



Youth messenger

Vol. XXXVI, No. 3

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THE HANDW

PART 1 OF 2
BY STEPHEN N. HASKELL

ON 7

It was the last night of a nation's existence, but the people knew it not. Some slept in unconscious peace; some reveled and whirled away in thoughtless dance. In the dens of Babylon, men steeped in vice continued their wild orgies; in the palace halls Belshazzar feasted with a thousand of his lords. Music resounded through the brilliantly lighted rooms. The nobles lounged about the tables sumptuously spread. Court women and concubines of the king entered those halls. It was a feast of

Bacchus, and they drank to the health of the king on his throne. He ordered that the sacred vessels be brought from the temple to show that no being, human or divine, could raise a hand against him, the king of Babylon. The golden cup filled with wine was raised and the blessing of Bel invoked, but it never reached the lips of the half-intoxicated king. His hand was stayed. Those vessels had been molded by hands divinely skilled, and after heavenly models. Angels had watched them as they were taken from the temple at Jerusalem and carried to Babylon. Messengers divinely appointed had guarded them, and their very presence in the heathen temple was a witness of the God of the Jews. Some day the silence

WRITING THE WALL



would be broken. The desecration of His temple would not always remain unpunished.

That time came when the king lifted the goblet ^{56 margin.*} let filled with sparkling wine. His hand grew stiff, for on the opposite wall, over against the lights, was a bloodless hand, writing words of an unknown language. The wine cup fell to the floor; the king's countenance grew pale; he trembled violently, and his knees smote together until the gorgeous girdle of his loins loosened and fell aside. The loud laughter ceased, and the music died away. Terror-stricken, a thousand guests looked from the face of the king to the writing on the wall.

The Chaldean astrologers and soothsayers were called, but the writing was meaningless to them. They who taught all earthly languages failed to recognize the language of heaven. The four strange characters remained as at first seen, emblazoned in letters of fire on the wall.

For days the siege of Babylon had been on. The gates were closed and her walls were considered impregnable, while

within the city were provisions for twenty years. But, however strong she might seem, God had said, "Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her" (Jeremiah 51:53).

The strongest strongholds which man can build are crushed like a dying leaf when the hand of God is laid upon them. But this was a lesson which the rulers of Babylon had not yet learned. The father of iniquity, who was urging these rulers forward into deeper sin, had not yet owned the weakness of his cause. Heaven and unfallen worlds watched the progress of affairs in this great city, for it was the battleground of the two mighty forces of good and evil. Christ and Satan here contended.

^{57 margin.*} Angels, unseen by human eyes, as when they gathered the animals into the ark before the flood, had mustered forces against Babylon. God was using men who knew Him not as God, but who were true to principle and wished to do the right. To Cyrus, the leader of the Persian

* In these marginal citations, SNH outlines many other Bible references that bring additional light to the story.

army, which was now outside the city walls, God had said that He held his hand to make him strong. Before you “I will loose the loins of kings.” I will open those two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; “I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron” (Isaiah 45:1, 2).

While Belshazzar and his lords drank and feasted, the army of Cyrus was lowering the waters in the bed of the Euphrates, preparatory to entering the city.

As the Chaldeans were unable

to read the writing on the wall, the king's terror increased. He knew that this was a rebuke of his sacrilegious feast, and yet he could not learn the exact meaning. Then the queen mother remembered Daniel, who had “the spirit of the holy gods” (Daniel 5:11) and who had been made master of the wise men in the days of Nebuchadnezzar as the result of interpreting the king's dream.

Daniel, the prophet of God, was called to the banquet room. As he came before Belshazzar, the monarch promised to make him third ruler in the kingdom if he would interpret the writing. The prophet, with the quiet dignity of a servant of the Most High God, stood before the gorgeous, terror-stricken throng that bore evidence of intemperate feasting and wicked revelry.

In Israel, children were named under the inspiration ^{58 margin.*} of the Spirit, and the name was an expression of character. When God changed a name, as in the case of Abraham, Jacob, or Peter, it was because of a change of character in the individual. True to the name given him by his mother, Daniel—God's judge—again appears to vindicate the truth. Nebuchadnezzar had called him Belteshazzar, in honor of the Babylonian god Bel, but to the last this Hebrew, who knew the Lord, remained true to his God-given name, as shown in the twelfth verse of this chapter. He did not speak with flattering words, as




the professedly wise men of the kingdom had done, but he spoke the truth of God. It was a moment of intensity, for there was but a single hour in which to make known the future. Daniel was now an old man, but he sternly disclaimed all desire for rewards or honor, and proceeded to review the history of Nebuchadnezzar, and the Lord's dealings with that ruler—his dominion and glory, his punishment for pride of heart, and his subsequent acknowledgment of the mercy and power of the God who created the heavens and the earth. He rebuked Belshazzar for his departure from true principles, and for his great wickedness and pride.

“And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; . . . and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified” (Daniel 5:22, 23). Straightforward and strong were the words of Daniel. Belshazzar had trodden on sacred ground; he had laid unholy hands on holy things; he had severed the ties which bind heaven and earth together; and there was no way for that life-giving Spirit of God to reach him or his followers. Day by day his breath had been given him, a symbol of the spiritual breath, but he praised and thanked the gods of wood and stone. His every motion had been by virtue of the power of

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the God of heaven, but he had prostituted that power to an unholy cause. “Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written” (Verse 24). What he could not see written in his own breath and muscles, what he could not read in his own heartbeats, God wrote in mystic characters on the palace wall, over against the candlestick.

The people waited with bated breath as Daniel turned to the writing on the wall, and read the message traced by the angel hand. The hand had been withdrawn, but four terrible words remained. The prophet announced their meaning to be: “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN: . . . God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it: . . . Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting: . . . Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians” (Verses 25–28).—*The Story of Daniel the Prophet*, pp. 68–73. 



PART 3 OF 4
BY GERSON ROBLES
[Emphasis added throughout.]

JESUS CHRIST: THE SINNER'S ADVOCATE

Before the world began, and by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ on behalf of sinners, God made Him a Mediator between God and the human race.

"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4).

This is why in Genesis, as soon as Adam and Eve sinned, we see the Lord searching for them. An Advocate had already been appointed for such a crisis.

"And **[Adam and Eve]** heard **the voice of the Lord God** walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And **the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?**" (Genesis 3:8, 9).

"Where art thou?" Did God know where Adam and Eve were? Of course He did. I hear immense pity in the tones of this question.

I don't hear a condemnatory tone in it. I hear sympathy, I hear love, I hear the tact that is born of divine love. I hear immense gentleness expressed towards a man and a woman trembling under the fear of guilt. I hear an Advocate speaking. I hear One that draws near to help in time of need.

As we follow the dialogue between God, Adam and his wife, we see that before a curse was ever pronounced upon them, God promised to deliver them from the power of sin. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed" (Genesis 3:15). This is an Advocate speaking. This is someone restoring a broken relationship. This is someone making "at-one-ment," to be "one" again.

So this is *why* we needed an atonement.

WHAT QUALIFIED JESUS TO BE OUR ADVOCATE?

Why was Jesus alone qualified to be our Advocate and High Priest in the atonement? There are two qualifying points we should consider here:

CHRIST'S HUMANITY AND HIS SACRIFICE AND CHRIST'S TEMPTATIONS AND SUFFERINGS

CHRIST'S HUMANITY AND HIS SACRIFICE

As we read the following verses, you'll see that Jesus was qualified to be our High Priest because He became one of us—and as one of us, He offered Himself up as a sacrifice for sin.

"Wherefore **when he cometh into the world**, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. [In Gethsemane, Christ prayed, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" Matthew 26:39]. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: **But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God**" (Hebrews 10:5-12).

You see, it was the will of God that Christ should be made a sacrifice for sin, and this qualified Jesus to be our High Priest and



Advocate. He became human to offer up Himself as the Lamb of God and in His office of High Priest, He is presenting the merits of His own sacrifice.

He was “the **Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**” (Revelation 13:8). Not in reality before the cross, but in pledged form was He slain before the cross. But a pledge of God is as good as real, for God cannot lie. It was necessary for Christ only to die once for all time, and it was as though He had died always to sin since the foundation of the world. His death on the cross is just as real today as it was 2,000 years ago upon the hills of Golgotha—for John saw “in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain” (Revelation 5:6). For this reason, Christ can be our Advocate.

“Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then

must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now **once** in the end of the world hath he appeared **to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**” (Hebrews 9:25, 26).

CHRIST'S TEMPTATIONS AND SUFFERINGS

The other reason Christ could be our Advocate is because of His temptations and sufferings while He lived upon the earth. This qualified Him to be merciful and compassionate with sinners and at the same time remain faithful in things pertaining to God.

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, **that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.** For in that **he himself hath suffered** being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:17, 18). Amen! 🕊

A Bible and Spirit of Prophecy
compilation, with comments by
PETER D. LAUSEVIC
[Emphasis added throughout.]

WHAT IS PRESUMPTION?

HOW MAY IT INVOLVE ME? PART 3

In the last two issues of the *Youth Messenger*, we discussed the sin of presumption as a counterfeit of true faith and explained how often it is triggered by pride. Now, another question comes to mind:

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT LEAD TO PRESUMPTION?

1. Doubt can lead a person to the sin of presumption, “for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23).

A serious warning was given by God through Ellen G. White, which she related to a man guilty of presumption: “Brother Hull, you were shown me under the soothing influence of a fascination which will prove fatal unless the spell is broken. You have parleyed with Satan, and reasoned with him, and tarried upon forbidden

ground, and have exercised your mind in things which were too great for you, and **by indulging in doubts and unbelief have attracted evil angels around you, and driven from you the pure and holy angels of God.**

If you had steadfastly resisted Satan’s suggestions and sought strength from God with a determined effort, you would have broken every fetter, driven back your spiritual foe, come closer to God, and triumphed in His name. I saw that **it was presumption in you to go forth to meet a spiritualist when you were yourself enshrouded and bewildered by clouds of unbelief.** You went to battle with Satan and his host without an armor, and have been grievously wounded, and are insensible to your wound. I greatly fear that the thunders and

lightnings of Sinai would fail to move you. You are in Satan's easy chair and do not see your fearful condition and make an effort to escape. If you do not arouse and recover yourself from the snare of the devil, you must perish. The brethren and sisters would save you, but I saw that they could not. You have something to do; you have a desperate effort to make, or you are lost. I saw that **those who are under the bewitching influence of spiritualism know it not. You have been charmed and mesmerized, yet you do not know it,** and therefore do not make the least effort to come to the light.”—

Testimonies, vol. 1, pp. 428, 429.

As mentioned in the previous articles, what is the difference between faith and presumption?

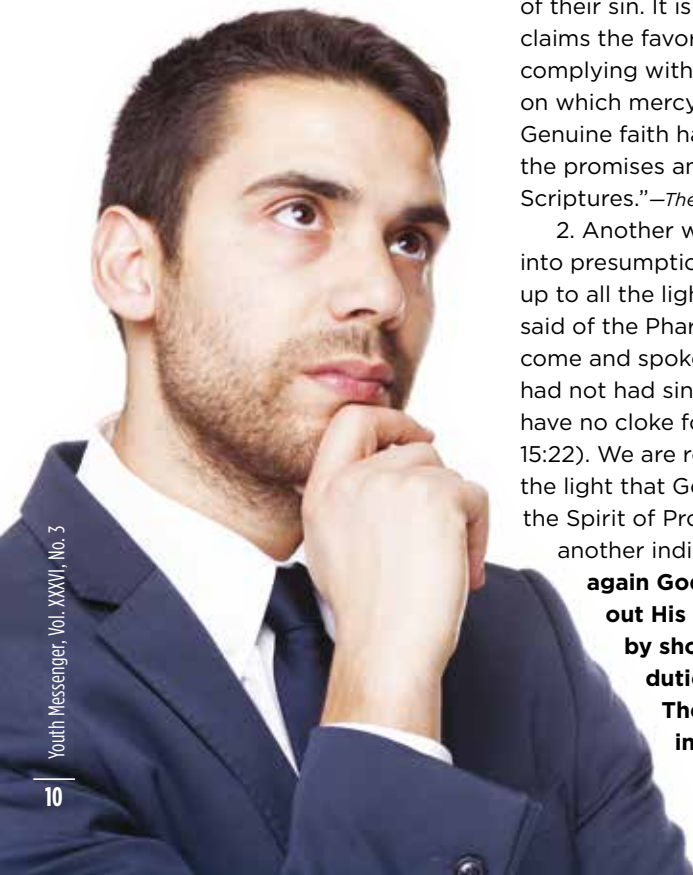
“Faith is in no sense allied to presumption. Only he who has true faith is secure against presumption. For presumption is Satan’s counterfeit of faith.

Faith claims God’s promises and brings forth fruit in obedience.

Presumption also claims the promises but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression. Faith would have led our first parents to trust the love of God and to obey His commands. Presumption led them to transgress His law, believing that His great love would save them from the consequence of their sin. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions on which mercy is to be granted. Genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 126.

2. Another way that we can fall into presumption is by not living up to all the light we have. Jesus said of the Pharisees, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin” (John 15:22). We are responsible for all the light that God gives us. Again, the Spirit of Prophecy warned

another individual: **“Again and again God has stretched out His hand to save you by showing you your duties and obligations. These duties change in character with**



the increase of light. When the light shines, making manifest and reproof the errors that were undiscovered, there must be a corresponding change in the life and character. The mistakes that are the natural result of blindness of mind are, when pointed out, no longer sins of ignorance or errors of judgment; but **unless there are decided reforms in accordance with the light given, they then become presumptuous sins.** The moral darkness that surrounds you will become more dense; your heart will become harder and harder, and you will be more offensive in the sight of God. You do not realize the great peril you are in, the danger there is that in your case the light will become entirely obscured, veiled in complete darkness. When the light is received and acted upon, you will be crucified to sin, being dead indeed unto the world, but alive to God. Your idols will be abandoned, and your example will be on the side of self-denial rather than that of self-indulgence.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 435, 436.

“With the Bible in our hands we ought all to know and practice the truth. But **some do not wish to change their faith or course of action, and argue that if they are only honest they will be saved. Such will be in great danger of committing the sin of presumption, of not living up to all the light they have.** Critical self-examination, united with a diligent searching of the

“Faith claims God’s promises and brings forth fruit in obedience.”

Scriptures and earnest prayer, is essential, not that some way may be found to evade the cross, but that they may be led into all truth however much self-denial it may cost, and however inconvenient it may be to obey.”—*The Signs of the Times*, July 22, 1880.

3. We can also become guilty of presumption by trying to excuse our sins. This is a very dangerous practice. “One presumptuous act, one deed in disregard of God’s expressed will, lost for Adam his beautiful Eden home and opened the floodgates of iniquity and woe upon our world; and yet men will declare that God is not particular, and does not require perfect obedience to His law. The precepts of Jehovah are as unchangeable as His eternal throne. **To excuse sin on the plea that God is lax in His government is dishonoring to the great Governor of the universe and perilous to man.** It is an attempt to belittle His requirements and to take away the force of law. Those who advocate such doctrine place themselves in harmony with the first great rebel,

and however high their professions of religion, Christ pronounces them ‘workers of iniquity.’ They are saying to the sinner, ‘It shall be well with thee in thy disobedience and transgression,’ as said the arch-deceiver in the garden of Eden.”—*Ibid.*, December 15, 1887.

4. In referring to the temptations presented to Christ, in *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 372, we are told that “pride of display” also leads to presumption. What did Christ teach us to pray regarding temptation?

Most of us already know the answer: “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from

evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” (Matthew 6:13).

What type of sin is it to deliberately place ourselves in the way of temptation? “Often when Satan has failed of exciting distrust, he succeeds in leading us to **presumption**. If he can cause us **to place ourselves unnecessarily in the way of temptation**, he knows that the victory is his. God will preserve all who walk in the path of obedience; but to depart from it is to venture on Satan’s ground. There we are sure to fall. The Saviour has bidden us, ‘Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation’ (Mark 14:38).

Meditation and prayer would keep us from rushing unbidden

into the way of danger, and thus we should be saved from many a defeat.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 126.

How did Satan try to lead Christ into presumption? “Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. . . .

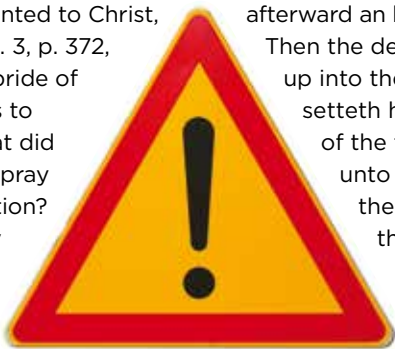
Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee:

and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matthew 4:1, 2, 5–7).

VICTORY PROMISED

In the wilderness, Jesus was tempted and was victorious on three great points: Appetite, presumption, and love of the world. The temptations which we also face are likewise based on these three points. It is not usually that hard for us to see when we are being tempted on appetite or love of the world. But presumption can be a little more subtle:

“The sin of presumption lies close beside the virtue of perfect faith and confidence in God. Satan



flattered himself that he could take advantage of the humanity of Christ to **urge Him over the line of trust to presumption**. Upon this point many souls are wrecked. **Satan tried to deceive Christ through flattery**. He admitted that Christ was right in the wilderness in His faith and confidence that God was His Father, under the most trying circumstances. He then urged Christ to give him one more proof of His entire dependence upon God, one more evidence of His faith that He was the Son of God, by casting Himself from the Temple. He told Christ that if He was indeed the Son of God He had nothing to fear; for angels were at hand to uphold Him. Satan gave evidence that he understood the Scriptures by the use he made of them.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 282.

Young people, beware of those who may try to trick you by flattery! Some may even place Scripture texts as bait in their trap. But whatever they may try, do you remember the promise that we can claim? “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

CONCLUSION

How can we avoid the sin of presumption in its various forms?

“Meditation and prayer would keep us from rushing unbidden into the way of danger.”

“Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38). How do we do this? “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7).


“We need to study the character of the motives that prompt us to action in the light of the law of God, in order that we may be made aware of our deficiencies; but while the human agent may see his sins, he is not to become discouraged, although he finds himself condemned by the precepts of righteousness. He is to see and to realize the sinfulness of sin, to repent, and to have faith in Christ as his personal Saviour. It is never safe for us to feel that we are possessed of virtues, and that we may congratulate ourselves on our excellences of character and our present state of purity and piety. **David often triumphed in God, and yet he dwelt much upon his own unworthiness and sinfulness.** His conscience was not

**"You are unsafe
unless you hold the
hand of Christ."**

asleep or dead. 'My sin,' he cries, 'is ever before me' (Psalm 51:3). He did not flatter himself that sin was a matter with which he had nothing to do, and that should not concern him. As he saw the depths of deceit in his heart, he was deeply disgusted with himself, and prayed that God would keep him back by his power from the presumptuous sins, and cleanse him from secret faults.

"It is not safe for us to close our eyes and harden our conscience so that we shall not see or realize our sins. We need to cherish the instruction we have had in regard to the hateful character of sin, in order that we may truly confess and forsake our sins. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9). Are you willing to be cleansed from all unrighteousness? Is it your purpose to press forward, but not in your own human strength, toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus? **Keep the fear of the Lord always before you.** Your only hope is in making Jesus your counselor."—*The Youth's Instructor*, July 5, 1894.

"Under the old covenant, there were many offenses of a daring, presumptuous character, for which there was no atonement specified by law. In the new and better covenant, Christ has fulfilled the law for the transgressors of law, if they receive Him by faith as a personal Saviour. 'As many as received *him*, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' Mercy and forgiveness are the reward of all who come to Christ trusting in His merits to take away their sins. In the better covenant we are cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ." —*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 931.

"Joseph bore the test of character in adversity, and the gold was undimmed by prosperity. He showed the same sacred regard for God's will when he stood next the throne as when in a prisoner's cell. Joseph carried his religion everywhere, and this was the secret of his unwavering fidelity. As representative men you must have the all-pervading power of true godliness. I tell you, in the fear of God, your path is beset by dangers which you do not see and do not realize. You must hide in Jesus. You are unsafe unless you hold the hand of Christ. **You must guard against everything like presumption and cherish that spirit that would suffer rather than sin.** No victory you can gain will be so precious as that gained over self."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 544. 



PART 2 OF 2
BY ELLEN G. WHITE

WORDS TO THE YOUNG

If it falls to your lot to prepare the meals, make careful calculations, and give yourself all the time necessary to prepare the food, and set it on the table in good order, and on exact time. To have the meal ready five minutes earlier than the time you have set is more commendable than to have it five minutes later. But if you are under the control of slow, dilatory movements, if your habits are of a lazy order, you will make a long job out of a short one; and it is the duty of those who are slow, to reform, and to become more expeditious. If they will, they can overcome their fussy, lingering habits. In washing dishes, they may be careful, and at the same time do quick work. Exercise the will to this end, and the hands will move with dispatch.

When I have been looking for a girl to do my housework, and a certain person was spoken of, those who had her in their employ have said, "O, she will not suit you, because she is so very slow. She will try your patience, and you will have to pay out more money for having your work done in a sluggish manner, than you would have to pay for having it done as it should be." Another would say, "O, she has no method. You will need someone to be brains for her; for she has not cultivated herself in lines of caretaking. Someone will always have to direct her what to do. She has no breadth of mind, no capacity to comprehend what is involved in being an acceptable housekeeper." Of one girl whom I employed, I was told that she would sit down in the midst of her

unfinished work, when the dishes were not washed, or the beds made, and forget her duties while she read a book or a newspaper. In this way she would spend hours of time that should have been employed in doing the work for which she was paid. The house would be left in confusion for hours after it should have been in perfect order, because of this untidy habit. Of another whom I thought of employing. I learned that she was disrespectful to those who employed her, unless she took a fancy to them. Those whom she fancied, she would serve to her utmost, and the friends whom she chose, who flattered and approved her course, received her affection

and favors. But

I reasoned,

“If she is a
Christian,
she will


certainly take counsel and advice.” A sorrowful expression came over the face of the person to whom I was speaking, as she said, “I am afraid you will be disappointed. If you seek to show her where she is erring, she will insist that she is doing the best she knows how, and instead of correcting her faults, will take on the air of one who is much injured. She does not respect authority and will keep up rebellion in her mind, which, if not expressed in words, will be plainly revealed in her countenance. She will not keep her opinions to herself but will freely tell others what she thinks about those who seek to correct her errors.”

Another defect that has caused me much uneasiness and trouble is the habit some girls have of letting their tongues run, wasting precious time in talking of worthless things. While girls give

their attention to talk, their work drags behind. These matters have been looked upon as little things, unworthy of notice. Many are deceived as to what constitutes a little thing. Little things have an important relation to the great whole. God does not disregard the infinitely little things that have to do with the welfare of the human family. He is the owner of the whole man. Soul, body, and spirit are His. God gave His only begotten Son for the body as well as the soul, and our entire life belongs to God, to be consecrated to His service, that through the exercise of every faculty He has given, we may glorify Him.

Let no one say, "I cannot overcome my defects of character;" for if this is your decision, then you cannot have eternal life. The impossibility is all in your will. If you *will not*, that constitutes the *cannot*. The real difficulty is the corruption of an unsanctified heart and an unwillingness to submit to the will of God. When there is a determined purpose born in your heart to overcome, you will have a disposition to overcome and will cultivate those traits of character that are desirable and will engage in the conflict with steady, persevering effort. You will exercise a ceaseless watchfulness over your defects of character; and will cultivate right practices in little things. The difficulty of overcoming will be lessened in proportion as the heart is

sanctified by the grace of Christ. Earnest, persevering effort will place you on the vantage ground of victory; for he who strives to overcome in and through the grace of Christ will have divine enlightenment, and will understand how great truths can be brought into little things, and religion can be carried into the little as well as into the large concerns of life.

The commandments of God are exceeding broad, and the Lord is not pleased to have His children disorderly, to have their lives marred by defects, and their religious experience crippled, their growth in grace dwarfed, because they persist in cherishing hereditary and cultivated deficiencies in wrong habits that will be imitated by others, and thus be perpetuated. If the grace of Christ cannot remedy these defects, what, then, constitutes transformation of character? "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; . . . who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, without having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (1 Corinthians 1:4, 8; Ephesians 5:25-27). —*The Youth's Instructor*, September 7, 1893. 



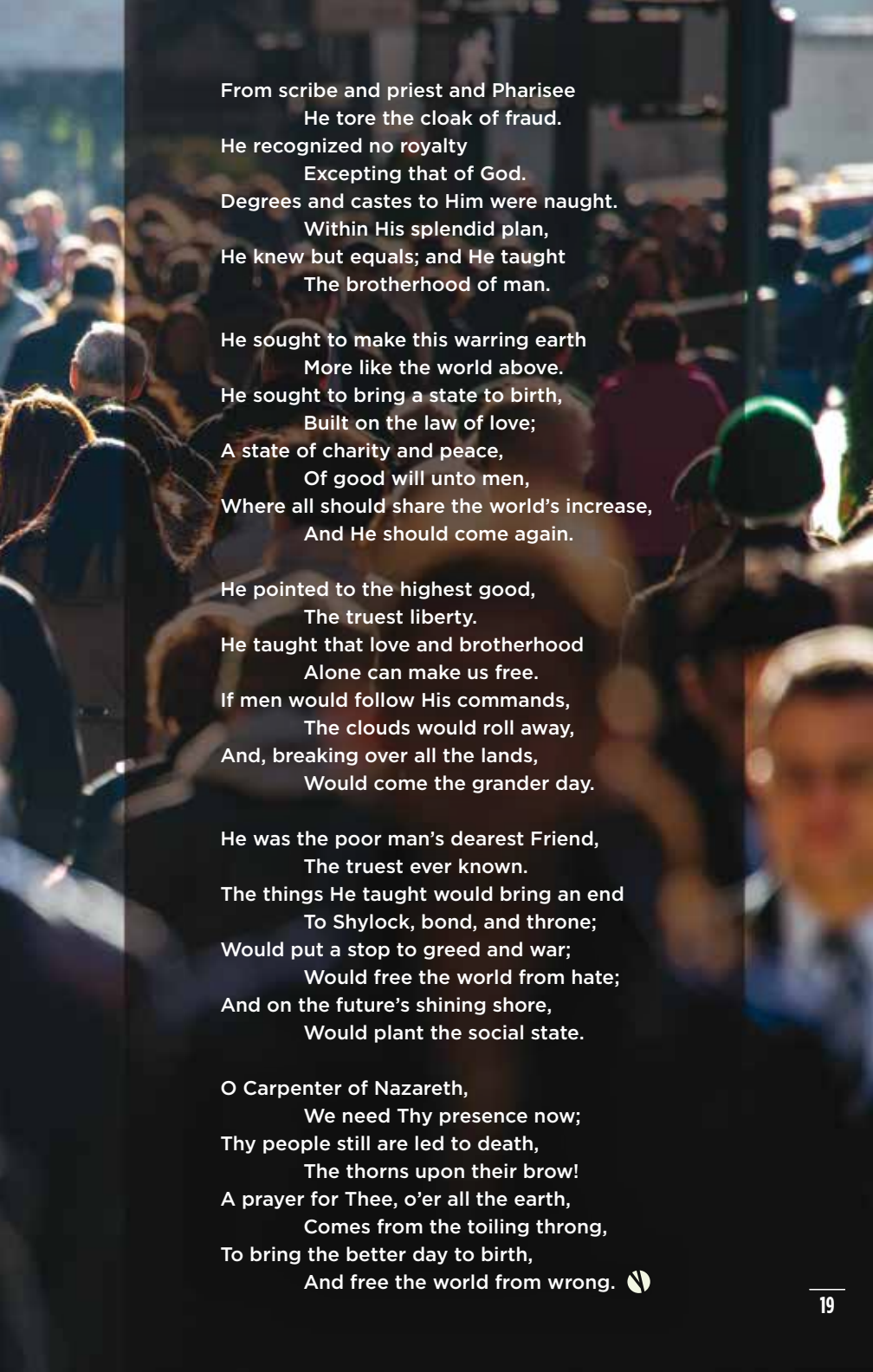
THE PEOPLE'S *Friend*

All hail the Christ of Nazareth,
Who came to banish strife.
He took the bitterness from death,
The hopelessness from life.
He gave to faith a mode of speech
It ne'er had known before;
But, best of all, He came to preach
The Gospel to the poor.

Although the dawn of glory broke
Upon His natal morn,
He came from poor and humble folk,
And He was lowly born.
He was a common carpenter;
He labored for His bread.
On all the earth He had not where
To lay His weary head.

In humble guise and simple dress,
He went from place to place.
He deigned to share earth's wretchedness,
To save a fallen race.
Although He left a legacy,
The richest ever known,
He lived Himself to poverty,
With naught to call His own.

Unto the toiling multitude
He opened heaven's gate,
But said the rich should not intrude
Into that blest estate.
He said that Mammon's sordid slaves
Could never be the Lord's;
He smote the money-changing knaves
With whip of plaited cord.




From scribe and priest and Pharisee
He tore the cloak of fraud.
He recognized no royalty
Excepting that of God.
Degrees and castes to Him were naught.
Within His splendid plan,
He knew but equals; and He taught
The brotherhood of man.

He sought to make this warring earth
More like the world above.
He sought to bring a state to birth,
Built on the law of love;
A state of charity and peace,
Of good will unto men,
Where all should share the world's increase,
And He should come again.

He pointed to the highest good,
The truest liberty.
He taught that love and brotherhood
Alone can make us free.
If men would follow His commands,
The clouds would roll away,
And, breaking over all the lands,
Would come the grander day.

He was the poor man's dearest Friend,
The truest ever known.
The things He taught would bring an end
To Shylock, bond, and throne;
Would put a stop to greed and war;
Would free the world from hate;
And on the future's shining shore,
Would plant the social state.

O Carpenter of Nazareth,
We need Thy presence now;
Thy people still are led to death,
The thorns upon their brow!
A prayer for Thee, o'er all the earth,
Comes from the toiling throng,
To bring the better day to birth,
And free the world from wrong. 

ORGANIZATION

"LET ALL THINGS BE DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER"

(1 CORINTHIANS 14:40).



THE PROBLEM

We really don't hear too much about it from the pulpit, but it is an essential part of our worship and Christian experience. If it matters to God, why should it not matter to His children?

We just read that all things are to be done **decently** and **in order**.

WHAT DOES THE LORD EXPECT FROM HIS PEOPLE TODAY?

"Order is heaven's first law, and the Lord desires His people to give in their homes a representation of the order and harmony that pervade the heavenly courts. Truth never places her delicate feet in a path of uncleanness or impurity. Truth does not make men and women coarse

or rough and untidy. **It raises all who accept it to a high level.**

Under Christ's influence, a work of constant refinement goes on.

"Special direction was given to the armies of Israel that everything in and around their tents should be clean and orderly, lest the angel of the Lord, passing through the encampment, should see their uncleanness. Would the Lord be particular to notice these things? **He would; for the fact is stated, lest in seeing their uncleanness, He could not go forward with their armies to battle.**

He who was so particular that the children of Israel should cherish habits of cleanliness, will not sanction any impurity in the homes of His people today. God looks with disfavor on uncleanness of any kind. How can we invite Him into our homes unless all is neat and clean and pure?"—*Counsels on Health*, p. 101. [Emphasis added.]

THE EXTREME

"Cleanliness, neatness, and order are indispensable to the

AND CLEANLINESS



proper management of the household. But when the mother makes these the all-important duties of her life, and devotes herself to them, to the neglect of the physical development and the mental and moral training of her children, she makes a sad mistake.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 21.

The Christian life is about balance. Extremes do not work. We tend to be extremists.

But following are some good examples:



1. THE ORDERLY TENTS

The prophet Balaam could not curse Israel. Why? “Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw

Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him” (Numbers 24:2). The camp of Israel was in such amazing order that Balaam knew that God’s blessing was upon the people.



2. THE ORDERLINESS OF JOSEPH

Joseph was amazingly organized even under very difficult circumstances—in a dungeon! “The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and

that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper” (Genesis 39:22, 23).



3. THE CAREFULNESS OF JESUS

We can just look at creation and see how orderly the planets line up, the flowers’ symmetry, and many other works. And after His resurrection from the tomb, Jesus even took the time to fold the sheets.

“And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself” (John 20:7).



“It was Christ Himself who had placed those graveclothes with such care. When the mighty angel came down to the tomb, he was joined by another, who with his company had been keeping guard over the Lord’s body. As the angel from heaven rolled away the stone, the other entered the tomb, and unbound the wrappings from the body of Jesus. **But it was the Saviour’s hand that folded each, and laid it in its place.** In His sight who guides alike the star and the atom, there is nothing unimportant. **Order and perfection are seen in all His work.**”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 789. [Emphasis added.]

“Those who, after receiving the truth, make no change in word or deportment, in dress or surroundings, are living to themselves, not to Christ. They

have not been created anew in Christ Jesus, unto purification and holiness.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 22.


HOW SHOULD THIS BE DONE?

If you see that you need to reform on this point, you don’t need to do everything today or tomorrow.

	ASK FOR GOD’S HELP
	MAKE A SCHEDULE
	GO ROOM BY ROOM
	GO CAR BY CAR

CONCLUSION

We are representing God in this earth. If we don’t do His work, we are cheating ourselves.

“Correct all that is lax or careless in your speech or your habits. Do not pass this over as a matter of little consequence. Wherever you are, keep your room clean and tidy. Let no dirt of rubbish accumulate, ‘lest the Lord pass by and see your uncleanness.’ Christ is pure and holy and undefiled. Do not grieve the heavenly angels by cherishing untidy, shiftless habits. It rests with you yourselves to decide whether you will be accepted by the Lord as vessels unto honor, fit for His use.”—*The Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 297. 

MAY I PLEASE GET A LIKE?

PART 2

BY GABRIEL SERBAN



○ Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether” (Psalm 139:1-4).

Recently I had an interesting experience. I was looking online for some car parts for my dad;

when I found what I needed, because the seller’s information was hidden, I texted him that I was interested in those things, letting him know all the necessary information to be able to contact me back. And when he called, he addressed me like this: “Pastor Serban?” to which I replied, “I am not a pastor, but how did you know I am working in this field?” “Very simple,” he said, “I’ve googled your name, and in a moment I saw all the posts

about you, your sermons, your Facebook profile—and you're there, and the people are able to get to know you."

This is not a tragic situation, but there are more critical things that may happen that may endanger your safety. A human resource manager seeking to interview applicants to employ at a company was really surprised when, at a certain moment within a two-week interval, two persons came into his office asking for a job with nearly the exact same resumé (CV). The only thing different was the personal information, but all the contents regarding the specialization details, studies, and competency were the same—identical. Something was clearly suspect.

IMITATION

Today, in the virtual world, you can be theoretically everything you'd like to be and capable of anything. There are people that imitate other people, and you'll see often that their own real pictures are not posted but the pictures of those whom they are imitating. This imitation may become damaging. Every one of us tends to imitate someone up to a certain age—and some maybe throughout the lifetime, as we learn through imitation. But the question comes when someone is trying to be someone else and his or her own identity is suppressed, and thereby the identity is cleaved again.

This next point is like a

challenge for you. Please ask yourself if that Gabriel Serban from YouTube or from other site of the virtual world is the same person, even in the real world. Ask yourself this question! If not (if he is a different person), that may be a problem of identity. On the surface it looks as if this would be a problem of identity—but in reality it may actually be a problem of integrity. What does "integrity" mean? Integrity is a personal trait of character that determines the balance and unity of a person. To be a person of integrity means to be honest, upright, correct, and incorruptible. People of integrity are the same wherever they are, in any life circumstance they find themselves.

There is a principle I have seen some people using when they are dealing with the virtual world: "If I want to go online, before I go, let me ask myself: Why do I want to go online? What do I actually want to do there? Why do I need to go online?" Get used to asking yourself these questions and answer them! If you are online, then go straight ahead and do the things you purpose to do. Otherwise you're in danger of being distracted by other websites, navigating all over and nowhere, spending an hour, two hours, precious hours that you're losing forever—and ultimately, what did you achieve from it? And time is a talent that God will require an account from us. He will ask us about the way we have used it.



There's another danger that can be a threat to integrity: Many people go online when they are tired, thinking that it may relax them. But the problem when you are tired has your guard down already, the human psyche is exhausted, and at the very moment when the reason filter does not naturally work well, the dangers are doubled, and the level of peril becomes unknown. It's like that wise advice which says: "You should not go shopping when you're hungry!" Why not? The risk is high that you will place more in the shopping cart than what you actually need because your hunger impelled you to do it. We can transpose this idea to the virtual world as well.

Another factor about integrity at risk is that many are tempted to indulge in plagiarism. There's often a tendency to assimilate

things (published works) that do not belong to you and to pretend that they are yours. The Internet is full of resources that you can use in a rational manner—as information, as an argument, or as a justification to a personal idea that you'd like to sustain. But by taking partial or entire works that you hesitate to put between quotation marks (" "), you give the impression that all that work is yours, but that's an untruth.

(IM)MORALITY

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of immorality on the Internet is pornography. Everywhere we meet all kinds of pop-up "windows" that may take you there. It seems that nearly everywhere, directly or subliminally, the immorality message is transmitted through all kinds of advertisements and video

clips. Not everyone is affected to the same extent by seeing such scenes. But certainly, all are affected somewhat. Without realizing it, these obscene images mar our souls; and we come to the point when we think life is too disgusting for us. Nothing can satisfy us anymore; everything seems pointless. The message of the seventh commandment of the Decalogue warns us not only of the actual sin itself (like carrying it out in reality), but includes even the staining of our souls with immoral thoughts, thoughts that contribute to the degradation of the human being as being equal to the act itself.

Let us pray to God that we may overcome this tendency and work with Him to reinforce the “fence” that can keep us safe. Let us pray for those entrapped in the chains of this sin that is practiced so much in these last days, especially online. The psalmist prayed, “O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought

afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.”

The One that knows the human’s paths, knows exactly what you’re doing in the moment when you’re in the front of your computer. Even when you think there is no one to see you, God is right there and knows everything. Nothing can be hidden from His sight. The same is happening in the virtual world as well. Nothing is deleted. Anytime, someone can check just through a click, everything you’ve visited, everything you did on the virtual world. Let’s think of this as something that is to our advantage. There is Someone that, for our good, jealously wants us to be His own. He knows that when we choose to walk away from Him, through our attitude, through our inappropriate paths, we’ll inevitably become slaves to evil. It’s like in our natural life, a child does not understand why the loving parent would deprive him or her from such desired things at that time. But when we



grow, with the passing of time we come to understand that those restrictions were for our own good. God's children will likewise thank their heavenly Father for all the "restrictions" He places before them.

In the light of these words, I'd like to reflect on some points:

If, after 10 years you look back to see all the "likes," all the posts you liked at this moment, today, and see everything you did on the virtual world, will you still "Like" them? If not, there may be a problem.

If everyone you love, your beloved, will get the opportunity to see everything you're doing on the virtual world, without any veil, will they give you a "Like"?

If God who can see everything in your virtual world, would make Himself visible there, do you think He would find pleasure in your visited pages, your conversations, and in your interested fields?


May I get a "Like," please? If I want a "Like" from God, this has to determine my behavior, not only

in real life, but in the virtual one as well. "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. A froward heart shall

depart from me: I will not know a wicked person" (Psalm 101:2-4).

The Internet is a tool through which we can get to know God better, or evil. If it is used in a good way, there are a lot of blessings; if it is used in a wrong way, it becomes a problem that may sever us from our Creator, and it will get harder and harder for us to return. David said: "I will not know a wicked person."

May the Holy Spirit give us the necessary wisdom and strength to keep our

consciousness alert, to be able to stay aside, far away from the evil temptations! 



BY JULIA LOOMIS

THE OVERCOMER

WHO IS AN OVERCOMER?

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John 5:1, 4).

WITH WHAT WEAPON DOES A PERSON OVERCOME?

"And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (Verse 4).

WHAT IS IT TO OVERCOME THE WORLD?

Jesus said to His disciples, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33), and it is written also that He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

HOW DID JESUS OVERCOME?

He said, "I do nothing of myself" (John 8:28). "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John 14:10).

HOW DO HIS FOLLOWERS OVERCOME?

Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (John 15:4, 5).

WHAT KIND OF FAITH OVERCOMES THE WORLD?

"Faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6).


HOW DOES THIS LOVE WORK?

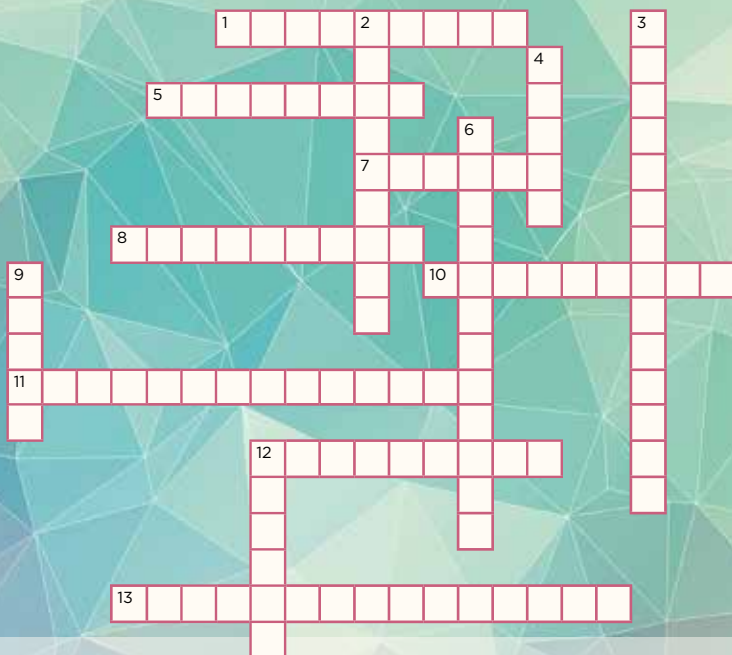
"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour" (Romans 13:10). "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments" (1 John 5:3). "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (John 14:21).

WHAT PROMISE DOES CHRIST GIVE TO SUCH?

"He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Verse 21).

WHAT IS TO BE THE FINAL REWARD OF THE OVERCOMER?

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21). 



ACROSS

1. The purest treasure that time affords is a spotless _____.
5. Christ's sacrifice enabled Him to be a _____ between God and humans.
7. "If sinners _____ thee, consent thou not."
8. Christ will grant the _____ to sit with Him in His throne.
10. One bad habit is when people let their tongues talk of _____ things.
11. Belshazzar knew about the history of _____.
12. Faith claims God's promises and brings forth fruit in _____.
13. _____ and strong were the words of Daniel.

DOWN

2. Christ restores the broken relationship between us and God through His _____.
3. Satan uses God's promises to excuse _____.
4. _____ and perfection are seen in all of Christ's work.
6. Hurrying through our morning devotions is _____ to God.
9. The people's Friend will free the world from _____.
12. A question we should often ask ourselves is, "Why do I want to go _____?"

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Youth Messenger® (USPS 765-030) is published quarterly by the Young People's Department of the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement General Conference as an educational service for our youth worldwide. **Web:** <http://www.sdarm.org>, **e-mail:** info@sdarm.org. The *Youth Messenger* is printed and distributed by Reformation Herald Publishing Association, 5240 Hollins Road, Roanoke, VA 24019-5048. Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, Virginia 24022.

Postmaster: Send address changes to, *Youth Messenger*, P.O. Box 7240, ROANOKE, VA 24019-0240. Manuscripts, inquiries, address changes, subscription requests, and donations should be mailed to the address above. Vol. XXXVI, No. 3. Copyright © 2017 July-September issue. **Illustrations:** Adobe Stock on front cover, pp. 2-5, 8, 9-10, 12, 15, 16, 18-23, 25, 26, 31, 32; SermonView on pp. 6-8, 28; Advent Digital Media on pp. 4, 21; Dollar Photo Club on p. 30.

Subscription: United States U.S. \$8.95; foreign (air mail) U.S. \$17.00; single issue U.S. \$2.95.


A TASTE FOR REALITY

Have you ever decided to develop a taste for some food that you never liked before? Some people don't like avocados, beets, or cauliflower, for example. But if they decide that a certain food is good for them and realize that they should learn to like it, they can choose to develop a taste for it, with God's help.

In today's age of virtual reality and cyber life, many live in a digital fantasy world. Many, many trust implicitly in whatever they see online; they forget there's a practical life we need to prepare for—an earthly existence and most importantly, the option to seek eternity.

The temptation to overlook the reality of eternal life has existed throughout history, including in the time of Ellen G. White, who wrote:

"I am laboring to call the attention of the young to the close searching of the Scriptures. I am laboring to have them bring to the foundation gold, silver, and precious stones, that the last day cannot consume. I am working with pen and voice to awaken the youth to the stern realities just about to open before us and to lead them to leave the superficial, the fictitious in everything large and small, for living realities, that they shall not live an unreal, imaginary life, but take right hold of the verity and truth of practical life. It is realities with which we are to deal. Everything is tainted and corrupted with falsehood and fiction in this age. We want now solid truth for our foundation. Men and women are asleep. Youth are enchanted, infatuated with the false. They lay upon the foundation hay, wood, and stubble which the fires of the last day will consume. The mind will be of the same character as the food is composed of upon which it has been fed. There is only one remedy; that is, to become conversant with the Scriptures. We cannot study the Bible too much. Christ said, 'Search the Scriptures;' but the natural heart would search everything else rather than the Scriptures."—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 6, pp. 259, 260.

If we find that our natural heart is inclined to read almost anything but Scripture—or even this little *Youth Messenger* magazine that points to the value of God's Word, then it's worthwhile to pray to the Lord for help. What kind of help? A fresh taste and desire for eternal reality. . . . He's more than happy to supply it. Why not ask? 

LIFE

Life hath its barren years,
When blossoms fall untimely down,
When ripened fruitage fails to crown
The summer toil, when nature's frown
Looks only on our tears.

Life hath its faithless days;
The golden promise of the morn,
That seemed for light and gladness born,
Meant only noontide wreck and scorn,
Hushed harp instead of praise.

Life hath its valleys, too,
Where we must walk with vain regret,
With mourning clothed, with wild rain wet,
Toward sunlight hopes that soon must set,
All quenched in pitying dew.

Life hath its harvest moons,
Its tasseled corn and purple-weighed vine;
Its gathered shaves of grain, the blessed sign
Of plenteous ripening bread and pure rich wine,
Full hearts for harvest tunes.

Life hath its hopes fulfilled;
Its glad fruitions, its best answered prayer,
Sweeter for waiting long, whose holy air,
Indrawn to silent souls, breathes forth its rare,
Grand speech, by joy distilled.

— Author unknown