

Youth messenger

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GETTING OUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT

BY EUNICE BRAIDMAN

SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS; AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU. MATTHEW 6:33.

Today I would like to ask you a question. Let's say you have a neighbor—Jim—who, for a very long time, has been telling everyone that he is living in his present house only temporarily, and that he will move to a permanent home far, far away. Although he does not have an exact date, he says it will be quite soon. Months and years go by and one would never guess he is planning on moving. He never packs anything and never makes a move to imply that he will soon move or that his stay is indeed temporary. As a matter of fact, it would appear that the opposite is true. It seems as if he has come to stay. He remodels his house, plants a garden and fruit trees, buys the parcel of land next to his, and so forth. All the while he says that his stay in the area is temporary, and that he will be moving soon. As time goes by, he says the date for him to move is drawing ever nearer, yet he continues to enhance his yard and beautify his house while not bothering to pack a thing. What would you think of such a person? Would you believe he is truly moving? Wouldn't you think he is foolish? Why put so much into a place that you will soon be leaving? I believe nearly all of us would be baffled at the absurdity of such a scenario, would we not?

And yet, a very similar scenario is taking place in the life of so many of us today, especially in the life of us youth. We say we believe Jesus is coming soon. We say we know we are just pilgrims who are passing through. We say we know this is not our home, and that we believe our true home and final destination is heaven. But do our actions truly prove this? Do the lives we lead convey this message to the world and to those around us? Or are we something akin to a film that is out-of-sync?

GOALS OF GOODIES AND GPAs

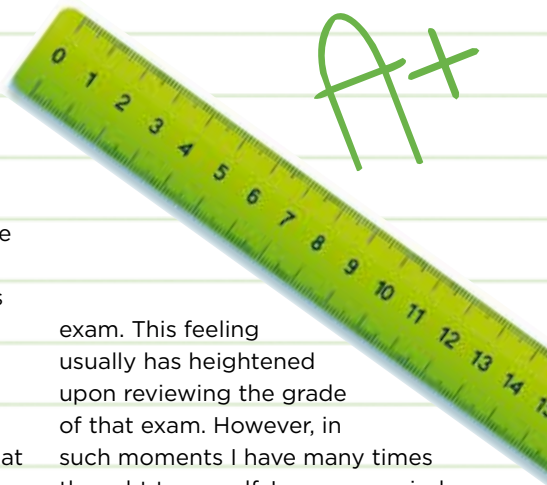
Today it is far too easy to be a Jim. We live, act, and make plans as if we were to live in this old world forever. You see, we are young and enthusiastic. We are at a point where the best of life's journey has just begun. We are full of ideas, hopes, aspirations, dreams, and we feel as though we can conquer the world. We want to experience life and all that it has to offer. Indeed, all this in itself is no sin . . . until we allow it to blur our view of heaven and allow ourselves to be distracted from what truly matters—eternal life. We tend to become so preoccupied with completing degree after degree, obtaining our dream job, fulfilling our earthly plans and endeavors that we lose sight of our true goals. Perhaps we sometimes worry more about maintaining a high GPA (grade point average) and excelling in our class than we do about the records being kept of us in heaven. Perhaps we are more concerned, at times, with impressing our professors, bosses, or peers and with making our parents proud than we are with gaining our heavenly Father's approval.

This reminds me of an important thought. I'm sure all of us who have been students at one point or another have felt our heart pounding fast inside our chests and have had a high amount of nervousness and anxiety when taking a crucial

exam. This feeling usually has heightened upon reviewing the grade of that exam. However, in such moments I have many times thought to myself, I am so worried and nervous over an exam which can mean nothing more than the passing or failing of a class. How will I feel in that great judgment day when my eternal life is in the balance—in that moment when the Judge will tell me whether I have “passed” or “failed” my life's test; at that day when I will know if I have lost everything that truly matters or gained it all? Neither you nor I can imagine what that will feel like. But it is then when we will realize whether everything we did was worth it. It is then that we will know whether we had our priorities straight.

BEHAVING AS IF WE BELIEVE

Jesus is coming soon. We all know this, but do we truly believe it? Do our actions imply this? Many of us, myself included, are many times like Jim. We forget, or at least act as if we have forgotten, that we are not here for long and that we are placing too much time, effort, and importance on things that




The end is near, probation is closing. . . . We should constantly be asking ourselves: How will this benefit my spiritual life?

are only temporary. But, you might ask, what is wrong with wanting to be someone in life, with aiming to get somewhere, or with accomplishing great things? None of this is wrong. What is wrong is allowing our priorities to become mixed up and setting our heart too much on the things of this world. We should constantly be asking ourselves: How will this benefit my spiritual life? Many of the things which engage the greatest part of our attention and time are things which will do nothing to help us gain God's favor or secure our crown. In the end we will have spent years, many sleepless nights, untiring effort, and perhaps many tears in achieving things which will be worth nothing when Jesus returns in the clouds of heaven. We will realize that we spent so much of ourselves in something that we cannot take to heaven and which will play no part in opening heaven's gates to receive us.

In today's world it is hard to stay focused on heaven and on eternity. And while having high aspirations and great plans is no sin, we cannot afford to forget

that Jesus' second coming is drawing ever nearer and we cannot act as if this world is our permanent home. Perhaps it is time to reorder our priorities and set them straight. I pray that in this alluring world God can help us keep our eyes focused on what is soon to take place. Time is running out, and you and I have much preparation to do. It is not a difficult exam we must study for. Rather it is our characters we must prepare for eternity. No earthly concern can compare with the seriousness of this task. We must keep ever before us the fact that while we are in this world, we are not of it. May we remember the following words written by the servant of the Lord: "The youth should seek God more earnestly. The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury by having repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near! The prophet says: 'Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger' (Zephaniah 2:3)." —*The Signs of the Times*, April 21, 1890. Jesus is coming soon! May our life be the most convincing proof of this reality.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). 

LESSONS FROM A LIFE

Part 3 of 3

A Bible and Spirit
of Prophecy
compilation, with
commentary by
ALEX GURDUALA

We learned in previous issues of the *Youth Messenger* that tragically, during Solomon's reign as king—exactly when he might have enjoyed the most spiritual prosperity as Israel's chosen monarch—he fell prey to the temptations of the enemy of souls.

“Yielding to the temptations incident to his success and his honored position, [Solomon] forgot the Source of his prosperity. An ambition to excel all other nations in power and grandeur led him to pervert for selfish purposes the heavenly gifts hitherto employed for the glory of God. The money which should have been held in sacred trust for the benefit of the worthy poor and for the extension of principles of holy living throughout the world, was selfishly absorbed in ambitious projects.

“Engrossed in an overmastering desire to surpass other nations in outward display, the king overlooked the need of acquiring beauty and perfection of character.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 55.

“For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father” (1 Kings 11:4–6).

Solomon separation from God through communication with idolaters was his ruin. As he cast off his allegiance to God, he lost the mastery of himself. He who said: “there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12) departed from purity and law.

We cannot serve two masters, and just as God warned Solomon of his danger, so today He warns His children not to imperil their souls by affinity with the world and the snare of greed.

DID GOD FORSAKE SOLOMON?

“By messages of reproof and by severe judgments, [God] sought to arouse the king to a realization of the sinfulness of his course. He removed His protecting care and permitted adversaries to harass and weaken the kingdom.”—*Ibid.*, p. 77.

WHY DOES THE LORD SEND US REPROOF AND JUDGMENT?

“Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today, will not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressive, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 489, 490.

Finally, “the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father’s sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son” (1 Kings 11:11, 12).

Solomon was at the bottom of the barrel!

“In penitence [Solomon] began to retrace his steps toward the exalted plane of purity and holiness from whence he had fallen so far. He could never hope to escape the blasting results of sin, he could never free his mind

from all remembrance of the self-indulgent course he had been pursuing, but he would endeavor earnestly to dissuade others from following after folly. He would humbly confess the error of his ways and lift his voice in warning lest others be lost irretrievably because of the influences for evil he had been setting in operation.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 78.

SOLOMON'S ADVICE TO THE YOUTH

“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” (Ecclesiastes 11:9–12:1).

None can be stable without watchfulness and prayer as our only safety for both young and old.

“Those who heed the warning of Solomon’s apostasy will shun the first approach of those sins that overcame him. Only obedience to the requirements of Heaven will keep man from apostasy. God has bestowed upon man great light and many blessings; but unless this light and these blessings are accepted, they are

“Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart.”


no security against disobedience and apostasy. When those whom God has exalted to positions of high trust turn from Him to human wisdom, their light becomes darkness. Their entrusted capabilities become a snare. . . .

“All who enter the City of God will enter through the strait gate—by agonizing effort; for ‘there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth’ (Revelation 21:27). . . . God hates sin, but He loves the sinner. ‘I will heal their backsliding,’ He declares; ‘I will love them freely’ (Hosea 14:4).”—*Ibid.*, pp. 83, 84.

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isaiah 55:7).

WHY REPENT TODAY?

“The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer” (1 Peter 4:7).

“Shall the warnings given by Christ be passed by unheeded? Shall we not make diligent work for repentance now, while Mercy’s gracious voice is still heard?”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 269. 

As mentioned in the previous *Youth Messenger*, the psalmist compares a thirsty deer to the strong desire the Christian believer should have to know the Lord more closely, more deeply. The great evangelist C. H. Spurgeon describes this desire for God as direct and single-minded. There are three more characteristics he mentions as follows:

INTENSITY

Observe the **intensity** of this desire. "As the deer pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after You." The panting of a thirsty deer is something terrible to see; it appears to thirst all over; every pore of its body is thirsting. It is not alone that heated tongue, those snorting nostrils, those glaring eyes, but the creature in every part, in every hair thirsts and pants; and so with the believer without God! . . . Surely the psalmist chose thirst for this reason, because it is a longing not to be appeased. People have gone for days without food, but they could not during the same length of time, abstain from drink; in a

long and weary march, soldiers have been able to endure much absence of food, but hundreds have died from lack of drink. It has been said that you can palliate hunger for a while, but thirst is awful; you cannot reason with it; thirst has no ears. You cannot forget it, the more thirsty one becomes, the more does the need thrust itself before you. O my God, painful as is such a spiritual thirst, yet would I desire to be always in this state when I'm not in immediate fellowship with You! I would be so thirsty as to never to find a moment's peace, nor ease, nor comfort, except when I am near to You. "Tears have been my meat," says David, "day and night" (Psalm 42:3). As though he could get nothing from himself by way of comfort, for his soul flowed over at his eyes in briny tears which made him even thirstier; still his cry went up at morn and midnight, "My God, my God, I must behold You; I must approach You; I must enjoy Your love. Shut me not up in this dungeon, cast me not from Your presence, take not your Holy Spirit from me; bring me to Yourself again, for I long, I groan, I faint, I die for You!

The Hart, the Hind, and the Hope

Part 3 of 3

Adapted from
a sermon by
C. H. SPURGEON,
with editorial
comments.

O come to me and manifest Your favor.” Such is the strong desire of the text, and such let ours be.

VITALITY

Another characteristic of this longing is vitality. Thirst is connected with the very springs of life. We must drink or die. So the Christian comes to feel that it is not a luxury to walk with God—a luxury with which he or she may perhaps dispense, but it is an absolute necessity for the spirit. Consider, my brothers and sisters, what danger we are in when we live at a distance from God; what danger of backsliding further and further; what danger of being tempted to gross sin. Consider how we are grieving the Holy Spirit; consider what comforts and mercies we are losing; consider what dishonor we are likely to bring upon the holy name we profess; consider how unkind we are to the Husband of our souls, to that dear heavenly Lover who did not spare His heart’s blood that He might buy us for Himself, that He might have all our heart’s love. Consider all this and we shall make it a vital point to return to our God. It will not seem to us as though it might be or might not be, but we shall that

it must be! We cannot be content without the light of Jehovah’s countenance. O God, as the deer must die without water, so must my soul die without a sense of your love again restored to me!

NOW, AT LAST: THE HOPE!

The feminine form of “hart” is “hind.” Consider, also, then, the following promises:

“God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet: and setteth me upon my high places” (2 Samuel 22:33, 34).

“The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places” (Habakkuk 3:19).

“Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (Isaiah 35:4-6). 🕊

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” (Psalm 42:1, 2).

Another Kind of Race

BY P.J. STEMLER

PART 4 OF 4



In previous issues of the *Youth Messenger*, we learned how the writer had entered into the spiritual “race” of following Christ in daily life.

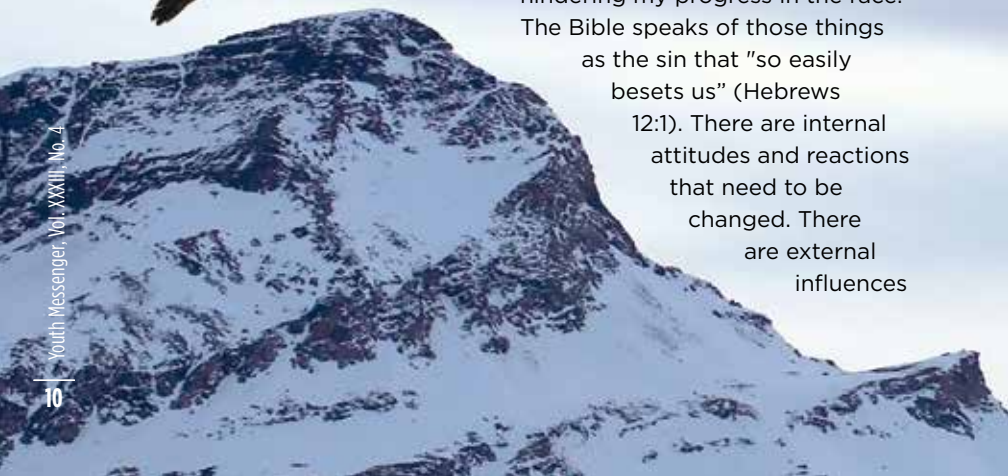
In the race, the Director led me to understand the need of self-discipline, especially in the area of what I put in my body. What

difference does it make about what you eat and drink if this is a spiritual race rather than a physical one? I learned by experience and later through Inspiration and science that what we eat and drink

does indeed affect the functioning of the body systems, the electrical impulse of nerve and cell, as well as the perception and function of the brain. Our habits of input directly affect our output of character, of how we think, how we converse, how we perceive, how we are.

If we put things into our physical body that hinder us in any way, we are less capable of having the energy and strength to run the race. We need calm nerves, healthy thoughts, and strong bodies as much as possible.

I noticed an interesting phenomenon. As I learned more about what to do for better health of brain and bone, I became more aware of other things that were hindering my progress in the race. The Bible speaks of those things as the sin that “so easily besets us” (Hebrews 12:1). There are internal attitudes and reactions that need to be changed. There are external influences



that are calculated to stop us in this race. I stopped watching things that used up time, energy, and attention that didn't help me in the race.

I stopped listening to things which were actually detrimental.

I put in the spiritual food of God's Word, the Bible. I spent time digesting what He was teaching by thinking on the concepts I was reading, by praying for wisdom and direction, and by listening to that still, small voice that He promises to give to guide the honest in heart. I was hungry to hear sermons that would challenge and encourage me in the race, and that would teach me how to run better. I wanted the best and still do. What about you?

SELF-HONORING OR CHRIST-HONORING?

I have noticed another interesting lesson in running this race. We may begin the race of the Christian, which by definition, is to be like Christ. Christ is the ultimate example in self-abnegation, that willingness to deny oneself for the good of others. We can read a very brief description of His attitude in the book of Philippians in the Bible.

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (2:6-8).

This description is remarkable when we understand that Christ is actually the Creator of all things, one with the Father in Heaven. He was willing to set that power, that position aside to come to Earth, become one with humanity and live a life that could show us what God wanted for us. He would show us how to run the race. He was willing to show by example how we can grasp hold of divine power outside of ourselves, and do what He asks us to do.

Christ was willing to make Himself of no reputation. He didn't come as a rich or powerful man. He was willing to take the lowest position to help people in whatever capacity He found them. He competed with no one. This is what He calls us to do—to be His followers, His representatives in this world.

But our race is in this world, on this planet called Earth. We are surrounded by others running another race, a race which involves competition, a spirit of winning. Power and importance often attend this race and can very easily enter into the Christian race.

I have found that I must constantly be asking why am I running this way. Is it really to honor the Lord who gives me strength to run, or do I want to prove something to myself or others? Am I God-honoring or self-honoring? How can I know? The Bible tells me I can pray for God to search my heart and

reveal to me my motives. I can also check myself. It may be like checking for dehydration. Am I looking for praise, trying to show how good I am, how important I am, how intelligent I am? Am I a "know-it-all"? Or am I willing to humbly be and do what Christ is asking? Am I gentle in spirit, encouraging others, striving to help, loving and kind?

I have been tested often on these things. Especially when there are those who try to stop you from winning the race, when there are belligerent runners, when there are jealous onlookers, how will we respond? I have had to plead with God for grace to turn the other cheek, love to share with those who have hurt me or my family either consciously or unconsciously, endurance to continue when all seems to be set against me.

This race changes us if we will continue the running. Will you? Will I?

THE RACE ISN'T OVER YET

The race is not over. I don't know how long it will continue. It seems in the physical races that you must be strong and that youth is often the optimum time to run. Yet, there are those who are older in years that have developed stamina that youth do not have and are even better able to run the long

distances of a marathon. So it is in the spiritual race. When we are young, we have energy to burn. We think that we can do anything, anywhere. Then life's experiences start to wear us down. There may be discouraging circumstances, sickness, death, sorrow, poverty, hatred against you, and the like. We can quickly realize that, without extra strength from above, we cannot finish the race. I want to praise the Lord for the promise that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

Notice the words just before this verse:

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall" (verses 28–30).

God is so good. He does not get tired, and He has the power to help and strengthen the faint and weary, the weak, the discouraged. He promises to be with us to run the race.

He declares, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will

uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness” (Isaiah 41:10).

I may need to run for many more years, or my race could be cut short today. Either way I have the promise of God’s strength to run. I am reminded of the apostle Paul, the great preacher of the New Testament in the Bible. Formerly a persecutor of the Christians, he became one of their greatest. He had a dramatic experience on his way to round up a group of his enemies. He learned humility, love, service, and perseverance. He was severely persecuted for his faith and his work, and yet he pressed on, seeking to do his best no matter where he was and whatever his circumstances. He was a great example of faithfulness, yet instead of saying “look what I have done,” he wrote: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12-14).


As mentioned before, this race requires perseverance and endurance. Jesus says, “Ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 10:22).

Am I a “know-it-all”? Or am I willing to humbly be and do what Christ is asking?

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:13).

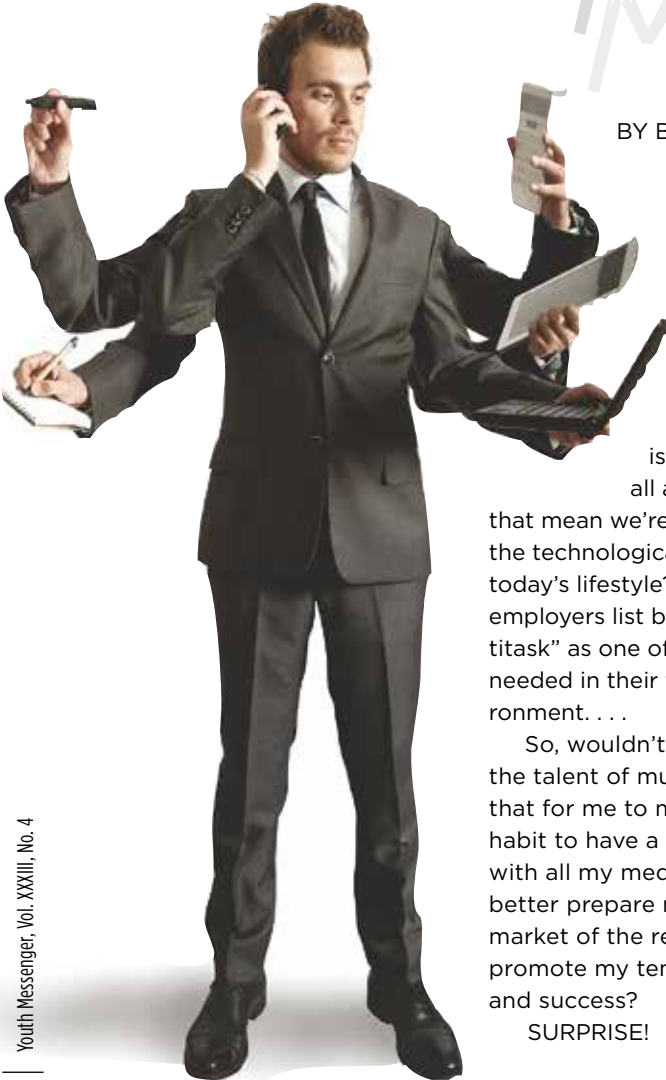
Let us be willing to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin” (Hebrews 12:1-4).

Then one day like Paul, we can say:

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7, 8). 

Multitasking Mania

BY BARBARA MONTROSE



Hey—we can text-message while eating breakfast, listening to an iPod, and finishing up homework all at once. Doesn't

that mean we're pretty adept at the technological demands of today's lifestyle? After all, some employers list being "able to multitask" as one of the requirements needed in their fast-paced environment. . . .

So, wouldn't the cultivation of the talent of multitasking mean that for me to make it a regular habit to have a multitasking brain with all my media devices will better prepare me for the job market of the real world and thus promote my temporal happiness and success?

SURPRISE!

According to a recent research, the answer may actually end up being a big, fat NO.

In a study performed in 2009 by the National Academy of Sciences, researchers at Stanford University found that, amazingly, college students who, as a habit, constantly immersed themselves in various types of media did not do well in tests of memory and attention. Their task-switching ability was not a good thing, after all. According to researcher Dr. Clifford Nass, “in a nutshell, they’re terrible at multitasking.”

At the beginning of their study, the researchers sincerely believed that heavy multitaskers had some innate ability to excel at handling several tasks at once. The assumption was that they were probably gifted at filtering irrelevant distractions out of their environment.

However, on a simple cognitive test, the habitual multitaskers performed more poorly than people who did not multitask. Further, when asked to switch tasks, they were actually slower than non-multitaskers performing the same assignment.

Another test—measuring the ability to organize and file information—further echoed the same findings.

WHY?

The Stanford study appears to indicate that multitaskers are really not good at what they do, probably because of sensory

Today’s glut of multitasking tools make it more likely that we will voluntarily overload our senses.

overload which decreases the ability to focus attention, actually causing a suppression of the frontal lobe of the brain.

Media expert Alvin Toffler explains that constant mental stimulation shuts down the analytical processes and ultimately disrupts the ability to face life rationally. The constant stimulation eventually triggers an “I-don’t-care” attitude. Then when it’s time to make hard decisions or exercise disciplined thinking, the person just wants to escape instead of tackling the challenge. Today’s glut of multitasking tools make it more likely that we will voluntarily overload our senses. Overload overwhelms—and our mental acuteness suffers. In other words, the result is that the mind is simply not as sharp anymore.

A DELUSION

In a report issued on National Public Radio on October 2, 2008, Dr. Earl Miller, professor of neuroscience at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, explains that, by nature, the human mind really

does not multitask very well at all—what actually happens when people **think** that they are “multitasking” is that they are just tapping into the ability of the mind to switch focus with astonishing speed. But to think that professed multitaskers are actually doing both tasks simultaneously is a delusion—and as Dr. Miller says, the human mind is very good at deluding itself.

Dr. Daniel Weissman, neuroscientist at the University of Michigan, asserts that the brain is able to prioritize sensory information and “muffle” the less important input that is coming simultaneously. So, in essence, regardless of what he or she may think, the supposed multitasker ends up giving less attention to one of the tasks than the others. Something is getting shortchanged—and if it’s a task, something is turning out mediocre.

It may seem that attempting two or more “thinking activities” at once would make you more productive, but in reality it

1. Slows you down.
2. Increases the number of mistakes you’ll be likely to make.
3. Temporarily changes the way your brain works.

While your brain is busily switching its attention from one task to another, you’re actually losing time. It takes four times longer to recognize new things, so you’re not saving time. Multitasking actually costs time, not to mention the extra mistakes it causes. The retention rate in learning is also much lower when trying to multitask.

When there are two concurrent goals, the brain essentially divides its attention in half, so each task ends up being performed in a “half-brain” way.

In another study by scientists at



the Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (INSERM) in Paris, neuroscientist Etienne Koechlin found that study participants asked to perform three tasks not only would forget one of them on a regular basis, but they also made three times as many errors as when they attempted only two. Further, Professor Koechlin also confirmed that those who professed to be frequent media multitaskers actually performed worse on tests assessing the ability to switch from one task to the next. Plus, they had a harder time ignoring external distractions.

So, in an age when text messages regularly ping out at us and e-mails constantly summon our immediate attention, we may feel as if we're doing more than our predecessors—and in one way we are—but we actually may be getting less done in the process, in spite of all the technological advances. With this in mind, Julie Morgenstern, productivity expert and best-selling author of *Time Management from the Inside Out*, recently came out with a state-of-the-art guide for planning in the digital age, designed to help people make good time management

When there are two . . . goals, the brain essentially divides its attention in half, so each task ends up being performed in a “half-brain” way.

decisions. Interestingly enough, it involves an old-fashioned, paper-based system!

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?

Why not try working “smarter” by building “screen breaks” into your schedule for at least 1–3 hours at a time? You might decide to avoid e-mails for the first hour and last hour of the day and/or somehow limit the times and hours in which you check your devices.

When drawn to an enticing game that would consume your valuable time, just say no. If, deep-down, you feel that somehow you might just be “addicted” to social media and/or mobile devices, turn off the dinger and plan times to say to yourself “Leave it!” just as a dog trainer would command at that crucial moment of temptation in the life of a canine. If you can

make sure to give yourself time away from your “screens,” you may actually be more fulfilled.

CAN THIS HELP ME SPIRITUALLY AS WELL?


By choosing your technology time wisely, you can focus more productively. Programs such as Scripture Typer put handheld technology to good use, for the Bible itself is the best “text” the world has ever known. “The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Psalm 12:6). The key here is that the word of God committed to memory, written in the tables of the heart, fortifies against the distractions of the enemy.

“A distinguished man was once asked how it was possible

for him to accomplish such a vast amount of business. His answer was, ‘I do one thing at a time.’ . . .

“Henry Martyn, both as a man and a missionary, depended not a little upon his habits of regularity. To such an extent did he carry these, that he was known in the university as the student who never wasted an hour. . . . How many youth who might have become men of usefulness and power have failed because in early life they contracted habits of indecision which followed them through life to cripple all their efforts. Now and then they are filled with sudden zeal to do some great thing, but they leave their work half finished and it comes to nothing. Patient continuance in well doing is indispensable to success. . . .

“Be **thorough** in all you undertake. Rely constantly upon your Saviour; go to Him for wisdom, for courage, for strength of purpose, for everything you need.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 146. [Emphasis supplied.]

Do try performing one mental task at a time, rather than two or three. You may be pleasantly surprised. After all, just as we are not to serve the Lord with a divided heart, so likewise to divide tasks may readily cause “halfhearted” results. Let us echo instead the sentiment of the psalmist, “Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: **unite my heart** to fear thy name” (Psalm 86:11, emphasis supplied). 



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT *Seriously* BY E. G. WHITE

Were it not for the communication between heaven and earth, there would be no light in the world. Like Sodom and Gomorrah all would perish beneath the wrath of an offended God. But the world is not left in darkness. The long-suffering and mercy of God is still extended to the children of men. . . .

It is our privilege to stand with the light of heaven upon us. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. It was no easier for Enoch to live a righteous life in his day than it is for us at the present time. The world in Enoch's time was no more favorable to a growth in grace and holiness than it is now, but Enoch devoted time to prayer and communion with God, and this enabled him to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is his devotion to God that fitted him for translation.

We are living amid the perils of the last days, and we must receive our strength from the same source as did Enoch. We must walk with God. **A separation from the world is required of us. We cannot remain free from this pollution unless we follow the example of faithful Enoch and walk with God. But how many are slaves to the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.**

This is the reason why they are not partakers of the divine nature and do not escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. They are serving and honoring self. Their constant study is, What shall I eat, what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed. . . .

Every man, woman, and youth who professes the religion of Christ should realize the responsibility resting upon them. All should feel that this is an individual work, an individual warfare, an individual preaching of Christ in the daily practice. If each would realize this, and take hold of the work, we should be mighty as an army with banners. . . .

The command is given us, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate' (2 Corinthians 6:17). It is not for you to say, I have nothing to do with my neighbor; he is buried in the world; I am not his keeper. For this very reason you should have

something to say to him. The light given you, you should not hide under a bushel. You are not to keep it for yourself alone. . . .

If you think you can lay down the oars and still make your way upstream, you are mistaken. **It is only by earnest effort, by using the oars with all your might, that you can stem the current.** How many there are as weak as water, when they have a never-failing Source of strength. . . .

God will help us if we take hold of the help He has provided. "Let him take hold of My strength," He says, "that he may make peace with Me, and he shall make peace with Me" (Isaiah 27:5). This is a blessed promise. Many times, when I have been discouraged and almost in despair, I have come to the Lord with this promise, and said, "Let me take hold of Thy strength, that I may make peace with Thee; and I shall make peace with Thee." And as I have laid hold of the strength of God, I have found a peace which passeth understanding.

I know that the words I speak to you are truth, and that you need them. Oh, that you would arouse, and wrench yourself from the grasp of the enemy, that you would engage in the battle of life in earnest, putting on every piece of the armor, that you may war successfully against the wily foe. Satan is already weaving his net

about you, and ensnaring your soul. He does not wait for his prey to be brought to him. He goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. But does he always roar? No; when it serves his purpose best, he sinks his voice to the softest whisper, and, wrapped in garments of light, appears as an angel from heaven. Men have so little knowledge of his wiles, so little understanding of the mystery of iniquity, that the enemy out-generals them almost every time.

Many who have lived under the blazing light of truth act as though they had nothing to do. They watch another playing the game of life for the soul, and stand by as though they had nothing to do but watch how the game is carried on. God calls upon every one of you to take up life's burdens, and engage in the warfare as you have never done before.

You who are gossipers, who love to speak of the faults of this one and that one, arouse, I beg of you, and look into your own hearts. Take your Bibles, and go to God in earnest prayer. Ask Him to teach you to know your own heart, to understand your weakness, your sins and follies, in the light of eternity. Ask Him to show you yourself as you stand in the sight of heaven. This is the prayer we should offer.

**God calls upon every
one of you to take
up life's burdens, and
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never before.**

I would close up my instruments of music, and bowing before God, plead with Him as I had never pled before. In humility send your petition to heaven, and do not rest day or night until you can say, Hear what the Lord has done for me; until you can bear a living testimony, and tell of victories won. This is the time to sing the songs of Zion. . . .

I long for God. I hunger and thirst after righteousness. As the hart pants for the water brooks, my soul pants after God. I plead with Him for His people that He may send upon us the showers of His grace.

But this is an individual work. Every man is to build over against his own house. Do not think of any one's faults but your own. Oh, consider this, for here eternal interests are involved. You have nothing to do with the sins of others, but you have much to do with yourself. Act as though there was not another being in the universe but yourself and a pure and holy God."—*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, pp. 5-9. [Emphasis supplied.]

Bible ABC's

F

A Roman procurator in Paul's day (Acts 23:24).

A gift for the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:11).

The governor who succeeded him (Acts 24:27)

One of the plagues of Egypt (Exodus 8:2, 12).

The business in which Peter was engaged (Matthew 4:18).

The instrument of destruction used on Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24).

The first great catastrophe in natural history (Genesis 7:11-24).

Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law of this disease (Matthew 8:14, 15).

What Jesus called Herod Antipas (Luke 13:32).

How the Passover was celebrated (Leviticus 23:5, 6).

The following quiz will test your knowledge of certain Bible names and places which begin with the letters F and G. Some answers are easy, others are more challenging. After you go through them all, pick out the ones you could not answer. Look up the verse prayerfully and read the entire context, asking God to give you greater spiritual understanding from what you find.

Try to discover more about that subject and about God's love shining through it by using a concordance or Spirit of Prophecy index. It may take a bit more time, but this is what turns what might have seemed as only trivia into richer spiritual treasure. Enjoy!

G

The first son of Zilpah, Leah's maid (Genesis 30:9-11).

A country where Jesus delivered a man from a legion of devils (Luke 8:26-40).

A Pharisee whose wise words saved the lives of the apostles (Acts 5:34-40).

Elisha's servant was punished for covetousness (2 Kings 5:20-27).

The first born of Moses (Exodus 2:21, 22).

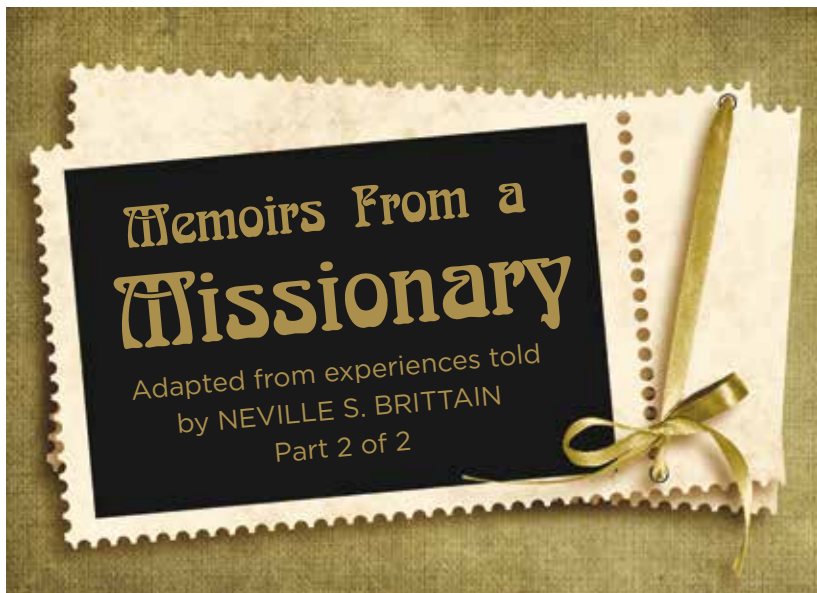
A nation whose envoys deceived Joshua (Joshua 9:3-27).

A heavenly messenger who spoke to Daniel, Zacharias, and Mary (Daniel 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26).

A city so wicked it had to be destroyed (Genesis 19:24, 25).

The defiant Philistine (1 Samuel 17:22-51).

"The place of a skull" (John 19:16-19).



In our last issue of the *Youth Messenger*, we read of how many years ago, this young man in Australia had recently been baptized into the SDA Reform Movement while attending missionary school.

WORKING AT THE HEALTH CLINIC

When Brother Weymark and I finished four years at Hebron Missionary School, he was sent to Victoria, and I was called to help in the health clinic in Sydney. My first job was as laundry boy. I thought that washing clothes was for girls, but I had the job of washing by hand, sheets and towels that had been used by the clients of the health center. It wasn't until later that we managed to get a washing machine.

At that time, Brethren Alex Macdonald and Ivan Smith began teaching us the basics of natural therapy: anatomy, physiology, nutrition, massage, and hydrotherapy—together with [the books] *The Ministry of Healing* and *Counsels on Health*.

Eventually I began to spend more time with the patients—learning to massage and to help look after the hydrotherapy department. There was a young sister who also spent much time in the steam and cold water part of the hydrotherapy department, and that is how this young lady and I got to know each other—while reading over nutrition notes.

However, there were times when I had to leave the clinic and travel with some of the other young brethren and went

canvassing. One day, while we were traveling on the highway south of Sydney, we saw a well-known bus broken down on the side of the road. We stopped to see if we could help. While the boys were all over and under the bus like bees on a honey pot, the brother who was the leader of the group went into the bus and told the passengers that these young men were training as missionaries. When the people heard that, they all dug into their pockets and gave a really good donation to the work. By that time, we had cleared a blocked gas line, and all were happy to be on their way again.

On another occasion we were working in Queensland. Friday afternoon came, and we pitched the tent to get ready for the Sabbath. While others were preparing potatoes and onions for a meal, I was lighting the paraffin stove. It had a paraffin tank in the center with a burner on either side. I lit one; and then, while lighting the other, a breeze came up and carried the fumes of the lighting fluid to the burner that was already alight and—poof—the fluid exploded in the bottle, it spewed from the neck of the bottle in a stream of liquid fire straight over the corner of the tent. Fortunately, one of the boys quickly picked up the large dish of water, potatoes, and onions, and he threw it over the burning tent. After the fire was out, we had the fun of gathering up the potatoes and onions and finishing the preparation of the

We worked only for accommodations and food and got help with clothing when needed.

meal. We spent a very thankful Sabbath—thankful that no one had been burned and that the damage to the tent was not too bad.

During this time we worked only for accommodations and food and got help with clothing when it was needed; but somehow it was similar to the Israelites. As Moses said: “Your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot” (Deuteronomy 29:5).

TWO BY TWO IN THE WEST

Sometime after that period I was sent to work with Brother Haynes in western Australia. There I made many wonderful experiences working with him; helping with Bible studies and canvassing gave me much needed experience. We had to battle with financial needs as usual. To try and make extra money to meet bank payments on the field property, we plowed up some of the land (something I had learned at Hebron) and planted melons. We planted a different variety to that usually grown in that part of the country; and when they were ready, we set up a stall on the side of the road and sold melons as if they were really going out of season.

Winter could be cold there; and one evening, when driving back from a Bible study at Fremantle, Brother Haynes began reminiscing about the problems of the pioneers. He said, "You know, Brother, we are very fortunate. Just think of the days when the pioneers went out and traveled with a horse and cart. They were considered fortunate when they had a rug over their knees, and here we drive in a nice warm car." I nodded in agreement—with an icy breeze blowing on my feet through a hole in the floor. 1937 Dodges didn't have heaters in those days. There are some now who wouldn't go for Bible studies even with a heater in the car. Are we becoming soft, or are we losing the missionary spirit?

In 1953, we crossed Australia by car for the conference session. It was quite an adventure in those days—about 1,000 miles without a town and a desert that was not very hospitable. What supplies were available could only be obtained from farmers about 150 miles apart. The road was so bad in some places that it was quicker to leave the holes and ruts and pick one's way through the salt bush. It took us ten days to complete the trip of 2300 miles; but now the beautiful road makes it possible to make the distance in three days, and there are gas stations all the way across. That conference was memorable for me, because soon afterwards I married the young lady from the hydrotherapy department (Betty Southwell).

We went back to western Australia for two more years before we were called back to Sydney to look after the clinic where we had trained. Four years later, worldwide financial problems also hit the work in Australia. At one stage, there was no money in the treasury to pay the workers so we left the work; and after two years of struggle, the way opened to enter the health work again. We were given the opportunity to join with a natural health





organization run by nonbelievers who wanted to work in the same lines as taught in *The Ministry of Healing*, page 127. During almost 14 years with that organization, we were able to take part in an ever-increasing circle of influence through lectures and assisting in organizational work in the Natural Therapy profession.

DISCOVERING SOMETHING MISSING

On the surface, others may have not have been aware of it, but in reality I still had a problem. I was a legalistic Pharisee. Near the end of my time with the “Hopewood Health Center,” I was reading the experience of John Wesley as recorded in *The Great Controversy*. I had read it before and enjoyed it immensely. But this time, it was different. I always had a difficulty relating Law and Grace; and it was still a bit of an

enigma. I would read James and Romans and then read Galatians with James and Romans in the back of my mind. I had to admit that I had difficulty there. But now, I saw that John Wesley and I had some things in common. He had been through a university, was ordained as a minister, and he had become a great Anglican preacher, but he didn’t know the joy of a relationship with Jesus Christ. After his experience with some Moravian missionaries, he became a changed man. But if you read carefully, you will see that it wasn’t his way of life that changed so much as his motive for that way of life. Take down your *Great Controversy* and read it for yourself right now (page 256):

“[John Wesley] continued his strict and self-denying life, not now as the **ground**, but the **result** of faith; not the **root**, but the **fruit** of holiness. The grace of God in

Christ is the foundation of the Christian's hope, and that grace will be manifested in obedience.” [Emphasis supplied.] There it is, obedience through love. A verse from Scripture came to my mind: “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). I had wondered about that little word “if,” and now I knew. Jesus put that little if there because He knew that there would be many, just like me, who would try to keep the commandments because they knew it to be right to do so. But that is not what He wants. He wants us to do what we know to be right for the best reason in the world—**because we love Him**. But to love Him, we must know Him. One day, when Jesus was talking with His Father and our Father, He said: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).



A DEEPER EXPERIENCE

There are many people in the world who know about the President of the United States. But they don't know him. Why? Because they don't live with him. And we might know about Jesus and our Father in heaven because we have been taught about Them; but we don't really know Them if we don't live with Them every day.

Do you love to talk about Jesus as your Friend? Or would you rather talk about the weather, or perhaps about your friends, or your car, or what happened to the local football team last week? If Jesus is your friend and you love Him, you will do anything you can to please Him because you love Him. That is the best reason for doing as He asks us.

Dear young people, will you love Him as John Wesley learned to do? I am glad I learned that if we love Him He will live with us; and the more we live with Him, the more we will love Him. Won't you do just that? It is easier than you think. Just bow your knees to Him in prayer, and tell Him just what you need. And Jesus will answer you because He loves you enough to want you to be His friend, not just now, but throughout Eternity.

In March 2014, at the age of 85, Bro. Neville S. Brittain, a faithful warrior for Christ, was laid to rest in the Lord—soon to resurrect at the glorious fulfillment of Revelation 14:13. 🌿

What about YOU?



Has reading about Bro. Brittain's experience at the missionary school inspired you? Maybe you'd like to attend a missionary school in Australia, too!

Elim Missionary College offers an intensive, short-term course designed to help prepare you for soul-winning. This training program is held at the SDA Reform Movement Australasian Union headquarters in Schofields in the province of New South Wales (and other field locations for the practical experience portions).

The course is ideal for people wishing to sharpen their skills for God's work. It provides instruction in doctrine, history, practical subjects, and field experience, and it is recommended to anyone—especially young people—who would like to be better equipped to give an answer for their faith and gain confidence in public speaking and witnessing.

The next Missionary Training Program is scheduled for **February 7–June 12, 2016**. That may seem like a long time from now, but it's essential to make your application in advance. It's not too soon to start planning and saving for this opportunity!

For more information, please contact:

**SDA Reform Movement
Missionary Training Program**

P.O. Box 132
Riverstone NSW 2765
AUSTRALIA

Phone: Australia: (02) 9627-7553
International: +61-2-9627-7553

Fax: Australia: (02) 9627-7554
International: +61-2-9627-7554

E-mail: emc@sdarm.org.au

*Share the joy of being a channel of blessing
as you work to bring souls to Christ!*

Savoring the Silence

When we think of people who have had a close relationship with God—so much so that they were able to go straight to Heaven without even dying—two names come to mind: Enoch and Elijah.

Enoch lived in a corrupt age. But he didn't let himself be polluted by his surroundings; he "walked with God" (Genesis 5:22). This wasn't in some kind of glassy-eyed daze, but in everyday life. His relationship with God grew through quiet hours spent in prayer. Like Jesus while on earth, Enoch invested quality time alone with God to be strong enough to resist temptation—and equipped enough to make a positive impact whenever he went out to face the world. His was a straight message with a prophecy foreseeing an event thousands of years ahead of his time—the second coming of Christ (Jude 14, 15). What an honor!

Now, what about Elijah? Here's another example of an amazing man of God. We've heard of how rain stopped, fire came down from Heaven, and rain came back all through the prayers of Elijah. But how did the Creator speak to this prophet? Was it always with a strong wind, earthquake, or fire? No, in 1 Kings 19:12, 13 we learn that God spoke to His child in "a still, small voice."

It's natural to expect that an awesome God would always speak in mighty, thunderous, dramatic, earth-shattering ways. But it's ignorant to assume that our all-powerful Creator limits Himself to such methods.

God often speaks in a still, small voice today. Often we need to hush out all other voices in order to hear it in silence. Why? Because other noise can interfere with our ability to know when God is speaking to us. Nearly everything seems to be clamoring for our attention to distract us. God loves us and wants to speak to us. He is a Gentleman in His approach; He is not pushy. He doesn't pound us over the head with a Bible—He invites us to read it for ourselves and attend consecrated worship services to hear it spoken. Then, as a result of what we learn, He speaks to our conscience. "Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions" (*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 120).

So let's treasure the quiet moments that make it easier for us to hear God speaking through His word—and then notice how He applies it to daily life through our conscience. Then we may truly discover that silence is golden—and will appreciate the still, small voice that we'll finally be able to hear. 🕊

Nature's Play

Not far up a hill
Nature's joys spill. . . .
Not far up the road
God's secrets unfold. . . .
A quite place of wonder
Lies waiting just yonder . . .
Where cares of life are left aside
And Earth's blanket is your guide,
Where a spider spins a web for his home,
High from where the wild animals roam,
Where a tarantula moves lightly across the land
Proclaiming life to be just grand,
Where you can take off your shoes and socks
And walk across the moss-covered rocks,
Where mushrooms grow everywhere on the ground
And life freely does abound,
Where the ripping waters of a pond
Seem to set in your heart a song.
Day and night you'd like to stay
To act a part in Nature's Play. . . .
But soon, the hill you must go back down,
Leaving behind the beauty there you've found. . . .
The tracks you leave behind
Will forever remain in your mind . . .
And you'll be sure to return to this place
Where God through Nature's Play has shown you His face.
—Veronica Collins