

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.
Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant.
Psalm 25:14

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Straight and Narrow

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New GC President Gives Speech - Sets Tone for Administration

By Allen Stump

On March 1, 1999 the General Conference Executive Committee elected Elder Jan Paulsen as the new General Conference President to replace Elder Robert Folkenburg who resigned the position in February. A great deal has been written by others concerning the plight of Elder Folkenburg. We have chosen to remain silent about the alleged financial dealings of Folkenburg until more facts and not just hearsay are known. What we do wish to discuss is the theological direction that the new General Conference President has outlined in his sermon, "The Urgency of the Gospel," which he gave at his dedication service.

Paulsen begins by stating, "The title begs the questions: 1) What is the gospel; and 2) Wherein lies its urgency?" The rest of this article will report on Paulsen's message with comments.

Introduction

Overview: Paulsen gives a speech that one writer declares could "be accepted and welcomed by all" He claims that "it is important to our members that the distinctive Adventist message be heard from our pulpits." He claims the sanctuary doctrine as being more than "speculation" but rather "the truth!" While upholding the importance of doctrine, he presents the gospel as paramount in the church's witnessing. Paulsen strives to find the distinction between the "general evangelical preaching," and the real gospel of the apostles and that which should characterize the remnant. However, in defining the gospel and the urgency of it, Paulsen makes little distinction between

what he understands the gospel to be and what the general evangelical view is.

Paulsen begins his devotion with some history of the movement and its emphasis upon "present truth" as noted in 2 Peter 1:12. Paulsen says that to the early Adventists, " 'Present truth' ... had particular reference to the two central teachings which characterized this Movement more than any other, namely the Sanctuary doctrine ... and the Sabbath, although Ellen White widened it somewhat when she wrote, in the context of preparing to meet the soon-coming Lord (2T 355), 'We have no doubt... that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the Judgement.' "

The statement of Ellen White is significant. She includes herself with the rest of the church as believing that the doctrines that were held at the time of the statement, (March 6, 1869) were "present truth." Paulsen next states that, "Present Truth, for us as a

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church today, is *wide enough to find expression in 27 formulations of doctrine*. These are intended to be a comprehensive statement of faith and doctrine as presented by the Bible.” However, that which Ellen White declared was “present truth” in 1868 is not what is considered “present truth” today.

The present twenty-seven fundamentals exhibit serious differences from the 1872 statement concerning the doctrine of God. These differences vitally affect the perspective we have of the gospel. The earliest church statement of belief was published in 1872, three years after the testimony of 1869. There is no evidence that any shift occurred between 1869 and 1872. The 1872 statement on the doctrine of God was distinctly non-Trinitarian as contrasted with the 1980 statement which is fully Trinitarian.

Paulsen states that:

“... the Gospel is the core central truth which the first church stood for, which identified them as a community of believers, and which was in fact ‘present truth’ to them, in the sense of 2 Peter 1:12.

“I invite you today to recognize what that “Gospel” was, to recognize that it was then and is now the core of Christian faith and proclamation, without in the process feeling that we have said something negative, or less important about the sum total of our doctrines as though they be peripheral. However, there is a real sense in which the original ‘Gospel’ was and is the heart of the matter, and the rest is commentary. Somehow I have to find, as a Seventh-day Adventist preacher, a way of living with that reality without my preaching becoming less Adventist and more of an insipid, general evangelical preaching.”

The reason that Paulsen and so many other Adventist preachers have a difficult time avoiding “insipid, general evangelical preaching” is that their gospel is so closely related to it. Both versions of the gospel have the doctrine of the Trinity as their foundation. The gospel emphasis of the early church was that Jesus was the literal Son of God. This was the message that Paul and others preached.

“And straightway he [Paul] preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” (Acts 9:20)

“And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he [the Ethiopian eunuch] answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” (Acts 8:37)

Paulsen later says, “The ‘Gospel,’ however, to the early believers, had a unique focus on the person of Jesus Christ. When the first believers preached the

‘Gospel’ they said something very specific about Jesus; and, it is clear, that that which was being asserted had the potential of creating feelings of shame with regard to the person of Jesus. Jesus himself recognized this when he said: ‘If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory’ (Mark. 8:38).” Paulsen quotes 2 Timothy 1:8, 12; 1 Peter 2:6; 4:16.

What was the real stigma about Jesus? John 19:7 records that the Jews told Pilate, “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the *Son of God*.” Those who later believed and taught that Jesus was the *Son of God* were in danger of meeting a fate similar to their Master. Today one searches in vain to find something in the “general evangelical preaching” that provokes such feelings as the Jews had against Christ or His disciples. The same would be true of the gospel that Paulsen proceeds to define.

Paulsen’s Gospel

Elder Paulsen states the essence of the gospel in four short points:

1) Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, the one “accredited by God,” who died for the sins of man to reconcile him to God.

2) Jesus rose from the dead. The grave did not have power over Him.

3) He ascended to heaven to be our High Priest in the sanctuary in heaven.

4) The second coming of Christ is essential to the fulfillment of the gospel.

Paulsen gives scriptural references and some short comments on these points but fails to expound on any concepts in detail.

Few would deny the importance of these points or their preeminence over other points. However, the way we understand these points makes a great deal of difference as to what gospel we finish with. For instance, the Bible declares Jesus to be the “Son of God.” How is He the Son of God and what difference does it make? How does our view of the Sonship of Christ affect how we perceive the love of the Father toward the sinner? What is important about having a proper understanding concerning the death of Christ? For an in-depth study of these issues we recommend that the reader study the January 1999 issue of *Present Truth* published by Smyrna. It will be sent free to all who request it.

The Urgency of the Gospel

Paulsen notes four reasons for the urgency of the gospel to be given:

1) There is a famine in the land and souls are perishing for a lack of the truth.

2) Time is running out with which to prepare for eternity.


3) False gospels are being presented which “distort the Gospel by offering alternative emphases or understandings to the doctrine of salvation.”

4) Since the gospel is God’s way of dealing with the sin problem, it must be given to meet the sin problem and prepare the way so Christ can return soon.

With these four points we find general agreement if we understand and agree on how the term “gospel” is used. If our understanding of the gospel is faulty, then our understanding of its urgency will be also.

Paulsen concludes his speech with a challenge to the church to be “Christ-focused and Mission-focused.” He wants the church to be gospel-centered with its direction moving outwardly

to serve others and not just those of the church. He appeals for the church members to make the church “a warm and attractive community where . . . sinners can feel at home; a place where individuals who come with many battle-scars and who have not done particularly well, or who don’t see themselves as successful, can feel accepted and loved. I think that is what Christ would want his church to be. — And at the same time make sure that the spoken witness of the church is strong and clear.”

Conclusion: Elder Paulsen strives to strike a balance between an emphasis on doctrine and a clear presentation of the gospel. He presents the gospel in broad outline form without articulating on the detail. What does this mean for the church? I believe that we will see a greater emphasis on doctrine from the office of the president. However, no matter how much the church claims to promulgate the “gospel,” if the foundation is faulty and compatible with “general evangelical preaching” then the message that this world urgently needs cannot be given by those who claim to be the torchbearer to the world. 

JUST WHAT WAS SO FASCINATING ABOUT IDOLATRY???

As I read through the Old Testament and see how *good* God was to His chosen people, constantly saving them when they got into trouble, and then they followed the other nations back into idolatry again, and again, and again, I have to ask myself, why????

Over and over, the Old Testament speaks of the “high places”—the groves.

The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible on page 243 states: “High Places: Localities selected as shrines for the worship of God or false divinities, or the shrines themselves.” Numbers 22:41 says that Balak took Balaam and brought him up into the “high places of Baal.” (See also 1 Kings 11:1-13.)

1 Kings 14:23, 24 speaking of the sins of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, says, “For they also built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did

according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.”

“Licentiousness was often connected with the worship on the high places and immorality.” (*Ibid*, p. 243) “Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with.” (Jeremiah 3:2)

I have had some darling little pet dogs in my day, but in the Bible you cannot find one good thing about a “dog” and I kept wondering: What does God have against dogs? Well, back to the concordance and surprise, surprise! I found out that the Hebrew word most often translated “dog” can also mean a sodomite, or male or female prostitute—workers in their temples. So to sacrifice to the idols, or “stocks” or “sticks” as they were sometimes called, included feasting and fornication with male and female prostitutes.

From this we can conclude that gross immorality was one of the great fascinations associated with

the high places and heathen worship, and when you read the world news today, this fascination doesn’t seem to have diminished any. Do you agree?

And now our so-called Christian United States has fallen into this fascinating revelry, and it is accepted because we are a ‘loving’ and ‘understanding’ nation.

I believe that at this point we have said enough of subject. Our Lord Jesus says, “Blessed are the pure in heart.” O, Lord, let us strive to this end.

Bessie Shurtlif

(Bessie Shurtlif writes from her home in Ogden, Utah. Bessie came from a large Mormon family before accepting the Advent message. She enjoys traveling. You may write to her at: 2521 Van Buren Ave. Ogden, UT 84401)

The Omega of Apostasy

By Allen Stump - All emphasis supplied unless noted. (Part 3)

1980 Statement of Beliefs and Beyond

The General Conference at Dallas in 1980 provided the laity a final opportunity to “meet” the omega of apostasy. The main focus of the session was the development of a new Statement of Beliefs to replace the 1931 statement which had only undergone minor revisions. The final product was an officially voted statement that affirmed the Trinitarian teaching. This statement has since taken on the lion-like jaws of a creed. Those who are found not lining up are disfellowshipped!

In 1984, a new pro-Trinitarian baptismal vow was released. 1985 brought the new *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* with its strong Trinitarian position as well as its responsive readings in multiple modern translations. In 1988, the replacement book for *Questions on Doctrine, Seventh-day Adventists Believe...* was published. It continued the omega apostasy with positions similar to *Questions on Doctrine*. 1993 saw the publication of the book *Issues* with its public challenge to independent ministries who claim to be “historic Adventists” to return to an anti-Trinitarian position.¹ There were few takers. The following year we find the church’s admission that the early pioneers would not be allowed to join the church today because of their anti-Trinitarian position.²

Current Relationship of Independent Ministries

While many independent ministries on the edge and within the Adventist Church today acknowledge the apostasy in *Questions on Doctrine* and other “books of a new order” concerning the incarnation and the atonement in heaven; most fail to realize the much larger scope of the matter. In fact, some of the most vocal supporters of Trinitarianism are Adventist independent ministries!

Several groups have gone on record rejecting the leading of God in the early days of the Advent movement and have strongly supported the pagan-papal Trinity. One former independent minister was quick

to label a conference minister as “Trash Can S_____” because he supposedly threw his Spirit of Prophecy books into a trash can. This same minister threw reprints of materials which the pioneers had written about the Godhead into a trash can and then proceeded to collect materials from his church members to throw into the trash can! This minister is now supporting the General Conference.

In response to materials sent, which clearly presented the Biblical and historical position of the pioneers, one ministry sent out an *amazing* letter full of so-called *facts*:

Dear D____:

Thanks for writing. D____ is conducting a major evangelistic crusade in Michigan so I am handling much of his mail. I do not wish to offend you but I would like to call your attention to several important things:

1. Many of the pioneers were in error on several Bible teachings. We do not base our doctrines on what various pioneers believed, but rather, upon what the church decided.
2. The Spirit of Prophecy is clear that:
 - a. Light is not revealed to a few (CW 45).
 - b. Light is not given contrary to the established faith of the body (EW 45).
 - c. New light should be submitted to the brethren and laid aside if they see no light in it (CW 47).

Like Froom and many others, this ministry has accounted the first fifty years as “error.” While we agree that we should not accept any doctrine just because the pioneers believed it, we also believe that just because the “church” decides a certain doctrine is truth does not make it truth! The Spirit of Prophecy references are excellent. What a shame the church did not listen to the counsel when the Trinity doctrine was adopted!

a.) The wonderful truth about God and His Son was not revealed to just a few! All the pioneers understood and believed it. The Trinity came into the church through the efforts of a few key men. b.) The Trinity was contrary to the “established faith of the body.” c.) New light is to be submitted to not just the brethren, but “the brethren of experience.” (*Counsels to Writers*

1. See *Issues*, page 39.

2. See *Ministry*, October, 1993, p. 4.

and Editors, p. 47) The “brethren of experience,” especially those whom Ellen White referred to, were those who went through the 1844 experience. They all rejected the Trinity, seeing no light in it.

To avoid the connection the Trinity has to the papacy, some independent ministries have gone to the other extreme and accepted tritheism, the belief in three gods. Like Kellogg and Froom, they are quick to quote the *Testimonies* to “prove” their position.

While at the date of this writing few leaders of the larger ministries have rejected the omega, we should not hold our breath waiting to see what others will do before making our own decision. We have been plainly told:

In the last solemn work *few great men will be engaged. . .*

God will work a work in our day that but few anticipate. *He will raise up and exalt among us those who are taught rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the outward training of scientific institutions.* These facilities are not to be despised or condemned; they are ordained of God, but they can furnish only the exterior qualifications. *God will manifest that He is not dependent on learned, self-important mortals.*

To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 80, 82, 136)

Concerning the giving of the first angel’s message, the Servant of the Lord stated:

But the churches generally did not accept the warning. Their ministers, who, as watchmen “unto the house of Israel,” should have been the first to discern the tokens of Jesus’ coming, had failed to learn the truth either from the testimony of the prophets or from the signs of the times. As worldly hopes and ambitions filled the heart, love for God and faith in His word had grown cold; and when the advent doctrine was presented, it only aroused their prejudice and unbelief. The fact that the message was, to a great extent, preached by laymen, was urged as an instrument against it. As of old, the plain testimony of God’s word was met with the inquiry: “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed?” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 380)


God is going to work in such a manner that no glory will go to man! The message of Revelation 14:7 to give glory to God will be accomplished, “not by might, nor by power,” but by the Spirit of Almighty God, and all glory will be His. What should be our relationship to this apostasy? “We are to hold *fast the*

first principles of our denominated faith, and go forward from strength to increased faith. Ever we are to keep the faith that has been substantiated by the Holy Spirit of God from *the earlier events of our experience* until the present time.” (Series B, no. 7, p. 52)

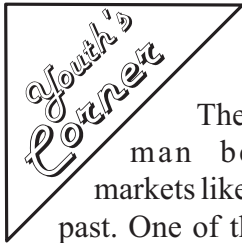
Shortly before I sent out the testimonies regarding the efforts of the enemy to undermine the foundation of our faith through the dissemination of seductive theories, I had read an incident about a ship in a fog meeting an iceberg. For several nights I slept but little. I seemed to be bowed down as a cart beneath sheaves. One night a scene was clearly presented before me. A vessel was upon the waters, in a heavy fog. Suddenly the lookout cried, “Iceberg just ahead!” There, towering high above the ship, was a gigantic iceberg. An authoritative voice cried out, “Meet it!” There was not a moment’s hesitation. It was a time for instant action. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. The passengers were violently shaken by the force of the collision, but no lives were lost. The vessel was injured, but not beyond repair. She rebounded from the contact, trembling from stem to stern, like a living creature. Then she moved forward on her way.

Well I knew the meaning of this representation. I had my orders. I had heard the words, like a voice from our Captain, “Meet it!” I knew what my duty was, and that there was not a moment to lose. The time for decided action had come. I must without delay obey the command, “Meet it!” (Series B, no. 2, pp. 55, 56)

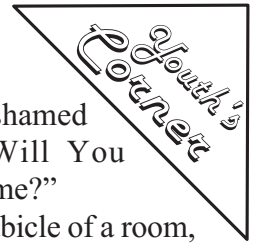
Beloved, the iceberg appeared shortly after the “alpha” apostasy. To confront the omega will bring a “fearful shock;” we will be “violently shaken by the force of the collision.” The true ship is “injured, but not beyond repair.” Let us obey the Captain of our faith and “Meet it”!

As we have seen in our study, knowing God is eternally important. The prophet Daniel tells us that “the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.” (Daniel 11:31) Now is the time to know our God and be strong as never before. Jesus says, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32) 

(This concludes the study on the Omega of Apostasy. This study was adapted from chapter 21 of The Foundation of Our Faith. (See page 9 for information on how to obtain a copy of this book.)



You Can't Tell a Book By its Cover



The days of a human being sold at markets like cattle have long past. One of the last places to abolish slavery was not in America, but in the Mohammedan lands.

When Christians of the Armenian race were driven from their homes, one particular Christian mother and daughter were among the exiles. The hardships and perils paid a heavy toll. The mother had endured more than seemed humanly possible. Finally, she recognized that she could not live too much longer.

The mother gave the daughter the terrifying news of the decision she had come to during the night. "My daughter, I love you very much."

"Yes," the daughter replied, "I know that."

"Well, this's going to seem terrible to you, but I believe that it is God's will for you."

"What are you talking about?" the disturbed girl asked.

"I can't live much longer. You're still young, but you can't make it very long like this. As difficult as it is to say, I believe that you will be much better off if I sell you as a servant to one of the Mohammedan families."

"Oh, no, Mother," the girl cried. "Please don't do that."

The mother persisted in her feelings that it was God's will. "You see, my darling, I can't take care of you. You'll be snatched up by anyone as soon as I die. I've noticed that the younger women get along so much better who are working as servants."

After much crying and pleading, the two agreed that the mother was right. As difficult as it was to part, the daughter became a servant in a

Mohammedan family. As long as she served as a servant she had comparative safety.

After a time, however, the master called her into his room. "I'm afraid that I have bad news for you. I can't afford to keep you any longer. I'm going to have to take you to the slave market tomorrow. I'm sorry, but that's the way it has to be."

The terrified girl ran into the small room they had provided for her. Falling on the small carpet that also served as her bed, she began to cry profusely. Then, she reflected back on her childhood days. She had been raised in a Christian family, but she had never had a Christian experience. She had always known that it was the right thing to do, but put off the time as many young people do. Now in sore need, she wished that she had accepted Christ as her Saviour and Lord.

"Oh, God," she cried, "I'm so sorry that I put off becoming Your child. How can I turn to you now? When I had a family, a home, food, and clothing of my own, I didn't take time for You. I didn't turn to You when I had all the opportunities in the world. How can I expect You to help me now when I'm in trouble?"

As she lay there thinking of all the lost opportunities and unappreciated privileges, one passage of Scripture came to her mind. She did not ever remember memorizing it, but still she could quote it. "Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee."

Over and over she repeated it. "Dear Lord," she prayed, "I'm sorry that it took all this to bring me to

You. I'm so ashamed of my past. Will You please forgive me?"

In that tiny cubicle of a room, the Holy Spirit was able to break through the barrier Satan had placed between her and the Lord. She found courage as well as forgiveness. She found a Saviour as well as peace of mind. That night she prayed for deliverance.

When the Mohammedan master took her to the slave market, she was terrified at the sight of such a crowd. The village marketplace buzzed with varied noises that only told her that her fate was soon to be known. A number of women were to be sold that day. She was stunned to find herself being dragged out onto the elevated platform first.

She couldn't control the eerie feeling they came over her as she stood there with all these men staring at her. As the bidding began she became nauseated. "Oh, Lord, please help me," was all she could silently pray over and over again.

The bidding narrowed down to about five men. As their rivalry for her increased, she became more terrified. Every single one of them looked so cruel and barbarous. She knew that one of those fiercely competing men would soon carry her off like a wild animal.

Then an old Arab made his way towards the front. He looked right into her eyes. He seemed to be more severe than all the others put together. She felt as if she was going to die, right on the spot, when this old man, whose stare was more frightening, also started to bid for her.

The other bidders became infuriated at the Arab for entering into the

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth

contest for another human being's life. One or two of the angry Mohammedan bidders scolded him and told him to go away. He kept on bidding.

At last the final bid was made. The Arab was the purchaser!

Without saying a word, he led her away by the rope that auctioneers had tied around her neck. She was so afraid that she stumbled and staggered through the crowd. It was obvious to the old man that she was scared to death.

He led her away from the market, around a corner, and down a side street. Then he stopped, looked at her, and smiled. It was not the sinister smile she had expected, but with compassion and understanding. Somehow she was instantly relieved.

"Don't be afraid," he said in perfect Armenian. "You won't be hurt.


My wife is here and she will take good care of you. I didn't buy you because I needed or wanted you."

And with this said, he removed the rope and gently led her by the arm to an elderly lady who was sitting at an outdoor restaurant table.

The Arab and his wife cared for the young girl throughout the rest of the war. Then they helped her get back to her own land and to the remainder of her relatives. Before the Arab and his wife left the girl in the hands of an aunt, they walked off together to say good-bye.

"I want to tell you something before we leave," the kind Arab told the young lady. "The night before I came into the slave market I got the deep impression that I was to go to the slave market. This impression came to me several times until I recognized that it must be from God. As Christians we knew that when

something so strong comes to a believer like that, it has to be followed through, even though the reason is not given. So, we went into town the next day in obedience to what we felt was the command of the Lord.

"You see," he continued, "in the night I seemed to picture myself at the slave market buying a young slave girl. I have never bought a slave before in my life and had no intention of ever doing so. When I entered that crowd and saw you on the platform, I recognized you as the one I saw in my dream!" 

(This story was reprinted from the book, *The Hand That Still Intervenes*, W. A. Spicer and Helen Spicer Menkel © 1982 by Concerned Publications. Permission to reprint this article was graciously granted by the publishers.)

Search the Scriptures - Ellen G. White

"For in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." John v. 39.

Dear children, I have feared there was a lack on your part in searching the Scriptures. Nothing should divert you from obeying this command. Time given you to prepare for heaven is precious, and the way to find out your duty to God, and learn the narrow path leading to heaven, is to search God's holy word. By that word you will see that it is no small thing to be a Christian.

In order to be a follower of Jesus, you must be often found studying the Word. Go to it for counsel, for direction, for knowledge, and you will find it sufficient for all this. It will thoroughly furnish you unto all good works.

There is an evil among the young that has caused me hours of sorrow. The reading of story-books and newspapers of the day. Dear children, as long as you do this, the religion of Jesus cannot dwell in your heart. What does the reading of these story-book and newspapers do for you? Does it make you sober-minded? Does it fit you for prayer in secret? Does it adorn the Christian? Does it show to the world that you love religion, and your Bible, and that your thoughts are much on God and heaven? Does it show that you are walking with God and

holding communion with him? Answer these questions to your God.

In every case where there is a thirst for light and vain reading, the word of God lies neglected, and there is no thirst for holy and pure reading, the more you read these books, the greater is your thirst for reading, and the religion of Jesus is crowded out. You may still retain the name and form, but these are only a curse, when the vital part is gone. The mind that should be stayed upon God, is under an unhealthy excitement, and prayer is hardly thought of. I know it is sin to read the books and papers of the day. It poisons the mind that should be pure to serve the Law of God. And again, time is wasted; time that is not your own, but lent you of God; and he holds you responsible for it; and in the day of judgment you must give an account what disposition you have made of your time.

You have an influence. You not only injure your own soul, but you encourage others to follow your example, and the end thereof you will find to be death. Jesus is crowded out of your thoughts, and vanity and folly takes its place. Your mind is perverted, if not corrupted. Some have reasoned, even parents, that it was harmless reading. But it is hurtful enough to grieve the Spirit of God away, and destroy the soul.

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An Appeal From Africa

(The following appeal comes from Pastor Akor in Nigeria. Brother Akor and those he is associated with are laboring to spread the three angels' messages. He has written articles for *Old Paths* before, his latest being published in the January 1999 issue. His wife, Nsini, has recently been quite sick but is now doing better to the glory of God. We encourage all our readers to help with this project as God directs them.)

Beloved Brethren,

Calvary greetings to you all in the name of Jesus, our Messiah. I am glad to extend to you the love from our brethren here in Nigeria. May the peace and love of Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

I want to share with you a proposed project of our church which aims at alleviating the poor conditions and hardships faced by our widows, the needy, orphans, and the unemployed youth. The primary occupation of our women folk is the processing of agricultural produce such as oil, palm fruits, corn, beans, and cassava. Hence, the church wants to establish a cottage processing mill that can process these things.

This processing plant will be operated by an eight horsepower engine. The estimated cost of establishing and running this processing industry and acquiring the engine stands at \$2,860.

It is sad that our brothers and sisters can only work five days of the week instead of six days in the mills because the mills are owned by Sundaykeepers. On Sundays the mills will be shut down, and since our women will not work on the Sabbath day they miss out on the Sunday working days. Our young men are denied jobs in factories because they will not work on the Sabbath day. This is one of the reasons we have so many unemployed youth among the Sabbathkeepers. Many of the youth lack the opportunity of acquiring skills so as to become self-reliant. We're glad for your support for the work in Nigeria; it is greatly appreciated. The mill will create opportunities for the needy, widows, and the unemployed to work

and gain resources to provide for themselves and the destitute among us. We have been instructed:

“Attention should be given to the establishment of various industries so that poor families can find employment. Carpenters, blacksmiths, and indeed everyone who understands some line of useful labor, should feel a responsibility to teach and help the ignorant and the unemployed.” (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 194)

The prevailing economic hardship in Nigeria is biting very hard on us. It is sadly true that many Sabbathkeepers have left the faith and gone back to Babylon and the Sunday churches because among them they can find employment, relief materials such as used clothing, food, scholarships, and even free medical care. Although this is one of the signs of the end, we are not to be discouraged but to continue on and bear the fruit that will bring glory to God. (See John 15:16.)

Brethren, we cannot over emphasize the importance of this project towards the well being of our poor, needy, and unemployed brothers and sisters here. My plea to you is the same plea that Paul made to the brethren at Galatia. “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10) Please help us establish this project as admonished our by sister, Ellen White. “As the members of a true family care for one another, ministering to the sick, supporting the weak, teaching the ignorant, training the inexperienced, so is ‘the household of faith’ to care for its needy and helpless ones. Upon no consideration are these to be passed by.” (*Ibid*, p. 201)

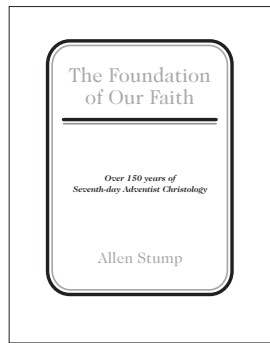
Thank you for donating to this project here in Africa. No amount is too small for your contribution. Please send your donations to Smyrna Gospel Ministries marked “Nigeria Mill Project.” They will then remit the funds to us. May God bless you for donating toward the welfare of your brethren here in Africa. Shalom.

Pastor Etim Udo Akor

News Notes:

The Foundation of Our Faith Reprinted

Today the Advent Movement is experiencing a tremendous shaking both within the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church and within the growing independent movement as well. The issues are much deeper than just liberal versus conservative ideas of worship. The difficulty we face today is not just apostasy within the educational or medical work, as serious as that may be. At the very center of the shaking is a doctrinal crisis that affects our very understanding of God and the plan of salvation.



Does the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church have the answer to the crisis? Can the answer be found within the swelling “Historic Adventist” movement outside the church?

Following the pantheism crisis, Sister White predicted an omega apostasy to follow. Several books have been written on this subject, yet few authors or church members are able to grasp the situation. This apostasy is already among us and is much deeper than many suspect.

Why has the position of “Historic Adventism” been twisted by some so as to redefine the understanding of the pioneers?

What is the real position of “Historic Adventism” on the incarnation, the atonement in heaven, and the Sonship of Jesus Christ? Does it really matter what we believe about these teachings? Is an understanding of these teachings relevant for Adventists today?

Find out why Sister White prophetically wrote: “We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” (*Life Sketches*, page 196)

Why has a noted Adventist university professor stated that most of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church would not be able to join the church today? Did God raise up the movement or not?

The Foundation of Our Faith was written to answer these probing questions and to help you piece the present-day puzzle together. Due to the many requests we have received since the first printing was exhausted, we have reprinted this helpful book.

This volume of over 230 pages explores the roots of Seventh-day Adventism from the Christian Connection and the Millerite movement to the present. Accepting the voice of Ellen G. White as presenting a sacred history of the Advent movement, this book explores Adventist Christology showing the harmony between the Bible, the writings of Ellen G. White, and the writings of the Advent pioneers.

The Foundation of Our Faith has a descriptive table of contents and a comprehensive Scriptural index. Its twenty-one chapters and appendix provide documentation for the serious student who refuses to accept speculation, but demands the plain truth. If you are interested in getting ready for the latter rain and the coming of Jesus, we believe you will find this book extremely helpful.

The suggested donation is still \$6.50 for one copy; \$12.00 for two copies; or \$55.00 for ten copies postage paid within the United States. For overseas rates please write or call us. You may send your requests to Smyrna Gospel Ministries, HC 64 Box 128B, Welch, WV 24801-9606 or call us at (304) 732-9204.

If you have requested books since the second printing was exhausted and have not yet received your order, please resubmit your request as it has been difficult to keep proper track of some of the requests and we do not wish to miss any. We are sorry for the inconvenience and thank you for your help in this matter.

Conference in Illinois

There will be a conference of believers April 14-17 at New Burnside, Illinois. All are invited to attend and share their input. The conference meetings will begin Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. Pastor David Clayton is scheduled to be the special Sabbath speaker. For further information you may call (618) 996-2525 and ask for Crystal.

Correction

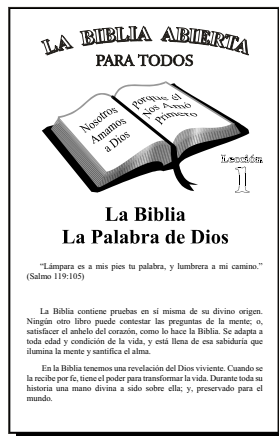
Last month in the Omega series article we stated: “In 1950, two young missionaries from Africa attended the General Conference Session at Cleveland, Ohio.” This is incorrect. It should have stated that in 1950 Elders Wieland and Short “made written representations to the Officers of the General Conference at the time of the General Conference session in San Francisco.” (*A Warning and Its Reception*, p. iii)

Spanish Lesson Studies

We are happy to announce that we now have Bible lessons in Spanish. Some Spanish-speaking brethren in Indiana have been working on these studies for use with people of all faiths. We believe you will find these studies to be a blessing. Currently the subjects include:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. The Bible | 10. The Judgement |
| 2. The Truth about God | 11. Baptism |
| 3. Prayer and Faith | 12. The Gift of Prophecy |
| 4. The Law of God | 13. Christian Stewardship |
| 5. The Day of Rest | |
| 6. Sin | |
| 7. The Plan of Salvation | |
| 8. The State of the Dead | |
| 9. Christ's Second Coming | |

The Lesson series is entitled “The Open Bible for Everyone.” The layout is very attractive with a picture of the Bible on the cover. Below is a sample of the lessons:



1) ¿Quién inspiró las escrituras? 2 Timoteo 3:16; 2 Pedro 1:21.

Respuesta: _____

2) ¿Por medio de quienes reveló Dios su palabra? Hebreos 1:1

Respuesta: _____

If you would like to receive copies of these studies you may contact Angel Romero, 57971 County Road 13, Elkhart, Indiana 46516. (This address is just for temporary purposes. They will soon have a post office box dedicated to the purpose of corresponding with those interested in the Bible Lessons.)

Arizona Camp Meeting

As announced last month, there will be a camp meeting May 7-15 in Wilhoit, Arizona (about 1½ hours northwest of Phoenix). We want to encourage all those in the western part of the country to plan to attend this spiritual gathering. The theme of the camp meeting is witnessing. I believe that you will be really blessed by the fellowship. For more information you may call Kim at: (520) 442-9868.

Are You Ready for Jesus

Are you ready for JESUS?
Are you living on the border?
Should CHRIST come back today,
Would your life be in order?

Are you holding on to something
That you cherish very dear?
Knowing that it will condemn you:
THE DAY OF GOD IS NEAR.

We don't have time to put things off
But surely to make things right.
GOD is calling HIS righteous people
To share HIS eternal light.

Let's rid ourselves of secret sins,
Or we never will see GOD's face.
For the devil and sin and sinners alike
Won't enter the heavenly place.

The wicked sins that we hold onto
Are truly a sour discord.
And they will not blend in, in heaven
With the things of our HOLIEST LORD.

So Brothers and Sisters let's sacrifice
All of our sins—for eternal life.
Let's ask our GOD to cleanse our way.
Or we won't be ready for “GOD's GREAT DAY.”

ARE YOU READY FOR JESUS?

Psalm 14:7

Willis Smith

LIVING BY THE WORD

By A. T. Jones - Reprinted from *R&H*, November 10, 1896.

“Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

The righteousness of God is that which every man is to seek first of all. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” And in the way of righteousness there is life. It is impossible to separate the life of God from the righteousness of God. As certainly as you have the righteousness of God, so certainly you have the life of God.

And “now the righteousness of God is made known.” Now is at this time, at this very moment, even while you read. At this very moment, then, the righteousness of God is manifested “unto all, and upon all them that believe.” Do you believe in Jesus Christ now, at this moment? Do you? If you say, Yes, then “now,” at this very moment, the righteousness of God is made known to you and upon you. Do you believe it? The word of God says that it is; do you say that it is? And if you do not say that it is, then do you believe the word? When the Lord says plainly to you that His righteousness is “now” manifested unto you and upon you and you do not say that it is now manifested unto you and upon you, then do you really believe the Lord? When He plainly says a thing to you and you will not say that that thing is true to you, then do you really believe Him?

The Lord wants you to say that what He says is so; that it is so “now,” at this moment, and that it is so to you and in you. “A new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you.” When the Lord says a thing, it is true, even though nobody in the world ever believes it. It would be true in Him, but not in them. But He wants it to be true in you as well as in Himself. And when you acknowledge that what He says is true to you “now,” at this moment, then that thing is true in Him and in you. This is believing God. It is believing His word. This is having His word abiding in you. And, “If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

Many people are ready to admit, in a general way, that what the Lord says is so; they will admit that it may be so to other people, but that it is so to them-

selves, just now, they will not say. Such people do not really know that the word of God is true. “Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God.” If you do not have faith for yourself, faith of your own, you do not have faith at all. If you do not believe the word of the Lord as being true to you personally and now, you do not believe it at all; for as you are not living yesterday nor tomorrow but just now, while it is now, so if you do not believe now, you do not believe at all. Therefore the word of God is that now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation; and, “Now the righteousness of God . . . is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.”

Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour now? You can answer that in one moment; you know that you do. Then this moment thank the Lord that His righteousness is manifested unto you and upon you. He not only says it but He gives you witnesses to the fact—it is witnessed by the law and the prophets. That law which you have transgressed, that law that has shown you guilty before God, that very law “now,” in view of the manifestation of the righteousness of God, witnesses that you have a just claim to this righteousness and that you are thereby justified through the faith of Jesus Christ. The prophets likewise witness to this blessed fact. “The moment the sinner believes in Christ, he stands in the sight of God uncondemned; for the righteousness of Christ is his; Christ’s perfect obedience is imputed to him.” Is not this, then, sufficient to cause you to say now, at this moment if never before, that “now the righteousness of God is manifested” unto you and upon you who now do believe in Jesus?

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” Would you rather have the righteousness of God now than to have your sins? You say, Yes. Very good. God has “now” set forth Christ Jesus “to declare” to you “his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.” Will you let the sins go now, this moment; and take the righteousness which He is set forth purposely to give and which He now, this moment, freely gives? “Being justified freely.” “Being” is present tense. “Was” is past; “shall be” is future; but “being” is present. Therefore the Lord says to you and of you who believe


in Jesus, "Being [now, at this moment] justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . through the forbearance of God."

But the Lord does not drop the subject yet. He emphasizes the present power and blessing of this infinite fact. "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness." First He says that it is "now" that the righteousness of God is manifested unto all and upon all them that believe; then He speaks of all such as "being justified freely", and next He emphasizes it all thus: "To declare, I say at this time his righteousness." O poor, trembling, doubting soul, is not this assurance enough that now, at this moment, the righteousness of God is yours? That now you are being justified freely by His grace? that now, "at this time," righteousness is declared to you for the remission of all your sins that are past?

Is not this enough? It is enough to satisfy the Lord, for He says, "To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Then as it is all-sufficient to satisfy the Lord, is it not enough to satisfy you? Will you now take the fullness of this blessed "gift of righteousness," which is life, so that the Lord, by seeing

the fruit of the travail of His soul, shall be satisfied again, and so, by your rejoicing, be doubly satisfied? This is all He asks of you. For "to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

Here is the word of God, the word of righteousness, the word of life, to you "now," "at this time." "Will you be made righteous by it now? Will you live by it now? This is justification by faith. This is righteousness by faith. It is the simplest thing in the world. It is simply whether the word of God shall be true in you "now" or not. God spoke to Abraham, "Tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. . . . So shall thy seed be." And "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." "Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Now," "at this time," it is true; it is true in him. Now, at this time, let it be true in you. 



"Search the Scriptures" - continued from page 7

You should profess the religion of Jesus, and the Third Angel's Message understandingly. You do not want to believe the truth merely because your parents do, but because the Bible teaches it. Then search the Scriptures, that you may know yourself that you have a well-grounded hope. Dear children you must have an experience in the things of God. Acquaint yourselves with the word of God, that if need be, you can tell others your reasons for believing as you do.

I have had an experience in this matter. I have ever had a natural love for reading; but since I have learned to prize the approbation of God, and have tasted the sweetness of his love, I have had a work to do, to lay aside vain reading, and turn to God's word. At times I have been overcome, by my love of reading. And O how soon my soul was barren, and my love for the word of God gone. It was difficult to fix my mind upon God, or approach him as I should. And I could not find comfort or peace again until I humbly confessed my sin to God. Many of the young that I am acquainted with have had the same experience. I have not only had an experience in this matter, but God has shown

me in vision the withering effects of this unprofitable reading. I dare not keep silent longer, lest the blood of your souls be found in my garments.

Children, I want to arouse you to this evil. I want you to awake, and now take the word of God as the man of your counsel. It may be difficult for you to love to study the word of God at once, when you have not been in the habit of studying it, but God will help you. Pray for his forgiveness for neglecting his holy word so long, and then beg of the Lord to give you love and interest in his word, be in earnest in the matter. When I lose my love for the Bible I am alarmed. I know that I do not love Jesus if I do not love to search the Book that testifies of him. (Reprinted from *The Youth's Instructor*, June 1, 1856)

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