly giving the sacred light of present truth to the world.”²²

“Canvassing campaigns are to be organized for the sale of our literature, that the world may be enlightened as to what is just before us.”²³

“When church members realize the importance of the circulation of our literature, they will devote more time to this work. Papers, tracts, and books will be placed in the homes of the people, to preach the gospel in their several lines.”²⁴

“We were in camp meetings and in large meetings in our churches, where the ministers presented clearly the perils of the times in which we live and the great importance of making haste in the circulation of our literature. In response to these appeals the brethren and sisters came forward and purchased many books. Some took a few, and some purchased large quantities. Most of the purchasers paid for the books they took. A few arranged to pay afterward.

“Because books were being sold at low prices, some being especially reduced for the occasion, many were purchased, and some by persons not of our faith. They said: ‘It must be that these books contain a message for us. These people are willing to make sacrifices in order that we may have them, and we will secure them for ourselves and our friends.’

“But dissatisfaction was expressed by some of our own people. One said: ‘A stop must be put to this work, or our business will be spoiled.’ As one brother was carrying away an armful of books, a canvasser laid his hand upon his arm and said: ‘My brother, what are you doing with so many books?’ Then I heard the voice of our Counselor saying: ‘Forbid them not. This is a work that should be done. The end is near. Already much time has

been lost, when these books should have been in circulation. Sell them far and near. Scatter them like the leaves of autumn. This work is to continue without the forbiddings of anyone. Souls are perishing out of Christ. Let them be warned of His soon appearing in the clouds of heaven.’

“Some of the workers continued to appear much cast down. One was weeping and said: ‘These are doing the publishing work an injustice by purchasing these books at so low a price; besides, this work is depriving us of some of the revenue by which our work is sustained.’ The Voice replied: ‘You are meeting with no loss. These workers who take the books at reduced prices could not obtain so ready sale for them except it be at this so-called sacrifice. Many are now purchasing for their friends and for themselves who otherwise would not think of buying.’”²⁵

“The silent messengers that are placed in the homes of the people through the work of the canvasser will strengthen the gospel ministry in every way; for the Holy Spirit will impress minds as they read the books, just as He impresses the minds of those who listen to the preaching of the word. The same ministry of angels attends the books that contain the truth as attends the work of the minister.”²⁶

“As long as probation continues, there will be opportunity for the canvasser to work. . . . Until in heaven is spoken the word, ‘It is finished,’ there will be places for labor, and hearts to receive the message.”²⁷

“From the light given me I know that where there is one canvasser in the field, there should be one hundred.”²⁸

Wanted: Youth!

In every era, God has especially chosen young people for great responsibilities. “It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth” (Lamentations 3:27). Many of those who accepted and were faithful to their mission, God placed in prominent positions, making them a light of salvation to the world.



“Christ calls for young men who will volunteer to carry the truth to the world. Men of spiritual stamina are wanted, men who are able to find work close at hand, because they are looking for it. The church needs new men to give energy to the ranks, men for the times, able to cope with its errors, men who will inspire with fresh zeal the flagging efforts of the few laborers, men whose hearts are warm with Christian love, and whose hands are eager to go about their Master’s work.”²⁹

“The Lord calls upon our youth to labor as canvassers and evangelists, to do house-to-house work in places that have not yet heard the truth. . . .

“We have a work to do. Educate, educate, educate young men to give themselves to the ministry of the word. Educate them to become canvassers, to sell those books which the Lord by His Holy Spirit has stirred minds to write. This reading matter will thus be given to a large class of people who would never hear the truth unless it

was brought to their doors. This is the work of the evangelist.”³⁰

Just like the governments of this world call upon the young people for military service, every young person should make a commitment to the Lord—to devote at least one year of their life to His service, canvassing being the best way to serve Him. It would be a wonderful experience to strengthen their faith in God and assist them in making the best decisions for the present and future life.

“I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” May all our young people respond like Isaiah, “Here am I; send me” (Isaiah 6:8).

With the strength of youth, the adults of experience, the simplicity of children and the power of the Holy Spirit, “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14).

The reward of those who cooperate with God

The Lord will reward and multiply even small efforts in the work of taking the gospel to the world. His word will never return void. In addition to collaborating in the salvation of others, we are ensuring our own salvation.

We are pleased to know brothers and sisters—entire families—who were brought to the knowledge of the truth through brochures, magazines

or books containing the light for this time. But with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the latter rain, “More than one thousand will soon be converted in one day, most of whom will trace their first convictions to the reading of our publications.”³¹

The redeemed in heaven will receive beautiful crowns with stars, to enjoy for eternity the reward for the Master and the satisfaction of seeing in the arms of Christ those whom they led to the Saviour. Some “had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns.”³²

All the promises of the Lord will be completely fulfilled.

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days” (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Psalm 126:5, 6). *R*

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By Emil Barbu, Romania

The Pioneer Work of the Gospel

The great Gospel commission of Jesus Christ to His disciples is: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

What is the Gospel in this commission? The Gospel is the Good News. News is transmitted through words. So, the Gospel or the Good News is all the words that are incarnated in Jesus Christ. “And the Word was made flesh” (John 1:14). In fact, all the things that surround

us are nothing else but the result of the words of God. The Bible says, “God said, Let there be light: and there was light. . . . And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so” (Genesis 1:3, 9). Even matter was made by His word!

The apostle John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:1, 3).

The apostle Paul explains that “by him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17).

Even nowadays, words have creative power. For instance, when we pronounce a word, its sound goes to the external ear, then into the middle ear and in the inner ear it is transformed into a nervous impulse; through the acoustic nerve it travels into the temporal lobe where, because of the connections with the frontal lobes and the other cerebral hemispheres, the sounds are integrated and the information is stored in the neural system as matter. So, the words are transformed into matter in our brain.

This matter will remain there. The words that we hear are the source of thoughts, of the way we react; they

lead to deeds, the deeds to habits, the habits form the traits of the character; and the character is in fact the person. So, we are the words that we choose to listen to.

The gospel is all those words that create in the human mind the character of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This is the divine image that humanity lost when sin entered our race.

In the beginning, when God created the world, everything was perfect, in perfect order and in subject to laws that were meant to maintain life in perfect and impressive harmony thus reflecting the character of the Creator.

All things were made by the Word and are upheld by the Word.

“The Lord made man upright in the beginning. He was created with a perfectly balanced mind, the size and strength of all its organs being perfectly developed. Adam was a perfect type of man. Every quality of mind was well proportioned, each having a distinctive office, and yet all dependent one upon another for the full and proper use of any one of them.”¹

“He who created the mind and ordained its laws, provided for its development in accordance with them.”²

Health and sickness

According to medical science, health is a state of complete physical, mental, psychological, social and moral well-being.

This perfect state of physical, mental and moral well-being has only one secret: complete obedience to the laws that govern the universe, our galaxy, our solar system, the earth and our body—the macro- and micro-cosmos.

“The same power that upholds nature, is working also in man. The same great laws that guide alike the stars and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart’s action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him

all life proceeds. Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same—a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator’s will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one’s self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin.”³

Ever since I began studying how the human organism works and how we get sick, I have been in a dilemma: What gets first sick, the organism that holds the mind, or the mind that controls the organism?

All the words we hear create our thoughts. We know that a nourished thought can become an action, a repeated action becomes a custom and a repeated custom a trait of character, and the sum of the traits form the complete character. And the character is what the person is.

This means that disorder or illness appears when that disorder takes place in a person’s mind or way of thinking. The wise Solomon says that, “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 7:29).

Human degradation starts with the sin or the sinful thought. What is sin? Listening to a lie or a half-truth, or listening to words told in a way that produce doubt or to untrue words will lead to wrong actions (sins) that will degrade health.

“A continual transgression of nature’s laws is a continual transgression of the law of God. The present weight of suffering and anguish which we see everywhere, the present deformity, decrepitude, disease, and imbecility now flooding the world, make it, in comparison to what it might be and what God designed it should be, a leper house [i.e., leper colony]; and the present generation are feeble in mental, moral, and physical power. All this misery has accumulated from generation to generation because fallen man will break the law of God. Sins of the greatest magnitude are committed through the indulgence of perverted appetite.”⁴ A perverted appetite is not merely intemperance concerning our

food, work, or rest but also a perverted visual, auditory, and intellectual appetite.

The mind is altered by what it hears and sees and it becomes identical with the things it meditates upon. “Like the body, the mind derives its strength from the food it receives. It is broadened and elevated by pure, strengthening thoughts; but it is narrowed and debased by thoughts that are of the earth earthy.

“Parents, you . . . cannot keep their [children’s] active minds unoccupied; neither can you frown away evil. Only by the inculcation of right principles can you exclude wrong thoughts. . . . Good, sound instruction is the only preventive of the evil communications that corrupt good manners. Truth will protect the soul from the endless temptations that must be encountered. . . .

“Encourage your children to store the mind with valuable knowledge, to let that which is good occupy the soul and control its powers, leaving no place for low, debasing thoughts. Restrict the desire for reading matter that does not furnish good food for the mind. . . .

“Never should books [Editor: or electronic media] containing a perversion of truth be placed in the hands of children or youth. Let not our children, in the very process of obtaining an education, receive ideas that will prove to be seeds of sin.”⁵

Nowadays, the mind is perverted by a tool readily refined by evil. It is that “window” that, besides a few good things, offers a large view about what is infamous and degrading. But naturally, the human mind chooses what is evil. Sitting on this window (like Eutychus during the apostle Paul’s sermon), people will fall not inside but outside—and they will be led to degradation and ruin. We can find this window (screen) everywhere—in our tablets, smart phones and laptops. This habit of watching everything at any time exhausts people into such a degree that they lose their ability to discern between good and evil.

One of the most important functions of the brain is its capacity

to discern between evil and good. In the psychiatric science this is called consciousness. It is benumbed then when we get psychically tired (by moving images), when we are in trance (induced by long watching of a screen).

The first act of disobedience was also caused by the inducement of a hypnotic state, an allurement—a speaking serpent. This first sin opened the door to disorder, degeneration, and death.

“God created man perfect and holy. But man fell from his holy estate because he transgressed God’s law. Since the Fall there has been a rapid increase of disease, suffering, and death. Yet notwithstanding man has insulted his Creator, God’s love is still extended to the race; and He permits light to shine that man may see that in order to live a perfect life he must live in harmony with those natural laws which govern his being. Therefore it is of the greatest importance that he know how to live so that his powers of body and mind may be exercised to the glory of God.”⁶

Pioneering for restoration

This work is wonderful. It is nothing else than the work of restoration of the mind through heavenly power—the

power of the human will to choose under any circumstances the things that bring us closer to the heart of the Heavenly Father.

The work of the Gospel is to recreate/bring back order into the mind. The willing acceptance of that information contained in the Gospel, that operates in full harmony with the human mind, helping to guide and restore the body from sickness to health.

Christ’s mission in this world was to open a way through which humanity, though degraded by sin, could be brought back and integrated into the universal harmony of Heaven as a perfect being. This work of healing the mind and leading to the healing of the body and soul is the best good news. The Gospel revealed in Jesus Christ is the first treatment for fallen humanity. There is no healthy person in this world. The moral or spiritual degradation leads to degradation of the body. The only way through which we can be changed is by accepting into our mind that life changing information, that is, Jesus Christ.

Renowned researchers of the world have decided that Jesus Christ, with His perfect character, should be placed in the center of the time axis measuring human history. Everybody relates to Him.

He is not only the One who sustains the history, but also the One who uplifts people from their state of degradation and brings them back into heavenly places. This uplifting starts the moment we accept His words. Referring to this, the apostle Paul says: “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

What is this Gospel and how does it represent the first step in the restoration of humanity?

“[Jesus] went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house; for He had passed through them, and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were displayed in every act of His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men.”⁷

The most important thing for everyone is the restoration of the human to reflect the image of God. This restoration begins by accepting the heavenly principles received



by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No miraculous drug, no complex surgical intervention can produce those extraordinary changes that transform a sinful person into a good one, or that will destroy the traces of illness and death. This happens only by accepting Jesus Christ as the foundation of our thinking, as the seed for all our thoughts.

If we permit the hand of God that works in nature to govern our being, then illness will disappear and health will be restored.

“It is not by inherent power that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of the Infinite One is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God’s power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain.”⁸

“The children of God are those who are partakers of His nature. It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love, a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God’s Spirit, will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate.”⁹

Whether we accept it or not, our presence is either a blessing, a remedy for our neighbors or, on the contrary, a poison, a savor of death unto death. This difference is made by what we cherish in our minds. If Jesus is there, this will be seen; if He is not, then both we and those who do not know God will be disappointed.

In the early church, the work of the apostles was far-reaching and profound. The beginning of every missionary effort is in fact the work of restoration of the body ruined by illness and suffering. Only after these

sufferings were eased, could people experience a new life in Jesus Christ. By accepting Christ, their whole being was filled with His presence and they became channels of light for their neighbors. This spirit of life that filled them and effused to others came from that well of eternal life of which we can freely drink.

Practical science

The Gospel is not a theory. It is practical life. While I was working as an intern doctor in France, a surgeon colleague asked me over breakfast: “Why are you a vegetarian?” I answered, “Because of a piece of biblical information that is scientifically proven: Genesis 1:29.” Elaborating further in purely scientific terms with which, he, as a doctor, was familiar—the actual chemistry of how efficiently the elements of plant-based foods are assimilated into our system—this technical explanation, with God’s help, turned out to be an ideal “entering wedge” for him. He answered: “Wow! I have never thought of this! That’s really amazing!” The perfect chemical reactions of God’s design declare the greatness of His divine wisdom and about the plan made before creation. It is also why, as time passes, humanity discovers truths that the gospel made known centuries ago.

The power of any means of cure cannot be found in itself or in the person that uses it. Jesus Christ is the Healer. If this truth were understood by the medical community as well as the preachers of the Gospel, then the work of salvation would soon encompass the whole world as at the beginning of the early church. None can allow themselves to proudly believe they can heal. The health practitioner can only help, but the healing comes from the well of eternal life.

Most people are careless with their bodies; they eat without reason and their life is ruled by no order, they are greedy; they only want to gratify their appetite and lust, without realizing that their existence is owed to a Sacrifice. Other times they are only

negligent or indifferent. They do not care what they introduce into their bodies. If they could understand the following statement, their life would be changed:

“Our Lord has said, ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. . . . For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed’ (John 6:53–55). This is true of our physical nature. To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring. All this Christ has taught in appointing the emblems of His great sacrifice. The light shining from that Communion service in the upper chamber makes sacred the provisions for our daily life. The family board becomes as the table of the Lord, and every meal a sacrament.”¹⁰

Conclusion

Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. Our existence is a balm and a blessing. The presence of every human being that is saved through the mercy of the Lord Jesus is a place where life abounds. “Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God” (Psalm 84:5–7). May all enjoy this happiness!

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Preaching the Gospel to Every Creature



By José A. Usuga Goéz, Guatemala

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

According to these scriptures, it is clear that the gospel message is to reach the ends of the earth. The good news of salvation in Christ must make its way across borders and oceans to reach the farthest corners of the planet. This is the divine command

and it is our mission as God’s chosen people. If the world is to be lightened with the glory of God, we have an important part to play in this work.

Without a doubt, we sometimes feel the same limitations as the disciples surely felt when the Saviour commanded them to preach the gospel to everyone. The challenge was too big for them as it is for us, but the promise made to them—that His presence would attend them until the end of the world—also belongs to us. (John 17:18, 20.)

Thank God, in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy we find not only

the charge of tilling the entire field, but also the form and methods to achieve this goal in the short time left. The Lord assigned to us His plan of evangelization, but also left us the tools to carry it out successfully.

Medical missionary work

“The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up” (Isaiah 1:5, 6).

"The earth . . . is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth" (Isaiah 24:5, 6).

"We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work. The world is a lazar house filled with victims of both physical and spiritual disease. Everywhere people are perishing for lack of a knowledge of the truths that have been committed to us. The members of the church are in need of an awakening, that they may realize their responsibility to impart these truths."¹

"During His ministry Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy but to save. . . .

"The followers of Christ are to labor as He did. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the suffering and afflicted. We are to minister to the despairing, and inspire hope in the hopeless."²

Many doors now closed will open before the delicate touch of the medical missionary. There are thousands of souls who would never be reached unless we use the entering wedge—the light of health reform. Both in the world and in Christendom with its various religious congregations there are many souls who are waiting for the Restorer of health for body, soul, and spirit. Where there is pain, we can make use of the keys in our hands to open the door of many hearts to the truth: A word of encouragement, counsel full of love about nutrition, fervent prayer for the sick, simple treatments by natural means, hymns of praise, prayer for families going through difficulties—all this will open the way to reach the people with the gospel because our great need is God's opportunity (Luke 4:18).

Personal home visits

The apostle Paul testified: "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have

taught you publicly, and from house to house. . . . Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:20, 31).

"Your success will not depend so much upon your knowledge and accomplishments, as upon your ability to find your way to the heart."³

"Much depends upon the manner in which you meet those whom you visit. You can take hold of a person's hand in greeting in such a way as to gain his confidence at once, or in so cold a manner that he will think you have no interest in him."⁴

"This house-to-house labor, searching for souls, hunting for the lost sheep, is the most essential work that can be done."⁵

"All who can, should do personal labor. As they go from house to house, explaining the Scriptures to the people in a clear, simple manner, God makes the truth powerful to save. The Saviour blesses those who do this work."⁶

"Of equal importance with special public efforts is house-to-house work in the homes of the people. In large cities there are certain classes that cannot be reached by public meetings. These must be searched out as the shepherd searches for his lost sheep. Diligent, personal effort must be put forth in their behalf. When personal work is neglected, many precious opportunities are lost, which, were they improved, would advance the work decidedly."⁷

"Let Sabbathkeeping families move . . . [to new areas] and live out the truth before those who know it not. These families can be a help to one another, but let them be careful to do nothing that will hedge up their way. Let them do Christian help work, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. This will have a far stronger influence for good than the preaching of sermons. Deeds, as well as words, of sympathy are needed. Christ prefaced the giving of His message by deeds of love and benevolence. Let these workers go from house to house, helping where help is needed, and, as opportunity offers, telling the story

of the cross. Christ is to be their text. They need not dwell upon doctrinal subjects; let them speak of the work and sacrifice of Christ. Let them hold up His righteousness, in their lives revealing His purity."⁸

"Among the members of our churches there should be more house-to-house labor, in giving Bible readings [which we would now call Bible studies] and distributing literature."⁹

"The Lord calls for decided efforts to be put forth in places where the people know nothing of the truth. Singing and prayer and Bible readings are needed in the homes of the people. . . . Those who do this work must have a ready knowledge of the Scriptures. 'It is written' is to be their weapon of defense."¹⁰

The ministry of music

"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Corinthians 14:15).

"There are few means more effective for fixing [God's] words in the memory than repeating them in song. And such song has wonderful power. It has power to subdue rude and uncultivated natures; power to quicken thought and to awaken sympathy, to promote harmony of action, and to banish the gloom and foreboding that destroy courage and weaken effort."¹¹

Singing to the glory of God drives away the enemy and praising Him beats Him back, giving us the victory.

"While Christ was working at the carpenter's bench, others would sometimes surround Him, trying to cause Him to be impatient; but He would begin singing some of the beautiful psalms, and before they realized what they were doing, they had joined with Him in singing, influenced, as it were, by the power of the Holy Spirit which was there."¹²

Souls are drawn to Christ and His church through the ministry of music. An inspirational anthem may touch the heartstrings, and the soul is

softened and subdued to receive the saving truth in Christ Jesus.

The ministry of canvassing

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. . . . In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good” (Ecclesiastes 11:1, 2, 6).

To provide training in the line of canvassing work is a task that the church must not neglect.

“When young men enter the canvassing field filled with an intense longing to save their fellowmen, a harvest for the Lord will be reaped as a result of their efforts. Then let them go forth as missionaries, to proclaim present truth, praying constantly for increased light, and for the guidance of the Spirit, that they may know how to speak words in season to those who are weary. Let them improve every opportunity for performing deeds of kindness, remembering that they are doing errands for the Lord.”¹³

“Our publications are now sowing the gospel seed, and are instrumental in bringing as many souls to Christ as the preached word. Whole churches have been raised up as the result of their circulation.”¹⁴

The sale of books and magazines can be fruitful, yet interest in the truth can also be raised up through surveys, religious opinion polls, and questionnaires about health and family topics. These inquiries pave the way for conversation and Bible courses should be available to follow up on the interest.

Jesus has given us a few examples of an opinion poll: “When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And

Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:13–16). (This conversation took place in the circle of the disciples but a similar example posed to the public is found in Matthew 11:7–11.)

God’s appeal echoes down through the centuries: “Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it” (Jeremiah 5:1).

Public conferences

Jesus is presented to us in the scriptures as the greatest speaker ever known. Often His speeches were made in open fields to the ears of large crowds. (See Matthew 5:1, 2; 14:14; Luke 21:37, 38.)

The apostles also adopted this approach in preaching the gospel. After Pentecost, their messages were accompanied by power and wisdom from on high to touch the hearts of thousands of listeners. (See Acts 2:41; 4:4.)

When William Miller gave lectures on the second coming of Christ, it drew crowds and produced a great sensation. “No wild excitement attended the meetings, but a deep solemnity pervaded the minds of those who heard.”¹⁵

Ellen Harmon attended these meetings and was deeply moved by them.

“In the cities of today, where there is so much to attract and please, the people can be interested by no ordinary efforts. Ministers of God’s appointment will find it necessary to put forth extraordinary efforts in order to arrest the attention of the multitudes. And when they succeed in bringing together a large number of people, they must bear messages of a character so out of the usual order that the people will be aroused and warned.”¹⁶

Camp meetings

“Camp meetings are to be held in many places, and evangelistic work

is to be done after the camp meeting is over. Thus the sheaves are to be gathered in.”¹⁷

“And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also” (Zechariah 8:21).

“The camp meeting is one of the most important agencies in our work. It is one of the most effective methods of arresting the attention of the people and reaching all classes with the gospel invitation. The time in which we live is a time of intense excitement. Ambition and war, pleasure and money-making, absorb the minds of men. Satan sees that his time is short, and he has set all his agencies at work, that men may be deceived, deluded, occupied, and entranced, until probation shall be ended and the door of mercy be forever shut.”¹⁸

“If our camp meetings are conducted as they should be, they will indeed be a light in the world. They should be held in the large cities and towns where the message of truth has not been proclaimed. And they should continue for two or three weeks. It may sometimes be advisable to hold a camp meeting for several successive seasons in the same place; but as a rule the place of meeting should be changed from year to year. Instead of having mammoth camp meetings in a few localities, more good would be done by having smaller meetings in many places. Thus the work will be constantly extending into new fields.”¹⁹

Why attend the camp meeting?

“Come, brethren and sisters, to these sacred convocation meetings, to find Jesus. He will come up to the feast. He will be present, and He will do for you that which you most need to have done. Your farms should not be considered of greater value than the higher interests of the soul.”²⁰

“It is important that the members of our churches should attend our camp meetings. The enemies of truth are many; and because our numbers are few, we should present as strong a front as possible. Individually you

The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which, as yet, they have scarcely begun.

need the benefits of the meeting, and God calls upon you to number one in the ranks of truth.

"Some will say: 'It is expensive to travel, and it would be better for us to save the money and give it for the advancement of the work where it is so much needed.' Do not reason in this way; God calls upon you to take your place among the rank and file of His people. Strengthen the meeting all you possibly can by being present with your families. Put forth extra exertion to attend the gathering of God's people.

"Brethren and sisters, it would be far better for you to let your business suffer than to neglect the opportunity of hearing the message God has for you. Make no excuse that will keep you from gaining every spiritual advantage possible. You need every ray of light. You need to become qualified to give a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. You cannot afford to lose one such privilege."²¹

Moving into new areas

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee" (Genesis 12:1).

Sometimes when our people move from one city or country to another, they easily fall into anonymity and thus lose their connection with the church—and in some cases their relationship with Jesus, only to end up dying spiritually.

But God's plan is that instead of this, we are to take Jesus with us wherever we go, as Abraham did. Wherever we raise our camp, a new mission field should be established, just as Abraham would leave an altar for the Lord.

"God calls for Christian families to go into communities that are in darkness and error, and work wisely and perseveringly for the Master. To answer this call requires self-sacrifice."²²

"The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which, as yet, they have scarcely begun. None should move into new places merely for the sake of worldly advantage; but where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. They should feel a love for souls, a burden of labor for them, and should make it a study how to bring them into the truth. They can distribute our publications, hold meetings in their homes, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to these meetings. Thus they can let their light shine in good works."²³

Printed and audiovisual materials

Besides spreading printed literature, one effective method of lay evangelism is through the use of audiovisual material. Short messages recorded on audio or video have had extraordinary influence in arousing the interest of many souls who have come to take their position on the side of the present truth. Wherever this method has been tested, we know it works. Brethren from various countries can testify that what we are saying is true.

"New methods must be introduced. God's people must awake to the necessities of the time in which they are living. God has men whom He will call into His service—men who will not carry forward the work in the lifeless way in which it has been carried forward in the past. . . ."²⁴

"Means will be devised to reach hearts. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from the methods used in the work in the past; but let no one, because of this, block the way by criticism.

"Men are needed who pray to God for wisdom, and who, under the guidance of God, can put new life

into the old methods of labor and can invent new plans and new methods of awakening the interest of church members and reaching the men and women of the world."²⁵

Radio and television programs

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you" (2 Thessalonians 3:1). It would be a big mistake not to take advantage of the mass media to preach the gospel. Through radio and television programs and selective forms of social media, we can reach hundreds and even thousands with the message of Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus declared: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Matthew 10:27).

Without a doubt, this is another effective way to reach many with the message of truth. More workers must be educated and properly trained to do this work in a professional manner. Many among us have this vocation, and can well be educated to perfect this beautiful talent to speak wisely from the microphones of a radio or TV channel.

May God bless all the media used in preaching the Gospel. Amen! *R*

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"In Season, out of Season"

By Sergey Karvatski, Russia



At His ascension, Christ addressed His followers with a holy duty to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God to all nations. That meant that every living soul upon the earth would have the opportunity to hear the most precious message that their sins can be forgiven, that they can be saved for eternity through the mercy of Jesus Christ, that the end of this world is approaching, and the kingdom of God is coming. God's plan is thus to enlighten the earth with His glory.

"The whole earth is to be illuminated with the glory of God's truth. The light is to shine to all lands and all peoples. And it is from those who have received the light that it is to shine forth."¹

"The time has come when the message of Christ's soon coming is to sound throughout the world."²

Time is flying and every second someone's life is suddenly cut short. Every minute someone finishes his life. . . . Have all these souls who

are so precious to Christ reconciled with their Creator? Did all that have passed away manage to prepare themselves to meet the Lord? How many acquaintances, relatives and other people dear to your heart have finished their life unprepared for eternity? The Lord commands: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:2).

"The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory."³

"We are to go forth to proclaim the goodness of God and to make plain His real character before the people."⁴

Service—God's instrument

Dear friends, Christ did not give His disciples a commission to bring people into His kingdom because He

couldn't evangelize the world Himself; for there is nothing impossible for Him. Christ Himself could have preached the truth faster and more efficiently than any human.

"God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid."⁵ The Lord could proclaim the message of salvation Himself or through the angels in a short span of time. Yes, "God could have proclaimed His truth through sinless angels, but this is not His plan. He chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs."⁶

The angels would have fulfilled the commission joyfully and unconditionally. For example, "the angel sent to Philip could himself have done the work for the Ethiopian."⁷ The angel descended from heaven with a commission, but instead of coming to the Ethiopian he went to look for Philip.

Why did he waste time to look for a man? Why didn't he just do it himself?

The mission was entrusted to people, so that by serving Him they could grow into the similitude of Christ! **Service is God's instrument for Christian growth!** By helping our fellowmen we grow spiritually!

How can we become effective missionaries?

When Christ gave a definite commission to His disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15), this small group of disciples had no riches, no power, no education. How could they fulfill Christ's commission?

In John 20:19 we read about Christ appearing to His disciples in the upper room, where they had gathered out of fear for their lives. The door and the windows were shut, and every rustling sound caused much anxiety.

The disciples were discouraged by the crucifixion of their beloved Master. Yet suddenly appearing in the upper room, Jesus declared to them, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). How could they fulfill the commission if they were even afraid to go out from the upper room? Knowing their worries and their need, He immediately said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22).

After forty days, the Saviour said that the disciples needed the special power of the Holy Spirit, and moreover, He promised them this power in abundant measure if they would ask. (See Acts 1:4, 5, 8.)

"Christ's visible presence was about to be withdrawn from the disciples, but a new endowment of power was to be theirs. The Holy Spirit was to be given them in its fullness, sealing them for their work. 'Behold,' the Saviour said, '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)"⁸

This promise strengthened the followers of Christ so that they could fulfill the Gospel work entrusted to them. God promised that He would send the disciples the power of the Holy Spirit.

"They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ had promised."⁹

It was on the day of Pentecost that the disciples received confidence, courage—the qualities needed for the work of salvation.

"The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart."¹⁰ The Lord supplied the church with the talents to fulfill His great commission, giving them ability to understand and preach in all the languages existing in their time (see Acts 2:4–12) as well as power to heal the sick and resurrect the dead, just as He had foretold (see Mark 16:17, 18).

The result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

Driven by the desire to proclaim the truth, the disciples went around the world. Within about three decades the preaching of Christ spread throughout all of Palestine, Asia Minor and Asia Major, northern Africa and Europe and reached even the settlements of skiffs—the message of salvation went to nearly all the civilized parts of the world in those days. The voice of truth penetrated the farthest corners of the known world of that time. Thousands heeded the message of salvation; many Christian churches were organized in Greece, Macedonia, India—and in the cruel Rome that hated and persecuted Christians, including even among Caesar's household.

The sincere followers of Christ became missionaries as soon as they learned of the Saviour.

"Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the desert, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life."¹¹

A missionary is one that fulfills a mission. It is the one that has found Jesus and cannot be silent; he is eager to share the received revelation with others.

"The spirit of Christ is a missionary spirit. The very first impulse of the renewed heart is to bring others also to the Saviour."¹²

My dear friend, do you have such an experience in your life? Maybe you are sitting and waiting until someone else does the work instead of you.

Very often we have doubts about whether we will succeed or not. We are sitting, planning, holding seminars for each other in the places where there are as many of us as trees in the dense forest, and we don't go farther than this. But how many places and huge cities are calling us with a Macedonian cry?

The marching orders

"The Duke of Wellington was once present where a party of Christian men were discussing the possibility of success in missionary effort among the heathen. They appealed to the duke to say whether in his judgment such efforts were likely to prove a success commensurate to the cost. The old soldier replied: 'Gentlemen, what are your marching orders? Success is not the question for you to discuss. If I read your orders aright, they run thus, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Gentlemen, obey your marching orders.'"¹³

"If you would go forth to do Christ's work, angels of God would open the way before you, preparing hearts to receive the gospel. Were every one of you a living missionary, the message for this time would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to every people and nation and tongue. This is the work that must be done before Christ shall come in power and great glory. I call upon the church to pray earnestly that you may understand your responsibilities. Are you individually laborers together with God? If not, why not? When do you mean to do your heaven-appointed work?

"For all who are disheartened there is but one remedy—faith, prayer, and work."¹⁴

Time is running out . . .

We have little time left to fulfill our Lord's commission and we need to remember that the powers of darkness are not idle; the enemy and his supporters work 24 hours each day, while we are measuring off for God but a tiny portion of our time, pondering whether to work for souls or not! We should realize that as we approach the Lord's return, the powers of darkness are making every effort to implement their cunning intentions leading souls to ruin.

The enemy's wrath is now intensifying even more as his end is approaching (Revelation 12:12), yet we are not to be surprised. Jesus has told of this in advance (Matthew 24:21; John 15:20; 16:2; 2 Timothy 3:1, 12).

It's difficult to describe in words the persecutions God's children have suffered over the centuries. The enemy's hatred against the followers of Christ knows no bounds. And since the times of Christ the church has resisted the attacks of the powers of darkness only with the help of the Lord. Millions have been tortured and killed. But their death was as seed—many executioners later came to Christ and many witnesses of executions on scaffolds and guillotines received Christ as their personal Saviour.

The faith of these true children of God shines throughout the ages, inspiring and encouraging Christ's followers. And no matter how diligently Satan may try to counteract God's church, he will never gain the ultimate victory; Christ has **already** conquered him on the cross and this is a sure pledge of victory for the followers of Jesus! And when some workers fall smitten by the hand of the enemy, the others step up—picking up Christ's standard, walking through the thorns, holding fast the hand of the Saviour. Soon the Lord will finish His work upon the earth.

My dear friend, no matter what obstacles are coming upon your way, we have the clear command of Christ: "Go and preach!" We have no time to waste and get sidetracked on unimportant temporal things, on

material needs, on arrangements for our well-being. There's no time to GET DISTRACTED FROM THE MAIN GOAL! ***It doesn't matter what the devil does, the main and most important thing is what God does!***

The disciples didn't fret and worry about Rome; prohibitions and threats couldn't stop or frighten them. Even the most terrible persecution didn't make them stop preaching about Christ. All the difficulties did not merely try their faith, but strengthened it!

As soon as Christ organized His church, the Jews became even more embittered against Christians. Terrible persecutions and martyrdoms began. Yet fearlessly, with songs, praise and prayers on their lips, these courageous heroes of faith received death at the hands of the tyrants that didn't understand the main thing: where one Christian died, thousands were born for the life with Christ!

Later when Satan understood that he could not destroy the church that way, he changed the tactics; the form of warfare was changed. In the days of Constantine the persecutions ceased and pagan rites entered the church, human authority superseded God's authority, and God's commandments were substituted by human regulations. Now the true Christians that were faithfully keeping God's commandments were persecuted by the professedly Christian church that was actually serving the interests of the state.

Later, the great reformers accomplished a great work of carrying the Word of Life to millions of people at the cost of their lives. They labored in perilous times with one goal—to fulfill Christ's commission: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world" (Matthew 24:14).

Of Jeremiah it is written: "Imprisoned, and placed in the stocks, the prophet nevertheless continued to speak the messages of Heaven to those who stood by. His voice could not be silenced by persecution. The word of truth, he declared, 'was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones,

and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay' (Jeremiah 20:9)."¹⁵

The controversy is going on and will intensify, yet leaning on the experiences of former generations we are encouraged. It doesn't matter what kind of persecutions the enemy makes and how he tries to counteract the message; he will not succeed, the truth will be preached.

Christ overcame in this controversy and His victory has paved the way of victory for us. Don't be discouraged; don't become disheartened: go boldly in the name of One Who has already overcome and gives us strength to overcome.

Instruments in the hands of Christ

Just as a sculptor begins with a plain piece of granite and uses instruments—designated tools—to create a beautiful sculpture, so we can be instruments in the hands of our Creator.

"Let us begin to work for those who have not had the light. . . . What we need is a living faith, faith to proclaim over the rent sepulcher of Joseph that we have a living Saviour, one who will go before us and who will work with us. ***God will do the work if we will furnish Him the instruments.*** There needs to be among us a great deal more of prayer and much less of unbelief. We need to lift up the standard higher and still higher before the people. We need to remember that Christ is always at our right hand as we proclaim liberty to the captives and deal the bread of life to hungry souls. ***When we keep before our minds the urgency and importance of our work, the salvation of God will be revealed in a remarkable manner.***

"God help us to put on the armor and to act as if we were in earnest, as if the souls of men and women were worth saving. Let us seek a new conversion. We need the presence of the Holy Spirit of God with us."¹⁶

The inhabitants of the Earth need to be educated, reproved, and appealed to and this should be done

by the Holy Spirit that will use people as His instruments. If this is the case, can we doubt the success of the missionary work?—No, never.

An honor and a privilege

The Lord has bestowed upon us a great honor—we can become His collaborators in the work of salvation! It's not a heavy burden, it's a great PRIVILEGE! "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16). It is this privilege to carry the message of salvation to the perishing world that is offered to you, my dear friend! Will you receive God's calling or will you stand aloof—the decision is yours!

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). Whether **with us or without us**, the work will be done!

When Christ uttered these words He was surrounded by a small group of Galilean fishermen. He Himself was rejected by the Jews. From that small beginning, a great work is to be accomplished. This message will sound till it spreads throughout all the nations. No persecution can hinder it. On the contrary, persecution tends to facilitate the promotion of the gospel.

Everyone has a choice to make: whether to be or not to be a coworker with Christ in completing the gospel work. You may say: "What can I do?" If you're just sitting, then you will do nothing—but if you take up the work where you are, you soon will see the results.

The power of example

After a big coastal storm, thousands of starfish were drying up on the beach, anxiously moving their tentacles but unable to return to the sea. Onlookers and photographers came to capture the beautiful, yet terrible sight. They watched but did nothing to save the dying creatures.

One boy was not able to bear the scene. He quickly grabbed a few

starfish and carried them to the water. A man inquired, "May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young boy paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they can't return to the sea by themselves," the youth replied. "When the sun gets high, they will die unless I throw them back into the water."

The man replied, "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. You won't really be able to make much of a difference." The boy bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled and said, "It made a difference to that one!"

Soon the man joined him in the project, then others came, and more and more followed until many people undertook the aim to make a difference. So, thanks to this small boy's persistence, nearly all the starfish were saved, though they had been doomed to die!

My dear friend! It's true that you cannot help everyone, but you can help those close to you! Then, help at least one perishing soul to find the way of salvation!

If suddenly your life ends today, have you ever thought: "What did I personally do for the Lord?"

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

preach the word; be instant **in season, out of season**; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:1, 2, emphasis added).

"The end is near, stealing upon us stealthily, imperceptibly, like the noiseless approach of a thief in the night. May the Lord grant that we shall no longer sleep as do others, but that we shall watch and be sober. The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God will triumph with it. The time is short; the night soon cometh when no man can work. Let those who are rejoicing in the light of present truth now **make haste to impart the truth to others.**"¹⁷

The truth is soon to triumph. The work of salvation will be finished. Become a partaker of this triumph!

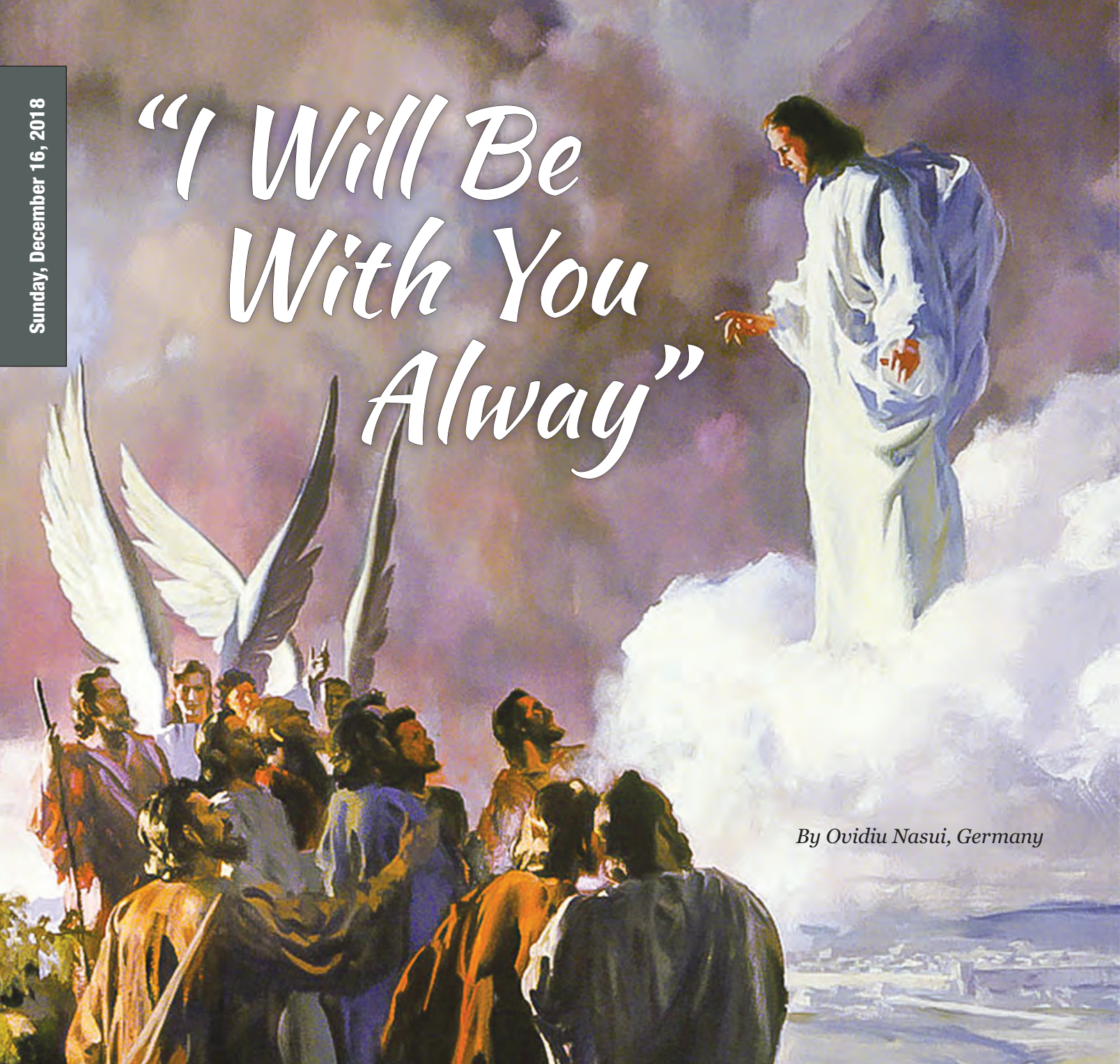
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- ¹⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 438. [Emphasis added.]
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"I Will Be With You Always"



By Ovidiu Nasui, Germany

Jesus concludes His great commission to go and teach all nations with the assurance, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20).

As we review the sacred history of God's people, there's one thing that catches our attention, and we will be deeply impressed by it, namely: The way in which God has related to His people, the way in which He has led them, His love, His forbearance,

justice, and loyalty exceeding all human understanding and interpretation. Every manifestation of His presence, of His creative power, His sovereignty, His nature, and His law convince us that God is love, and that He has always been and will forever be such. In God's love is comprised the happiness and blessing of all created beings. Time and again God has promised in His Word that He will be with His children, that He

will providentially guide and bless them and that He will never forsake them. This promise has been fulfilled exactly the way He promised.

A lesson from the eagles

Moses describes the way the Lord led the Hebrews in their wilderness journey: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh

them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him” (Deuteronomy 32:11, 12).

What a wonderful description!

For the eagle’s young, the nest means safety, comfort, ease; everything is available, their food is provided. In their nest, the young feel at home, safe. What would happen if the young eagle spent its entire life in the nest? Would she develop harmoniously? Would she end up being a beautifully developed eagle? Surely not. She would be an eagle unable to fly, she would not be able to use her wings, she would become lazy, selfish, always expecting to be attended to; she would remain an eagle that had lost her motivation and lived vainly to no aim. But see, there comes the moment when the eagle-parent stirreth up her nest and teaches her chick to fly. This “small eagle proper” finally becomes a full-grown, imposing eagle, who roams the air with her wide wings, meeting tempests and providing her own food. Our eagle can face life from now on, and is able to build a nest for herself and establish her own family.

When Moses was presenting the image of the eagle in the verses of his song, he was only presenting his personal experience and that of his people, an experience they had made with God throughout their lives. It is an accurate description of the infinite love of God’s care for them and of the delicate and wise way in which God had led and treated His beloved people.

Some aspects of this are worth mentioning:

1. God stirred up their “nest”

Since the time of Abraham, God has “stirred up the nest” of His chosen ones. Often they had to be separated from their families who were dear unto them, from their home, their country, becoming strangers and pilgrims upon the earth in search of a better homeland. They did not live in comfort, they did not have an easy life. They were persecuted by the enemies of God, and they also frequently grieved the Lord by infidelity, idolatry,

disobedience, and rebellion—things which had painful long-term consequences.

2. He watched over them

All the while God watched over them, taking care of them; His eyes were over them day and night, and nothing happened to them without His will.

3. He stretched His wings, bearing them thereon

Often when they were in danger of falling, the Lord intervened and stretched out a mighty hand to help. Under the shadow of His wings, they were protected time and again. He did not leave them to dash their feet against a stone (Psalm 91:12). David, remembering the image that Moses described, later said in one of his psalms: “He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler” (Psalm 91:4).

4. God has safely led His people

It was not in the “nest” that the children of Israel found safety, neither at home, in their tent or in their country—rather, their safety was God. The reality of His presence with them was the reason for their security. To the faithful ones, God has time after time been father, mother, sister, brother, shelter, and safety. How wonderful to have such a God!

If we look closer into this subject, we will notice that the Lord’s promise of being with His people, particularly with those whom He has chosen to lead His people—patriarchs, prophets and all the men of faith—has certainly been fulfilled.

The promise to Isaac

“I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed” (Genesis 26:24).

The promise to Jacob

“Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou

goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Genesis 28:15).

The promise to Joshua

“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee” (Joshua 1:5).

David takes courage in a crisis

“David seemed to be cut off from every human support. All that he held dear on earth had been swept from him. Saul had driven him from his country; the Philistines had driven him from the camp; the Amalekites had plundered his city; his wives and children had been made prisoners; and his own familiar friends had banded against him, and threatened him even with death. In this hour of utmost extremity David, instead of permitting his mind to dwell upon these painful circumstances, looked earnestly to God for help. He ‘encouraged himself in the Lord.’ He reviewed his past eventful life. Wherein had the Lord ever forsaken him? His soul was refreshed in recalling the many evidences of God’s favor.”¹

David encourages Solomon

“Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee” (1 Chronicles 28:20).

Promises fulfilled

All the promises mentioned so far have been wonderfully fulfilled in the lives of God’s people. The Lord has chosen His people so that they would testify of Him, of His love and His grace in word and deed, wherever they might be. Moses observed: “For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy

people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth” (Exodus 33:16).

This was Moses’ desire, namely, that the presence of God would separate them from among the nations, and the Lord was ready to support them in this.

In the Christian dispensation, the promise was fulfilled: “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

“Since Jesus came to dwell with us, we know that God is acquainted with our trials, and sympathizes with our griefs. Every son and daughter of Adam may understand that our Creator is the friend of sinners. For in every doctrine of grace, every promise of joy, every deed of love, every divine attraction presented in the Saviour’s life on earth, we see ‘God with us.’ ”²

The greatest Missionary ever known

“The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’ ”³

The sending out of the disciples and Christ’s promise:

Christ gave His disciples their commission and promised to be with them.

The Son of Man endured scorn, insult, and mockery in this world and was about to ascend back to Heaven, yet “as He reviews the ingratitude of the people He came to save—will He not withdraw from them His sympathy and love? Will not His affections be centered upon that realm where He is appreciated, and where sinless angels wait to do His bidding? No; His promise to those loved ones whom He leaves on earth is, **‘I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’** ”⁴

“Though the ministration was to be removed from the earthly to

the heavenly temple; though the sanctuary and our great high priest would be invisible to human sight, yet the disciples were to suffer no loss thereby. They would realize no break in their communion, and no diminution of power because of the Saviour’s absence. While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth. He is withdrawn from the eye of sense, but His parting promise is fulfilled, **‘Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world’** (Matthew 28:20). While He delegates His power to inferior ministers, His energizing presence is still with His church.”⁵

God’s special work for and with you

“God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and learn of Him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their imperfections, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image.”⁶

In order to bring salvation to humanity, Christ needed human nature. He took upon Himself human nature and was a partaker of it; He was tempted in all things as we are, yet He remained sinless. On the other hand, how are things with us? We as humans need the Divine, a power from without, to restore His image in us. We need Him to enable us to reflect more and more closely the character of Christ, to have Jesus live in us; then we will be able to accomplish the work entrusted us. In other words, each of us need to become a partaker of the divine nature. When this union, or fusion, takes place, we have heaven in our hearts, and frail humanity is enabled to keep God’s commandments and not to sin anymore. What a magnificent accomplishment!

“The followers of Christ are to labor as He did. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the suffering and afflicted. We are

to minister to the despairing, and inspire hope in the hopeless. And to us also the promise will be fulfilled, “Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward” (Isaiah 58:8).”⁷

My beloved, the righteous works of the saints have to be seen and felt in our lives. They will be a testimony to the righteousness of our Lord Jesus, of which we are daily partaking. This righteousness refers to purity of heart and correctness of life, compliance of both heart and life to the divine law through the indwelling of Christ in the soul. We will not be content with the mere thought that Christ died, paying the redemption price for us on Golgotha to be righteousness for us. But rather we will earnestly desire Jesus’ righteousness, which He is willing to impart to us day by day, that it may be part of our life. Let us put this righteousness actively into practice, by faith, in deeds of love, as we advance daily in our life of faith. It is only thus that Christ’s promise will be fulfilled with us: “Lo, I am with you always!”

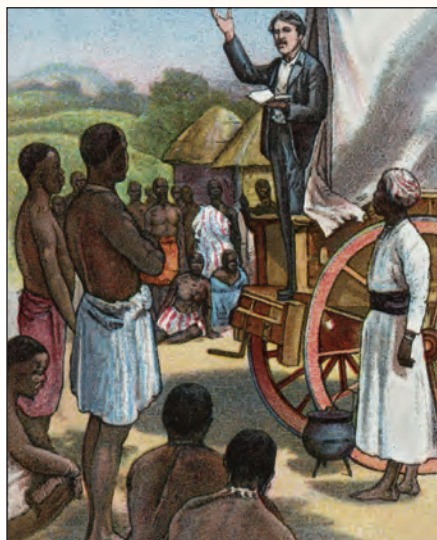
How will people know that we are Christ’s disciples? Remember what Moses observed to God? “For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth” (Exodus 33:16).

My beloved, may God bless us that we be a special people, a humble people, to fear God and give glory to Him, to represent in honor His character on earth and not to disappoint Him.

Testimony of faithful missionaries

David Livingstone:

In 1856, after 15 years of intense, uninterrupted labor, Livingstone returned to England to see his wife and the children from whom he had been separated for four years. Back home in England he was now received with great esteem. He was called to speak everywhere about his



experiences in Africa. The University of Glasgow awarded him a special honorary doctorate. The unbelieving students had planned to mock him and to boo him off the stage, as they did not agree to have this title awarded to him. But, when he showed up before them with his cheeks burnt by the African sun, with the shoulder torn by lion's teeth, all were deeply moved. They were beholding in him now a man who had given up everything. The self-sacrifice and suffering were carved into his face. Before their eyes they had a saint of God. No one uttered a word. Solemnity pervaded as at a gravesite.

Livingstone spoke about the great needs of the Africans and about the experiences he had had there. Closing, he said: "Now I return. But I would like to tell you that what sustained me in the midst of all the hardships, trials, and loneliness was the promise: **'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!'**"

Hudson Taylor:

"Oh! To be full of the knowledge of God's will and of the feeling of Jesus' presence, to be one with Him so much so that His life flows through your veins, that He borrows your lips to utter His words, your face to show us His patient and loving looks, your hands to work for Him."

A sheet of paper on which Taylor's thoughts are jotted down, a yellowish paper that he carried around with him many days in a row, shows the secret of his life of faith. It reads:

"Lord Jesus, be to me a living and clear reality, more present to the look of my faith than any visible thing, dearer, closer than any earthly good!"

Ellen G. White:

On January 25, 1915, the Lord's messenger testified: "The Lord has been my helper, the Lord has been my God, and I have not a doubt. If I could not realize that He has been my guide and my stay, do tell me what I could trust in. Why, I have just as firm a trust in God that He will stand my feet on Mount Zion, as that I live and breathe; and I am going to keep that trust till I die."⁸

Shortly after the accident in which she broke her hip she testified of her Saviour: "Jesus is my blessed Redeemer, and I love Him with my whole being." And again: "I see light in His light. I have joy in His joy, and peace in His peace. I see mercy in His mercy, and love in His love. . . ."

In an interview she declared: "My courage is grounded in my Saviour. My work is nearly ended. Looking over the past, I do not feel the least mite of despondency or discouragement. I feel so grateful that the Lord has withheld me from despair and discouragement, and that I can still hold the banner. I know Him whom I love, and in whom my soul trusteth."⁹

Several days before her passing away, her last words to her son were: "I know in whom I have believed"; "God is love"; "We shall all be home very soon now."¹⁰

Earlier in her life, she wrote, "In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader."¹¹

Welcome!

"The promise of Christ's second coming was ever to be kept fresh in the minds of His disciples. The same Jesus whom they had seen ascending into heaven, would come again, to take to Himself those who here below give themselves to His service. The same

voice that had said to them, **'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end,'** would bid them **welcome** to His presence in the heavenly kingdom."¹²

Dear disciple of Christ, dear missionary, be faithful until the end; don't grow weary on the way. Look up in faith and you will hear the gentle voice of Jesus, saying to you: **"Welcome!"**

What a glorious meeting!

Conclusion

My beloved brethren in Jesus, may we keep the following thoughts fresh in our minds in the year that we will soon step into, and until the coming of our Lord Jesus: "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."¹³

May the Lord help us not to forget the history of our people, lest we have to repeat it. May we remain in the pathway in which the Lord has led us and not forget what He has taught us regarding our past history and the foundation of our faith, a foundation laid with much toil and sacrifice by our forefathers, through the grace and help of our Lord Jesus. We can in all assurance say as well: "Ebenezer"—Hitherto the Lord has helped us! "Emmanuel"—God was and is with us! We thank the Lord once again for His promise, that accompanies us daily, and that will remain as an anchor of our life:

"Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world!" Amen!

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MOVING? Please let us know.

Revealing Christ to Others

*We speak of commandments on tables of stone—
The guideline for life they shall be.
How oft' the first table is thought of alone;
In frailty, there's part we don't see.*

*We're judged by Ten Laws—not just one up to four;
The fifth to the tenth we must heed.
To humble our pride that is deep to the core:
Is greatest of all of our need.*

*To love wayward people for whom the Lamb died
Is theory as broad as the ocean.
Yet bidden we are to stay by His pierc'd side
Regardless of any emotion.*

*Obeying is vital—not just to love God;
The Pharisees showed how that smothers
When we overlook the real path Jesus trod,
Neglecting His true love for others.*

*Let's look beyond faces and find the deep scope,
In faith and in zeal, Christian workers!
Dear souls are now dying; they live without hope!
The call now comes not to be shirkers!*

*We're called to a mission and bidden move faster;
There's no time to fret or be nervous.
The angels are ready—and so is the Master—
To strengthen and guide us in service.*

*When souls look at us and they see what they see,
And hear every tone of our voice,
Will they soon observe that it's not just a "me"
Whose presence brings cause to rejoice?*

*The one to uplift is the One on the cross
Who draws souls from darkness so dim.
So thus we can gladly view pride but a loss
If only we would reflect Him!*

*The time is now short and the Spirit is ready
To be poured out free from on high.
Great power is promised to sure and to steady—
'Twill swell to a wondrous loud cry!*

*This glorious chance is extended to sinners
That soon we might gain the great prize.
God washes; He cleanses; He then makes us winners;
He teaches 'til we become wise.*

*Our goal and our chief aim become just to share;
Salvation should none want to lose!
Our purpose in life is to help those "out there,"
That they might accept the Good News!*

*Then let us consider our ways this new year
To focus our mind up above—
Thus watching our heart and our words in God's fear
So others may see He is love!*

—Barbara Montrose