

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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The Conquest of the Spirit over the Flesh

By Allen Stump

Conflict is a part of life that we all face due to the entrance of sin into God's universe. Nations struggle against nations, ethnic groups fight against each other, and there is even strife and warfare in the animal kingdom due to the entrance of sin. The most important warfare that we as individuals must be concerned with is the internal struggle that battles within us between the Spirit of God and the will of sinful flesh.

If we are to be victorious as Christians, if we are to overcome self and all sin, and if we are to give glory to God as we are commanded in his Word, then the Spirit must conquer the flesh.

The Apostle Paul says in Galatians 5:16-18: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." There is a very real battle, a severe conflict, described here, and the Bible declares that this war began in heaven: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him (Revelation 12:7-9)." Michael, whom we know to be Christ, fought against the devil and his angels. After Satan was cast out of heaven, this struggle moved to earth and all of her inhabitants are now engaged on a very personal level.

We read about this entrance of sin and how Satan beguiled Eve and tempted Adam in Genesis 3. As a result, God said: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto

Prayer Requests

As you will read in "The Precious Gift of Love," God's great desire for us is to know the depth of his agape love and then for us to share that love as we relate to others. As you read through this issue of *Old Paths*, it is our great desire that you will, in a deep and abiding way, understand more than you have ever understood before how great God's love is for *you* and for every other member of the human family. The worth of a human soul is truly beyond estimate. God understands the needs of every heart, whether they be physical, mental, or spiritual, and he wishes to abundantly supply them through Christ Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. We need God's blessing on the speakers for the

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the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return (Genesis 3:15-19).”

Because of what happened in Eden, we have a fallen nature and today we do not need Satan to know evil, temptation, or wickedness. To do wrong is part of the very nature with which we come into this world. Galatians 5:17, however, says that if we are led of the Spirit we *cannot do* the fleshly lusts. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” In connection with this, Paul tells us in Romans 8:14 that “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” According to 1 Corinthians 2:16, the sons of God will have the mind of God: “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16).” The Bible equates mind and spirit. For example, the Hebrew word that is translated *Spirit* in Isaiah 40:13, “Who hath directed the Spirit [רוּחַ ruwach] of the LORD?” is translated *mind* in the Septuagint. This mind is to also be in us. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5).”

The way that we may have the mind of Christ is very simple. We allow Jesus to dwell within us, “Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27),” and as Christ dwells within us, then we have all of him, including his mind. On the other hand, those who serve the flesh have a carnal mind or, you could say, the mind of the flesh. They do the works of the flesh and serve the law of sin. So, we see depicted in the Bible two different choices we each have. There is the way of the flesh which leads to transgression of God’s law or the way of the Spirit which leads to life eternal. (See John 14:6, John 1:4, and John 6:63.) This conflict will never end until Jesus comes. God’s Spirit wars against the sinful will of man so that man may be transformed into a new creature. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).”

Returning to Galatians 5:17 we find something else very interesting: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” The question to be considered is: What *are* the things we would do? Are they the things of the Spirit or the things of the flesh? There are basically two ways to understand what Paul is saying in this verse. Of all the church movements that have ever existed, there is only one that has really understood the concept of having *total* victory over *all* sin and that is Seventh-day Adventism. You will not find any other movement proclaiming, *as the norm*, that, in Jesus, there is to be full victory over all sin. Now, if Galatians 5:17 is speaking about a Christian *living in the flesh* who is trying to overcome sin but cannot, then Paul is painting a very dismal picture indeed. He is describing a Christian fighting against the Spirit! When we are in the flesh we are not converted, and

when we are not converted the Spirit is not ruling over us. Thus, we find we cannot do the good we want to do.

On the other hand, if the Spirit is leading, guiding, and controlling our lives, then we cannot do those things of the flesh, for they are contrary to the leading of God’s Spirit which is far greater than the clamors of the flesh. God’s infinite wisdom has designed that we have a free will, and if we are led of the Spirit we will always desire to choose those things that are right. Whosoever is led of the flesh, however, cannot do the good that he would do because he is under the law of sin. If we live after the flesh we find death and, yet, if we live after the Spirit we find life. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye *through the Spirit* do mortify [put to death] the deeds of the body, ye shall live (Romans 8:13).” The last part of this verse tells us that we put the flesh, or the deeds of the body, to death by allowing the Spirit to live within us. The flesh in its true fleshly, sinful nature is still present with the one who has the Spirit of God, and it should be obvious to us that this flesh is warring against the Spirit. Under conversion the flesh is brought under the power of the Spirit and under the mind of Christ. I want to emphasize that we *do not*, under conversion, become delivered from the flesh and its desires and tendencies. Do not think the fight is over. It will not be over until the final atonement is made. Then Jesus comes and that is when we are changed. The Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55:

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

Our flesh will be changed when Jesus comes, for at that time we will put on incorruption, but there is something that does have to change before that happens. We each have a character and our character is what is preserved by God when we die. The Bible does not say *how* God does this, but he does do it, and our minds, or our characters, have to change now while we are alive, for they will not change after Jesus comes. This change, or conversion experience, comes through the renewing of our minds. Paul says: “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed,” not by the renewing of our flesh but “by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Romans 12:2).”

With the flesh we have many kinds of *inherited* tendencies to do wrong, as well as *acquired* tendencies. An inherited tendency is a predisposition that we receive from our parents. In the last issue of *Old Paths* was an article on DNA and

the epigenome. We know now that epigenes actually control how the DNA is switched on and off and that there are many things that are passed on hereditarily that we did not think could be passed on. Some things that we thought were locked and fixed in our genetic code are not so fixed and locked as we thought. We receive not just our physical make-up through heredity but also tendencies, for example, to be patient or angry or to be quick or slow in the way we approach things. Some of these traits are good and some are not desirable.

We also have tendencies that are cultivated by the things we do. Perhaps someone who has never stolen before starts to steal. If that activity is repeated, a habit is cultivated, and with each repetition it becomes easier to steal. At first it is hard to go against the Spirit of God and do wrong, but the more it is done, the more the Spirit of God is silenced in the mind and the more the tendency to steal is strengthened. We may also see this exhibited in people through their diet. We may start, for instance, to overeat or indulge in the wrong things, and after a while it becomes easier to overeat and indulge; whereas, if we had never started to do this it would not become a strong temptation to us.

I would like to share two statements in the Spirit of Prophecy that address these issues. The first says: “Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 175).” We do not need to be enslaved by any habit or tendency, no matter where it come from! The second statement from the pen of inspiration states: “The religion of Christ changes hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong. It banishes self-confidence and egotism, leading man to see himself as he is,—weak and sinful, unable of himself to do any good thing. It leads him to behold Jesus, and beholding, he is changed into His likeness (*The Signs of the Times*, January 8, 1902).”

Romans 12:2 speaks of the character, or the mind, that we are to be changed into. It is the mind of Christ we are to have working in us. When the Spirit rules, we are no longer subject to the flesh. The flesh is now subject to the Spirit, a power that conquers it, brings it under, and keeps it down.

Paul gives greater detail concerning what we are to put to death: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Colossians 3:5).” The things Paul mentions are matters of the flesh and they all live and reign when the flesh rules. But, is the flesh supposed to rule in the Christian’s life? Is it supposed to rule, for example, half of the time and the Spirit rule the other half of the time? Never! The Spirit is to totally rule and reign in our lives! Once the flesh is brought into subjection to the power of God through the Spirit, *all* evil tendencies can be killed at the root.

There are two passages of Scripture that portray the two experiences we are talking about. The first is found in

Romans 7 where the flesh is described as the master. There has been a great deal of theological debate over the years on whom and what Paul is describing. Some people believe the latter part of Romans 7 is a description of Paul’s own experience *after* his conversion because he seems to be writing in the present tense. Such an experience, however, for a converted Christian would be very dismal indeed. Instead, I would like to propose that Paul is describing someone who is not converted but who is under the conviction of sin. This is a person who wants to do what is right but he finds he cannot do it because he is not being led and controlled by the Spirit of God.

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. [He even personifies sin.] For I know that in me [that is, in my flesh,] dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not (Romans 7:14-18).

Paul is saying there is a will within man that wants to do well but does not know how to accomplish it. If this represents a Christian experience, then the Christian can only expect to live a defeated life, but a defeated life is contrary to scores of Bible passages that speak of God’s ability to give us victory over *all* sin. There is “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 (1 Corinthians 10:13).” Jesus expects us to live victoriously, for he said: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48).” These, and other verses, show that Paul cannot be speaking of a converted man in Romans 7.

Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death (Romans 7:20-24)?

Paul calls his body “a body of . . . death,” but there is deliverance from it. “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin (v. 25).” If our flesh governs us, we serve the law of sin, we are condemned and lost, and we have no hope, but if with our minds we serve God, then the rule of the Spirit is working in our lives. We change from being disobedient and living out of harmony with the great Creator of the universe to one that is under the rulership of his Spirit.

Paul illustrates the rulership of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27:

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

If you should walk into a dark room and be hit by someone, your first instinct might be to strike back, but you would not know where to strike because of the darkness. Paul says that he is not fighting as someone who fights uncertainly, not knowing where or what to hit, but that he keeps his body in subjection. “But I keep under, my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (v. 27, corrected punctuation).” The punctuation in the Bible is not inspired. As given in the Authorized Version, it sounds like Paul is keeping something under his body, but what he is saying is that he is keeping his body under or in control. He is bringing his body under subjection, and this is done by allowing the Spirit of God to live within us. Paul states that he was to bring his body (the flesh) into subjection to his mind, which was, in turn, under subjection to the Spirit of God and that if he did not do that, after having preached to others, he would become a castaway. Neither Paul nor we need to become a castaway or a reprobate because the Spirit of God will come into our lives and help us: “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27),” and “the Lord is that Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17).” In addition, “faithful sentinels” will guard and direct us. “None need despair because of *inherited tendencies* to evil. When the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, the wrong-doer must repent, and confess and forsake the evil. *Faithful sentinels* are on guard, to direct souls in right paths (*The Youth’s Instructor*, February 14, 1901).” This is a wonderful promise! Our fight is with the body (the flesh) and all of its afflictions and this body is to be kept under by the power of the Spirit of God. There is deliverance from the power of the foe, yes, but not from the contest itself. We need Christ living within us, and when we have that we have the ability to overcome every sin.

Christ dwells within us by faith and the Bible speaks of faith *in* Jesus and the faith *of* Jesus. Though they sound similar, there is a difference in these two expressions of faith. To understand this better, let us look at what Paul says in Romans 3: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 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; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just [that is God], and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (vs. 23-26).” The word *believeth* in this reference is the verb form for the Greek noun that is translated *faith*. To believe means to have faith, and Paul says that we are *justified* by believing, or having faith, *in* Jesus; but our faith and Christian experience are *maintained* by the faith *of* Jesus, because it is Jesus who is then living within us: “*Christ in you*, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).” “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the *faith of* Jesus (Revelation 14:12).” Keeping the commandments of God and having the faith *of* Jesus go hand-in-hand. By faith *in* Jesus we obtain justification, but then it is the faith *of* Jesus living within us that maintains us in our Christian experience. Paul was able to keep his body in subjection by faith. In the Greek, the expression “keep under” means to beat black and blue or to strike under the eyes. The Revised Standard Version translates the expression “keep under” as *pummel*.

To summarize, Romans 7 describes a man who is subject to the power of the flesh but who is longing for deliverance from it. In 1 Corinthians 9 we have a description of the flesh that is subject to man through the empowering of the Spirit of God. In Romans 7, the flesh rules and the man is kept under, but in 1 Corinthians 9 the man rules and the flesh is kept under. The only thing that makes the difference is conversion. In conversion, we receive the power to conquer and to rule over all the evil tendencies and desires of the flesh. Beloved, we must be able to have victory over *all* manifestations of the flesh.

It is important to understand that men and women cannot develop character by being delivered into a realm without temptation. Character is only developed by the experiences we have. Character not developed by deliverance from the realm of temptation but by receiving power, in the very field of temptation, exactly where we are, to conquer all the temptations that we encounter. Being victorious in the majority of our battles will not win the war. Our war can only be won by winning all the battles, for Satan knows if he can win *one* of the battles, he will win the war.

In Romans 8 Paul says there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God and Christ (v. 35) and then he says, “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us (v. 37).” So, we are able to conquer every temptation, trial, and every work of the flesh in our lives! We are more than just conquerors! God has provided something better than overcoming just by the “skin of our teeth.” We are able through his Spirit to conquer everything, every temptation, and if we are saved by being removed from temptation, Jesus did not need to come, but, by that type of deliverance, we could have never developed a character like God. Therefore, instead of trying to save man by delivering him utterly from the flesh just where he is at, the Bible says

Jesus came to this world and took upon his sinless nature our sinful nature. So, just where we are at now, he has met that very same flesh and the Bible says he “condemned sin” in that flesh (Romans 8:3). So, our faith allows Jesus to bring divine power to deliver us from the flesh and the law of sin and death.

Whenever people get ready to go to war, like the soldiers in Iraq and other places, they go through boot camp and usually a very intensive kind of training for specialized service. They do this because they are going to face a foe that they have to be better than. God wants us, friends, to be prepared for a time that is coming. The war in heaven between Christ and Satan moved to this earth. This war is raging today and will climax during what the Bible calls a time of trouble “such as never was since there was a nation (Daniel 12:1).”

The 1,260 years of papal persecution foretold in Daniel 7 is the longest period of trouble mentioned in the Bible. This period used to be called the Dark Ages. During this long reign of papal tyranny, the most conservative estimates are that at least fifty million Christians died. This 1,260 year period of trouble is the longest spoken of in the Bible, but what makes the time of trouble spoken of in Daniel 12:1 a time such as never was is the *intensity* with which the battle is fought.

We might think we are living in a world today that is becoming more humane, where people are learning how to treat each other better, but last year in Afghanistan when a Muslim converted to Christianity, he was arrested and sentenced to death. There was quite an outcry from the Western world over this. Many in the West, including people in England, the United States, and France, were saying that we should not kill people anymore for their religious beliefs.

The Bible is very explicit, however, that there is coming a time when death sentences are going to happen all over the world again and it is going to start in the United States of America. The religious intolerance that the Bible predicts is going to happen first in the United States of America and she will be in a key position to encourage the rest of the world in this kind of tyranny. We need to be getting ready for that right now. God is allowing us to experience trials and temptations to overcome now so that our characters can be developed for the greater trials that will come, and finally for sweet fellowship in heaven. You might wonder why God does not just deliver us from all of this. Why doesn't he just let us develop a little bit of character and not allow such a time of trouble to happen? Friends, God wants us to develop the best character we possible can. He wants us to become like him in character, and we *need* this experience. Not only do we need it, but, interestingly, God needs it. God needs it because he must be vindicated. The only way he can be fully vindicated is if there is a group of people that will develop a character that will have a perfect reflection of his. God is allowing this whole scenario to run its course so that, when it is finished, the universe will be in perfect harmony.

I was in Poland last year and I visited Auschwitz. The horrors of the holocaust are difficult to fully comprehend. During the reign of Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge regime terrorized Cambodia and turned a once peaceful country into a place of “killing fields.” History informs us of the persecutions that occurred during the Dark Ages, and we wonder how things can be more intense, but, friends, the Bible warns it is so. This trouble will be so severe because the Spirit of God will be fully withdrawn from the wicked, and the faithful believers will be living in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. We are going to have to be a different kind of people to live at that time, and God is going to prepare us for that very time. The Apostle John tells us how God will do this:

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 1:1-5)?

The Bible says that there is going to be a group of people who are going to have victory; they are going to overcome “all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16).” This is imperative because “the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (v. 17).” The Bible equates the born-again experience, the conversion experience, with allowing the Spirit of God to come into our lives and to overcome the flesh. So, whoever is born of God overcomes the world and the world is represented by all that is in the flesh. How do we overcome? By believing that *Jesus is the Son of God* and having the *faith of Jesus* in our lives. This is what God wants each one of us to have.

I would like to share a few gems from the Spirit of Prophecy that will help us to understand God's desire for us and what he is trying to do.

They are rough stones hewed out of the quarry of the world by the cleaver of truth; but it is not the plan of God that they shall always remain rough stones. We shall all be brought into the work-shop of God, where the hammer and the chisel will be brought to bear upon us until we are hewed and squared; then we are to undergo a still nicer work of burnishing and polishing, until we are fitted for a place in God's temple, when every stone will come into its place without the sound of an ax or a hammer (*The Review & Herald*, December 18, 1883)

This refers back to when Solomon's temple was built. Not a sound of an ax or a hammer was heard at the temple site. Every stone was quarried and fixed up elsewhere. No beautiful stone ever came from the earth fully polished. It first had

to be dressed. I had an experience a few years ago visiting a brother who worked with stones. He was a good rock mason. He understood rocks and he wanted to teach me about rock cutting. He brought out a rock and said, "This is a pretty rock." That rock weighed about 60 or 70 pounds (27-32 kilograms) and it was roughly-shaped and I did not see anything worth making with that rock. It did not look pretty to me at all, but my friend got his hammer and his chisel, and he showed me a line in the rock where he was going to tap. He tapped a little here and a little there and he started to shape the stone. After a while, it looked like a rock that you could use in something. It really changed its appearance and became *pretty*. But even further than that, friends, inspiration speaks of a polishing process. Granite monuments are usually polished to a mirror-like finish, but they start as very rough stones. First they are cut and then polished. We have all seen these kinds of monuments before. They are extremely smooth. We are like rough stones that are first quarried, but God takes us, hews us down, shapes us, and then he polishes us.

Jesus does not desire those who have been purchased at such a cost to become the sport of the enemy's temptations. He does not desire us to be overcome and perish. He who curbed the lions in their den, and walked with His faithful witnesses amid the fiery flames, is just as ready to work in our behalf. He who curbed the lions in their den, and walked with His faithful witnesses amid the fiery flames, is just as ready to work in our behalf to subdue every evil in our nature (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 90).

Notice it does not say every evil is taken away immediately but that they are subdued. They are held in check. Even though we have the sinful nature we were born with, it can be subdued, held in check, and overcome by the work of the Spirit. Ellen White goes on to say:

Today He [Jesus] is standing at the altar of mercy, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration. He does not tell to any all that He might reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 90).


Notice how merciful God is. He does not tell us everything we need at once. It would overwhelm us, but he takes us where we are and provides that which we need, and he is just as willing to do that as he was willing to help Daniel and as he was willing to help Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Daniel, who had been cast into a lions' den, was greatly beloved of God (Daniel 10:11). David was called a man after God's "own heart (1 Samuel 13:14)," and Abraham was called "the friend of God (James 2:23)." Yet, God, who is "no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34)," is willing to help us just as he helped Daniel, someone who was greatly beloved. That is encouraging to me today.

If you have hot wax, you can set a seal in it. "As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ (*The Signs of the Times*, January 2, 1907)." So, just as wax takes the impression of the seal, we are to receive the impression of the Spirit of God, and then, just as when wax cools with the impression and becomes set, we will retain the impression of the Spirit of Christ in our lives. How often can that be? All the time!

The Bible says that in the judgment every mouth is going to be stopped. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God (Romans 3:19)." Philippians 2:10, 11 says: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." All the complaining and excuses of the wicked will be stopped and they will have nothing else to say. They will have no excuse before God and even they will acknowledge that "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:11)." It will be too late for the wicked at that time because their characters, like wax that has taken a seal, have been set, but, instead of the seal of God, they have taken the seal of Satan. They have taken the seal of wickedness and they are beyond ever being changed again.

That is a very solemn thought. As Elder Stephen Haskell, a good Bible student, wrote many years ago: "The judgment is spoken of by every Bible writer. It is mentioned over a thousand times in the Sacred Writings. It is more solemn than death; for death separates friends only until the resurrection, but judgment separates them forever. No one can escape it. To ignore the thought of the judgment and live without preparing for it, will not evade it (*The Cross and Its Shadow*, p. 230)." Which side are we going to be on, the side of the flesh or the side of the Spirit? It is really up to us. God has given us the deciding vote in this by how we will choose. Satan through the flesh wars against us. The Spirit works with us, and it is our choice that determines our destiny. We must give all of our lives to the Lord because he either gets all of us or, in the end, he gets nothing.

God has given his Holy Spirit as a power sufficient to subdue all your hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. By yielding the mind to the control of the Spirit, you will grow into the likeness of God's perfect character, and will become an instrumentality through which he can reveal his mercy, his goodness and his love (*The Youth's Instructor*, October 2, 1902).

With our limited powers we are to be as holy in our sphere as God is holy in his sphere. To the extent of our ability we are to make manifest the truth and love and excellence of the divine character (*The Review & Herald*, November 1, 1892). 

The Precious Gift of Love

By Allen Stump

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love (1 John 4:7, 8).

We commonly think of God as being the all-powerful God of the universe. As well as being omnipotent, he is also omniscient, omnipresent, and immortal. While God's power to create is one of the great signs that he is the true God, I believe that the great hallmark of divinity is his pure nature of unselfish agape love. The Bible says very simply in the writings of John that God is love. Love is of God and God is the source of all love.

In the book of Hebrews we read: "God, who at sundry [various] times and in divers [different] manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power (Hebrews 1:1-3)." Jesus is the express image of the Father's person. Interestingly, the Greek word that is translated *express image* transliterates into English as *charakter* and the root of this Greek word means a tool for engraving or an engraver, the concept being that something has been engraved, fixed, or etched. Our character is what we have been molded and engraved to become. If you take a piece of metal and etch into it, you create a permanent mark in it, and the character of the Father is impressed in Jesus like that.

In John 14:9, Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father, and Jesus responded: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Jesus is saying, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." Jesus is so much like the Father that he could say, "I and my Father are one (John 10:30)."

The Apostle Paul understood and taught this principle:

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:3-6).

Beloved, when we see Jesus, we see exactly what our heavenly Father is like. As we think about the different instances in the gospels where Jesus met and dealt with people, for instance, the woman who was caught in the act of

adultery (John 8) and Nicodemus (John 3), we know this is exactly how God would have treated these people, because Jesus is the express image of the Father. He has the very character and the very nature of the Father, so everything we see in Jesus we know is in the Father also.

Since the very quality and nature of God is love, we know that Jesus has that very same quality too. It is interesting, friends, but the assurance we have that God is love is in the truth that Jesus is the begotten Son of God. Because he is begotten of the very nature and substance of the Father, we know that he is just like the Father in every respect. The life of Jesus was a demonstration full of love. It is his very nature and being, and since he is the express image of the Father, we know he received this love from the Father. Together they are beings of total love and have great love and appreciation for one another.

God loves his Son dearly. There are several verses in the gospel of John that speak about this. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand (John 3:35)." The word love here in the Greek is *agape*. It is an unselfish, principled love that God has. Agape is God's very nature and it is this love that God wants us each to have and he can embody that love in us as he dwells in our hearts.

In John 5:20 we read, "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth." Jesus also affirms the Father's love for him: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again (John 10:17)." God loves us, but God loves Jesus in a unique and special way because he was willing to lay down his life for us. This reveals how much God loves us as well.

Talking to his disciples at the last supper, Jesus said: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love (John 15:9)." God loves Jesus and Jesus loves his Father. God loves man and Jesus loves man, and we are to love the Father and the Son. Love forms a circle. God did not design love to be a one-way street. If we have this love in our hearts, it will be something that continues to flow to and from one another.

Speaking to the Father in his prayer, Jesus said: "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:26)." So, the love that God has and has declared for his Son, he wants to dwell in our hearts. That is beautiful. God is so powerful that he can take a vile, wicked heart and change it into pure love like his. He can take people who were once headhunters and cannibals and change them into beautiful, sweet people! (See "Youth's Corner," p. 19.)

The Son loves the Father also. In John 10:14, 15 the Revised Standard Version translation says: "I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father." God has declared Jesus to be, as Zechariah 13:7 says, "the man that is my fellow," one who knows and loves just as God does.

Jesus spoke of the relationship between love and obedience in John 14:15: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Obedience is one of the highest forms of love that we can show to another. In Hebrews 10 we read: "Wherefore when he [Jesus] 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 (vs. 5-7)." Jesus showed this high form of love in always doing God's will.

... the unity and love between Christ and his Father bear the credentials to the world of Christ's divinity (*The Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1896).

What really demonstrated Christ's divinity when he came as a man? Was it because he could perform great miracles? No, for the Bible says that God did those miracles through Christ. We know that Jesus was not omnipresent when he was upon the earth, and he was not omniscient, for the Bible says Jesus "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52)." Jesus had to learn like we do. In fact, Jesus said he did not even know the time of his second coming. That was something only the Father knew (Mark 13:32). We know Jesus was not immortal because he died on the cross for our sins. The one thing that really shows the divinity of Christ is his pure, matchless love that he and the Father have.

Ellen White continues:

Transformed in character, the believer presents the fact that Christ alone can reshape, purify, and ennoble the soul. The love that God has manifested toward men has no parallel. Jesus says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life" for the sheep. In this expression he would prove to man that the Father's love is so large, so unbounded towards man, that he even loves the Son for the sacrifice which he made for the recovering of humanity. God himself suffered in the suffering of his Son. While Jesus walked the earth in the habiliments of humanity, he could say, "I and my Father are one" Having undertaken the work of redemption, the Lord spares nothing, however costly, which is essential to the completion of his design. He withholds not heaven itself, but continues to surround men with its favors, heaping gift upon gift, until the world itself is flooded with its boundless mercy and love. Jesus says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full (*The Signs of the Times*, March 5, 1896).

The love of God and of his Son, by its very nature, extends out to humanity. That is the nature of true love. It wants to express itself and to share. God demonstrated his great love for man in giving of his only begotten Son. This is what the Bible holds out as the one great hallmark of God's measureless love for humanity—that he gave his Son. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God did something concrete for us—he sent his Son, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:10, 11)."

Not only does the Father love us, "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God (John 16:27)," but the Bible assures us that Jesus also loves us: "Now before the feast of the pass-over, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end (John 13:1)." Jesus has promised to manifest himself to us: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him (John 14:21)." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me (John 17:23)." God's love is so great. In Ephesians 2:4, 5 Paul says: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)." We see both the love of the Father and of the Son in the cross of Calvary.

Paul identified himself with Christ in his crucifixion: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20)." We see God's great love manifested in the gift of his Son, and Jesus loved us so much that he gave himself also for us.

The whole theme of the Bible is the love of God. From cover to cover, the Bible is, in essence, a revelation of the Father's love. In the story of Sam Dick starting on p. 19, Pastor Parker could have told the headhunters many things that they needed to change, and I am sure he did give them good instruction as time went on, but the most important thing he could tell them was that there is a God in heaven who made them and who loves them.

Romans 8:35-39 says: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am

persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” There is nothing that can separate us from that love.

The message of Revelation comes “from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood (Revelation 1:5).” He does love us, and he loves us one at a time. God loves us all, but he is concerned about the individual.

In John 11 we read the story of Lazarus. Jesus intentionally stayed away so that the arrows of death might take Lazarus to the grave, allowing Jesus to do one of his greatest miracles. Jesus told the disciples in verse 4: “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.” Jesus loves individuals and he loves families, and the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was a welcomed reprieve to Jesus: “At the home of Lazarus, Jesus had often found rest. The Saviour had no home of His own; He was dependent on the hospitality of His friends and disciples, and often, when weary, thirsting for human fellowship, He had been glad to escape to this peaceful household, away from the suspicion and jealousy of the angry Pharisees. Here He found a sincere welcome, and pure, holy friendship. Here He could speak with simplicity and perfect freedom, knowing that His words would be understood and treasured (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 524).”

At the Passover supper “there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved (John 13:23), and who was that disciple? It was John. This is mentioned again in John 19:26: “When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved,” and in John 21:7. Before he was crucified, Jesus entrusted his mother, Mary, to John, the disciple whom he loved.

How much does Jesus love us? He loved us enough to die for us, but there is something else. Jesus loves us enough to warn us and to rebuke and chasten us. In the message to the Laodician church, Jesus says: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent (Revelation 3:19).” Rebuke is not wrong of itself. It can be good, provided the rebuke is appropriate and done in a proper way, for it is a manifestation of love. It teaches us that others love us and that God loves us.

We have considered the love of God and of Jesus and their love for mankind, but we now need to discuss man’s love. We are told in Genesis 1:26 that man was originally made in the image of God. God has a nature of love. This quality and quantity of love is inherently only embodied in God. God, however, has made man capable of loving. When Adam and Eve fell, they lost the pure love that they had had before their sin and they quickly began to accuse each other, condemn, and find fault with one another. They had fallen far away

from God and his image by that one seemingly insignificant sin. Through the plan of redemption, however, mankind is brought back and restored to the place from which he has fallen. As we are now, we naturally do not have love, except for the love of self, and that is not true agape love at all. We want to serve self, but true agape love is an unselfish experience and principle in our lives, and that is the kind of experience God wants us to have.

Does God really command us to love? While love is not something that can be forced, the greatest commandment is to love! Mark 12:28 says, “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?” What he was asking was, “What is the most important commandment,” not necessarily what is the first commandment given? “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment (vs. 29, 30).” So, the most important thing the Bible tells us to do is that we should love God. Now it is true you cannot force love. It must be the natural out flowing of our relationship to God, but as Lynnford Beachy likes to say, “To know him is to love him.” Love begets love.

“We love him, because he first loved us (1 John 4:19).” In John 12:32, Jesus says, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” The love that lifted Jesus up on the cross draws us to him. It produces a love in our hearts, and, indeed, as we learn to know who God is and what he is like, we will love him, for we see how he has loved us and what he has done for us.

Jesus then tells us what the second commandment is in Mark 12:31: “And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” Beloved, there is nothing greater that we can do for our fellow man than to love that person. We must be willing to even give up our lives for our friends. “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; [How?] as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:34, 35).” Jesus also says: “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:12, 13).” That is the kind of love that Jesus has for us. We are to love as he loves, with a self-sacrificing love, a love that stands every test, a love that is not fickle and changeable.

Now, I may not be called upon to give up my life for any one in a physical, literal way. Even though the Apostle Paul was martyred, we cannot say that he exchanged his life for someone else’s life. But Paul in essence said he was giving up his life for his people, and he did. He sacrificed his whole being, his life, what he could have been and what he could

have done, for others, and, as Christians, that is our goal in life too. Our relationship to others is to serve them and if it means to stop doing something because it takes up my time instead of helping a brother, then that is what I have to do. If it means that instead of buying a new car, I send the money where it will be used in God's work, that is what I do. I give what I am and all that I am for others and that is one great way that love is shown. We cannot love our brother, however, unless we love God first and this is also why loving God is the first of all commandments.

In 1 John chapter 4 we read about the importance of loving God first. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God (v. 7)." We cannot love unless we know God and we are born of God. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also (vs. 20, 21)." So, if we really love God, will we love our brother? Of course! But, if we lack love for our brother, what is the real root problem? We truly do not love God as we should. This might be difficult to accept and we might say, "Wait a minute. I love God because God is good and faithful and I can love him, but this brother over here is a pretty rough guy and I do not like him." If we love God, we will love his children because each one is prized. I was talking with a nice young man recently on the telephone, and we were talking about the need to really show love. He remarked, "Well, for some people it is harder to show love than for others." And I said, "Yes, it is true that sometimes people will do things that will cause us some consternation and even aggravation, but we need to realize that every soul, every person that we ever meet on this earth, is a soul that Jesus died for and if that person had been the only one upon this earth, Jesus would have died for that one person. So, every individual, despite the appearance, is a candidate for heaven." That is the way God looks upon us and that is the way he wants us to look upon people too.

In 1 John 3:14 we read: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Jesus told us how we would be able to recognize his true disciples. Did he say they would speak in tongues or keep the seventh day Sabbath? Instead, he said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35)." This is the hallmark. I have known some people who I have thought were really sweet and genuinely nice people who appeared to be full of love. I found, however, that when some of their most cherished doctrines, like the doctrine of the trinity, were crossed, they did not always stay sweet, loving, and nice. They could sometimes become very aggravated and upset. The Bible says that if we do not love our brother, then we have death, instead of eternal life, abiding in us.

In Romans 13:8 we are told to "owe no man any thing, but to love one another." Love is the one great important principle of life.

I would like to conclude with some thoughts concerning a publication I have had in my file cabinet for a long time and which I recently unearthed. It is a little magazine put out by Mt. Zion Publications, a ministry of Mt. Zion Bible Church in Pensacola, Florida. It is a quarterly booklet called, *Free Grace Broadcaster*. On the front of the magazine, someone has written: "Excellent articles by the greats of the past. EGW used and quoted." In this booklet are six articles on the doctrine of the Trinity, authored by G. D. Watson, Jonathan Edwards, Thomas Watson, and Edward Bickersteth. We may be familiar with Jonathan Edwards. In a search through Ellen White's writings, I could only find her quoting Jonathan Edwards, of the authors listed, and she did not quote him in a favorable light. (So, this shows that not everything you hear is always true.) At first I wondered if I could learn anything from this book as it was all about the Trinity, but I started to read through the study by Jonathan Edwards, and even though a lot of it does not make sense, God taught me something through Jonathan Edwards in this booklet. What he taught me is the basis of this article.

Edwards wrote:

Christ promises that He and the Father will love believers (John 14: 21, 23), but no mention is made of the Holy Ghost, and the love of Christ and the love of the Father are often distinctly mentioned, but never any mention of the Holy Ghost's love.

(This I suppose to be the reason why we have never any account of the Holy Ghost's loving either the Father or the Son, or of the Son's or the Father's loving the Holy Ghost, or of the Holy Ghost's loving the saints, tho these things are so often predicated of both the other Persons (Jonathan Edwards in an article entitled 'The Trinity,' as published in *Free Grace Broadcaster*, Issue 165, Summer 1998, p. 13.)

This is true. The Bible speaks about God's love and the love of the Son, and it speaks about both of them loving the saints. The Bible also speaks about our love for God, and if you have a trinity of three coequal, coeternal persons or beings who have existed from eternity and they all have the exact same nature, why is that we can read about the Father loving the Son and the Son loving the Father, but we never read about the Father or the Son loving the Holy Spirit? There is no mention in the Bible of the Holy Spirit loving the Father or the Son. There is no mention of the Holy Ghost loving mankind. Jonathan Edwards says we only assume it is true because the Holy Ghost is one of the three persons, just like the Father and Son, and therefore since they love, the Holy Spirit must love also.

Friends, the truth of the matter is that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. Now, it is true God loves us, but if there was a Holy Spirit that was a separate and distinct person apart from

Florida Revival Retreat

Last Call

By David Fahnstock

the Father and apart from the Son and if there was a Trinity, then that Holy Spirit would love us too and that love would be expressed in the Bible, but no where in the Bible do we read that the Holy Spirit loves us. No where in the Bible are we instructed to worship the Holy Spirit or to pray to the Holy Spirit. Yet, we find today that this is what we must believe today to be considered orthodox. It is anathema if we do not worship, pray to, and love the Holy Spirit.

The Bible tells us that we are to love God with all of our hearts first, and Jesus is specifically speaking of the Father. Jesus tells us that we are to love the Father. We show that love by being obedient to God and by loving one another. This is really the test of our Christianity—it is whether we have that love, that perfect love, that kind of love of the Father.

At the beginning of this article, we began by showing the essential characteristic of God is unselfish agape love. This is what God offers us and what he wants us to return back to him and to our fellow man. This is the great work he is attempting to accomplish in each one of us. “When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 69).”

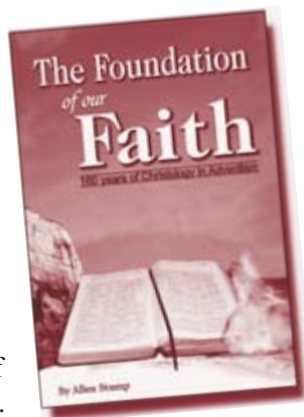
The Foundation of Our Faith Reprinted

We are thankful to announce that the book, *The Foundation of Our Faith*, is being reprinted for the fifth time.

This volume explores the roots of Seventh-day Adventism from the Christian Connection and the Millerite movement to our present time. Believing that the voice of Ellen G. White presents an inspired history of the Advent movement, this book explores Adventist Christology and demonstrates the harmony between the Bible, the writings of Ellen G. White, and the writings of the Advent pioneers concerning the doctrine of God.

We have performed a major upgrade to this book. Several pages of truth-filled information have been added on the Holy Spirit and the sonship of Jesus Christ, and answers to many difficult Bible texts and Spirit of Prophecy references have been provided. We have redesigned the cover, and we have changed the dimensions of the book, so that it can be held more easily.

We are working very hard to have the book ready by the time this issue of *Old Paths* is published. Please be patient with us if we are not exactly on schedule. The suggested donation for this book is \$7.50.



There will be a “February Revival Retreat,” February 28–March 4 at the River Forest Campground, located in the southeast corner of the Ocala National Forest on the scenic St. Johns River. All are invited to attend. While brothers and sisters from the Georgia and Florida areas will be coming, many others from different areas farther north will also be attending.

The theme of the meetings will be, “Discerning The Signs of The Times.” There will be much time for prayer.

Speakers will be: Willis Smith (Ohio), Jeff Pippinger (Arkansas), Allen Stump (West Virginia), David Clayton (Jamaica), Ann Ford (West Virginia), Lynnford Beachy (West Virginia), and Barrington Hendricks (Florida).

A lunch will be provided on Sabbath. Each one will be responsible for their meals, and a nice kitchen is available. You might wish to consider bringing simple fruits and pancakes or waffles for breakfast, and simple salads and bean dishes for dinner in quantities enough for your family. This way, if you choose to combine your meals with others, they will be compatible.

There are no RV hookups, but plenty of room for RV’s and tents. There is a main building for meetings, showers, rest rooms, and, as mentioned earlier, a kitchen. If you can make it, please come. Mosquitoes may be present, so be prepared.

The River Forest Campground is approximately six miles west of Deland and twenty-five miles northeast of Eustis. It is located near the St. Johns River on County Road 42, about ¼ mile west of Crows Bluff, off of State Road 44.

For more information, please contact Jerri Raymond, (407) 291-9565. Hope to see you there!



West Virginia Camp Meeting Announcement

We are pleased to announce the 2007 West Virginia camp meeting will be held June 12-16 in beautiful Smyrna valley located between Pineville and Welch, West Virginia. We will share further details as plans are formalized, but we wanted to let you know the dates so those needing to plan ahead could have reasonable time to prepare.

The Final Generation Part 5

By Allen Stump

In the last four issues of *Old Paths*, we have looked at specific Bible prophecies that plainly declare that we are living at the time of this earth's final generation.

Understanding the importance of these prophecies helps God's people to know where they are at in the stream of time and the critical need they have for preparation now! How sad it would be if we fully understood all the prophecies and knew all future events exactly as they are to transpire, and yet not be ready for the coming of Jesus! No wonder Paul was inspired to write: "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2)."

The book of Daniel is an excellent example of how God prepares his people while at the same time teaching them prophecy. The book of Daniel contains six prophecies, five of which run unto the last days, and six stories. The purpose of these stories is not simply to recite history but to teach God's people how to live during the fulfillment of the prophecies. God does not want us unprepared! Interestingly, the one great theme of the stories of Daniel is worship! The central issue in the book of Revelation, a book especially for the last days, is worship. Our worship of God is of utmost importance. While many Christians would not openly worship Satan, Satan knows that if he can interfere with the Christian's worship of the Father and the Son he will be able to at last receive their homage of these people.

There are many forms and acts of worship, both public and private, but they all should involve the believer entering into the sacred presence of God. To sin, "our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29)." The only thing that will allow the close fellowship that God so dearly desires is for the believer to have the spotless righteousness of Christ. While we are to have our private time with God throughout each day, God has also ordained public worship as one of the means to prepare us for the fellowship of the Father and of the Son and for the society of heavenly angels, and this concept will be the focus of this article.

I have had a concern for several years about the *home church* movement within Adventism. While some *home church* groups have done well, other groups have lost focus and disbanded, leaving many of Christ's sheep without fellowship with their brethren and without the ability to publicly worship God.

A mind-set has arisen within some people such as that which is found in the Old Testament book of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6)." In part, this attitude can come to the believer as a reaction to the oppression of being lorded-over while the believer has been part

of the hierarchical main-line church. Their so-called "liberty" of action may be fine for those who wish to be independent of others and who wish to have freedom to do "their own thing," but by so doing they forfeit their responsibility to their brethren. This freedom is not in accordance with God's plan for unity and with his plan for strengthening and edifying the believers. God instructed the children of Israel concerning the blessed results of working together when he declared: "How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight (Deuteronomy 32:30)?" He also had told them: "And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight (Leviticus 26:8)." If one person could chase a thousand, you would think two people would be able to chase two thousand, but God blesses two people who work together to be able to chase ten thousand! When sending out the disciples for missionary work, Jesus did not send them alone, but in groups of two! (See Luke 10:1; Mark 11:1; 14:13.)

Public worship is a great blessing ordained of God and if we wish to find fault with churches that are hierarchically-based we may, but let us not go to the even worse extreme of anarchy! The concept of gathering together for worship is ordained of God. The fourth commandment of God declares that we are to "remember the sabbath day to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8)." Concerning His holy day, God also declares, "the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation (Leviticus 23:3)." A convocation is a gathering of people.

While worship has always been important, it is especially applicable to the people of God who will be a part of the final generation. God counsels us not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and *so much the more, as ye see the day approaching* (Hebrews 10:25)." Commentators differ on their understanding of Paul's expression, "the day." Some commentators believe that this phrase refers to the second coming of Christ and some think it should be applied to the Day of Atonement. The expression "the day" would to the Hebrew mind certainly evoke the idea of the Day of Atonement. While I personally believe the Day of Atonement is the best understanding of this phrase, in either case it should speak to those living at the end of time in the final generation. If those who saw the day *approaching* were to not forsake the assembling of themselves together, how much more so should those living (*present tense*) in that day not forsake worship together! Dare we think that we may disregard God's command with impunity?

God has promised to bless his people when they humbly meet together. Jesus says, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them

(Matthew 18:20).” Notice these verses from David concerning his love for public worship:

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD (Ps 122:1).

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. ... For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness (Ps 84:2, 10).

Sometimes I hear people say that they are more blessed worshipping alone at home. The complaint is heard that the local group they could otherwise worship with is not spiritual enough and/or members are critical of each other and are even difficult to get along with. Firstly, let me say that we should not condone doctrinal error. Jesus said, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).” “Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Mark 7:7).” The counsel God has been pleased to give us has an important bearing on our salvation:

God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness (*Early Writings*, p. 125).

We should all agree that we are not to worship where we know error upon error is being taught. I am not taking about when an occasional mistake is made or a misspoken word is said, but when we can expect the main course to be error, we should not submit to that unless we are specially sent of God on a mission.

Let us go back and answer the person who thinks that spiritual growth is better at home. For those of us who live isolated from other believers and who cannot meet together regularly for worship, God will surely bless us at home. “For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust (Psalm 103:14).” If we have the chance, however, to meet with people who sincerely wish to grow and with whom we have no major doctrinal differences, we have a duty to God, to ourselves, and to the brothers and sisters in the area, to worship with them. We may think we know better than God, but, I assure you, we do not and God knows best. This is not to say that we might be able to learn more at home, at least in some areas. If so, then take time at home to learn of God and then still attend meetings in your area, if they are available and if your health and circumstances allow. Why? “There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 20).” May God save us from having an “I am holier than thou (Isaiah 65:5)” attitude! We might

think we are blessed and that perhaps we already know all there is to know. If so, then let us accept the challenge to help those around us who are struggling. Let us become a part of the solution and not a part of the problem. We are our brother’s keeper and we should be thankful that God gives us the chance to minister to those who need his love and care.

The prophet Malachi speaks to us in plain words concerning our need to encourage and help others and how God responds to it: “Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him (Malachi 3:16, 17).” Those that speak often to each other are noted especially by God and he counts them as his jewels.

Psalm 84:4 proclaims the blessing of those who dwell in the house of the Lord. “Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.” David exclaims, “One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple (Psalm 27:4).” Why did David want to dwell in the house of the LORD? It was simply because that was where our Father manifested himself! I want to encourage each reader to also remember that the redeemed will meet in heaven on a regular basis:

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

If we are going to worship God in heaven each Sabbath as one grand family, should we not learn to imitate that pattern here as we are able? “The life on earth is the beginning of the life in heaven; education on earth is an *initiation* into the principles of heaven; the life-work here is a *training* for the life-work there. What we now are, in character and holy service, is the sure foreshadowing of what we shall be (*Education*, p. 307).”

During the times of the apostles in the New Testament, local church groups met mostly in homes, but they also met in schools, by riversides, and wherever the people could meet. Even during Paul’s time there was among some a failure to be faithful in assembling together. If we are to return to an apostolic faith and even go beyond it, we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

Not only should we meet on Sabbath, but, where possible, we should attend midweek prayer services. These midweek meetings will be most helpful to the people of God.

“The prayer meeting [should] be faithfully attended (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 461).” God instructs us

that neither courtship nor even marriage plans should cause a lack of interest or attendance in the prayer meeting. (See *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 44 and *The Adventist Home*, pp. 50, 51.)

There are many blessings that we may obtain from these meetings, and “all should feel it a privilege to take part (*Gospel Workers*, p. 171).” Further, we are told: “Praying together will bind hearts to God in bonds that will endure; confessing Christ openly and bravely, exhibiting in our characters His meekness, humility, and love, will charm others with the beauty of holiness (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 175).” Brothers and sisters, do you want your heart bound with those of like believers? One of God’s means to do this is to have believers pray together.

Ellen White also wrote: “I know that the Lord loves His church. It is not to be disorganized or broken up into independent atoms (*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 68).” We recognize that “from the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 11),” and it is not constituted by the names on a church membership book. The need for those who are in or have been in the *home church* movement to pull together is tremendous.

Based upon the commands, as well as the promises, of God, I want to invite you to attend Sabbath meetings, as well as prayer meetings, whenever you can as they are available in your area. We at Smyrna wish to encourage all to be active in a local fellowship if it is at all possible. While encouraging such action, we also realize that there are many believers in present truth who are scattered far and wide and who have no one to worship with or who are not able to attend meetings due to either being sick or caring for someone who is sick. We would like to invite all such people to join our meetings, either over the Internet or through phone conferencing, and have fellowship and worship with us.

Smyrna is currently broadcasting their weekly Sabbath worship service, as well as Wednesday evening prayer meetings, live over the Internet and by phone conferencing. This summer we plan to also broadcast our camp meeting services. Since we began broadcasting, we have had our share of challenges, but recently the quality has improved dramatically and we are very thankful that listeners can now hear much better and with fewer interruptions. Please see the article on page 15 for directions in accessing these services.

Getting Our Homes Prepared for Worship

We are very thankful for each one listening from home or from wherever you are at. As noted earlier, we want you to be a part of the service though you may be located far away. For those listening at home, we suggest that you approach the services as you would if you were having worship at home. The room used should be neat and clean. Worldly magazines and other nonspiritual reading materials should be put away. If applicable, the telephone line or extra line ringer can be

turned off. Please try to take all precautions so as not to be distracted. When we have worship in our homes, we invite our Father, his Son, and the angels to meet with us and we should do all in our power to provide an atmosphere that they will love to dwell in and an atmosphere which will give us the best chance to receive the blessing that the Lord wants to bestow upon us. This includes forsaking all sin, putting aside differences between family members, and earnestly seeking the blessing of God.

We are also hoping to soon extend the question and answer mode to include the study portion of the Wednesday evening prayer meeting whereby callers can be systematically unmuted to share thoughts or ask questions.

Strive to be Among the 144,000

The Bible speaks of a special group of people known as the 144,000. Though they are mentioned only twice in the book of Revelation, it is clear that they are an exceptional group of people whose lives are very pleasing to God. There will be those from among the final generation that will be a part of the 144,000. We have been instructed to “strive with all the power that God has given us to be among the hundred and forty-four thousand (*The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1905).” Surely this *group* is not made up of “independent atoms.” Would you like to be a part of this group? Then please consider the following counsel:

There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain (*Steps to Christ*, p. 98)

As you go about your daily duties and as you consider what your highest duty to God is, I encourage you to reflect on the following words of inspiration and then plan not only to worship with fellow believers each Sabbath, but also during the week for prayer meeting. Not only will others be blessed with your presence, but you will be richly blessed with God’s presence.

The conflict in which you have to take an active part is found in your every-day life. Will you not in times of trial lay your desires by the side of the written word, and in earnest prayer seek Jesus for counsel? Many declare that it is certainly no harm to go to a concert, and neglect the prayer-meeting, or absent yourself from meetings where God’s servants are to declare to you a message from heaven. It is safe for you to be just where Christ has said he would be. Those who appreciate the words of Christ will not turn aside from the prayer-meeting, or from the meeting where the Lord’s messenger has been sent to tell you concerning things of eternal interest (*The Youth’s Instructor*, March 30, 1893).

More on Service Broadcasts

Our regularly-scheduled services begin at 11:00 a.m. (EST) each Sabbath morning and 7:00 p.m. (EST) on Wednesday evenings.

These broadcasts can be accessed on the Internet via Skype, a communication program, or by simply listening over the telephone. To access Smyrna Chapel services by the Internet you need to have Skype installed on your computer. Downloading Skype is free and easy at www.skype.com. Skype allows communication on levels from chat to audio/video conversations. You may directly access our Skypecast and/or be involved in a chat session by going to our home webpage and following the simple directions. If you are currently running Skype on your computer, you may enter +990008275126052 on your Skype call window to access our broadcast.

In addition to being able to access the services directly from the Internet, you can also listen to the broadcast through the telephone by calling 1-712-432-4990 and, when prompted, entering room #5126052. In Germany you may call 01805007620, and from the UK you may call 08701191313 and then enter the above-listed room number. Long distance charges do apply, but if you live within the United States and have free evening and weekend calling on a cell phone or a plan such as Verizon's Freedom Plan on a land-line phone, you may listen without cost.

How to Listen to Prior Services

You may listen to prior services that have been recorded by using Skype or by calling on the telephone. The numbers are different, however, so please note them. To use Skype, you enter +990008271111 on your Skype call window to access the recording section and, when prompted, enter room number 5126052. After reaching our recordings, you will be given the option of listening to the most current recording by entering "0#" (zero and then the pound [#] symbol) on your Skype call window.

You may also listen to the recordings by telephone by dialing 1-712-432-4999 and, when prompted, entering room #5126052. After reaching our recordings this way, you will also be given the option of listening to the most current recording by entering "0#" (zero and then pound [#] symbol) on your keypad.

If you wish to listen to one of the other recordings, you must know the reference number for the recording. We have included a chart of the current reference numbers, along with descriptive data, for you. A list of the most current recordings will be published each month in *Old Paths* and we will keep a total listing of the messages available and their reference numbers on the Smyrna website. Please see the link under the "Audio Sermons" section of our home page.

All May Participate

We hope that all who listen to the Wednesday evening broadcasts may be blessed by also being an active participant. As we read earlier, "All should feel it a privilege to take part (*Gospel Workers*, p. 171)." Those who are listening by Skype or by telephone may participate in the service by using a special *hand raising* mode. If there are fifteen, twenty, or even more people all wanting to talk without knowing when it is best to or without being able to see each other, you can imagine the confusion it would cause to allow all to have an open line for talking all at once. Therefore, those listening are initially muted from being able to talk to the others in the conference, but with *hand raising*, as it is called, we can know when you wish to have the floor for sharing an experience or a prayer request and your selected line can be unmuted. Here is how it works:

When you are in a conference and wish to speak, press "11" (that is, the number one twice) on your telephone keypad or Skype call window. When you do this, the moderator should see a small yellow hand appear under the question and answer column in the moderator's control panel. This action will be followed by a message that says, "The moderator sees your raised hand." Your line will be unmuted by the action of the moderator when your turn has come and you

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Current List of Messages Available for Listening:

Message	Speaker	Date	Reference #	Length
The Flesh and the Spirit	Allen Stump	December 2, 2006	60096	38 minutes
Why Should We be Discouraged?	Dennis Robertson	December 9, 2006	55896	48 minutes
The Word	Glen Ford	December 13, 2006	56936	30 minutes
Redeeming Grace	Allen Stump	December 16, 2006	57614	64 minutes
God's Love for the Individual	Allen Stump	December 20, 2006	58523	29 minutes
The Precious Gift of Love	Allen Stump	December 23, 2006	59055	63 minutes
Mustard Seed Faith	Allen Stump	December 27, 2006	59575	23 minutes
Seeking After God	Allen Stump	December 30, 2006	60105	22 minutes
Trials	Allen Stump	January 3, 2007	60527	31 minutes

Mustard Seed Faith

By Allen Stump

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Romans 12: 1, 2).” Paul is addressing the need to have our minds transformed. Before our flesh can be translated at the second coming of Jesus, our minds must first be transformed. You might be tempted to think that this may be good for someone else, but not for me. God has a plan for other people, but maybe he has left me out. Notice, however, what Paul goes on to say in verse 3: “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” Beloved, “God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34),” and these texts teach us that God looks upon each of us equally and loves each one of us with a preciousness that is sometimes difficult for us to fully comprehend. God says if you are prone to think of yourself in a pharisaical manner, (thinking that you are someone special) don’t! We are all precious to God, but none should think of themselves as being someone more or less important than another. Do not think of yourself as being higher than anyone else because God has dealt to *every* individual “the measure of faith (v. 3).” That is what we need in our lives to bridge that position between being in sinful flesh to having the Spirit of God ruling in our hearts and our minds. We need faith; so, God has planted in each one of our hearts a certain measure of faith.

In the third chapter of the book of Genesis we read about the fall of Adam and Eve. We also read about something God said he was going to do, something he would have to do if his image was to be restored in man. When Adam and Eve fell, their natures became so depraved that, of themselves, they could do nothing good anymore. They were not even of themselves able to receive God’s mercy. The Lord, speaking to the serpent, said: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel (Genesis 3:15).” The seed the Bible speaks of here is primarily Jesus. But, as we consider what was to follow after the fall of man, we know that Jesus did not need enmity put between himself and Satan. There was already a variance that had been established, but in our own hearts we needed something. We need a jumpstart, we needed a seed of faith in our lives to be able to even be drawn to God, and so God has given to each one of us a measure of faith. He has given each one of us an ability to believe, to see his love, to appreciate it, and to allow that faith to work in our lives to bring forth that which is good. God knew that this was necessary and Jesus also knew it was necessary and therefore in the

“counsel of peace (Zechariah 6:13)” it was decided that God would put within man “the measure of faith.”

John testifies that “Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man (John 2:24, 25).” “He knows by experience what are the weaknesses of humanity, what are our wants, and where lies the strength of our temptations; for He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 329).” Jesus “took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181).”

We thankfully praise God that Jesus never once submitted or surrendered to any of those temptations. He was always victorious over every one. The Bible says “in him is no sin (1 John 3:5).” He knew what temptation was like firsthand. He knew what it was like to be sorely tempted. In fact there is a statement in the Spirit of Prophecy that says that in proportion to his divine nature he was tempted that much greater than we are tempted:

It is impossible for man to know the strength of Satan’s temptations to the Son of God. Every temptation that seems so afflicting to man in his daily life, so difficult to resist and overcome, was brought to bear upon the Son of God in as much greater degree as his excellence of character was superior to that of fallen man (*Confrontation*, p. 31).

So, Jesus understands temptation quite well. He knows about the need that we have for faith. Sometimes we may feel weak and that we failed the Lord. We want to do better and the Lord wants us to do better, and I am encouraged by a statement in *The Desire of Ages*, p. 353 that speaks about Jesus: “He did not censure human weakness.” As you read through the gospels, you see this principle clearly enacted. You find that in meeting the woman caught in the act of adultery mentioned in John 8 Jesus did not censure her for her weakness. He did not condemn her for giving into lust. You find instead that he lifted her up and encouraged her. That is the way Jesus is with us. He has given to us that little seed of faith and he provide the encouragement for it to grow, and if we will allow it, that faith will grow in our lives and in our experiences and blossom into a beautiful reality in our lives.

One day “the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith (Luke 17:5).” What Jesus did is very interesting. As the story goes, he did not try to increase their faith, but rather he tried to help them to understand the power of even a small amount of faith. “And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you (v. 6).” It was not that the faith they had needed to be increased because faith is the strongest thing in the world.

God has “dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3, KJV) in giving Christ to every man.

There is therefore no opportunity for anyone to plead that his faith is weak. He may not have accepted and made use of the gift, but there is no such thing as “weak faith.” A man may be “weak in faith,” that is, may be afraid to depend on faith; but faith itself is as strong as the Word of God (E. J. Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, p. 41, edited by RJW).

Jesus was trying to help the disciples understand how great and powerful faith is, that if we just have even a very small amount we can do great and wonderful things because faith comes by the Word of God (Romans 10:17), and the Word of God, being God’s Word, is his own power!

Have you ever seen mustard seed? Mustard seed is very tiny. In Matthew 17 Jesus uses mustard seed to teach about faith. The first thirteen verses of Matthew 17 deal with the event at the Mount of Transfiguration, and while Jesus was upon that mount with Peter, James, and John, there was something else happening down below.

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out (vs. 14-19)?

When Jesus had called his disciples apart, “he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease (Matthew 10:1).” Later after Jesus had sent the seventy out for missionary service, they came back to Jesus rejoicing and said, “Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name (Luke 10:17).” But in the story recorded in Matthew 17, the disciples were powerless. What had happened? Jesus said:

Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit [however] this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting (Matthew 10:20, 21).

I would like to propose to you that Jesus was not instituting here a new program. He was not instituting a program of faith, fasting, and prayer. He was giving us a deeper perspective of a program of faith, the faith of a grain of mustard seed, and what he was telling us is that by fasting and prayer, we place ourselves in a position that enables the Lord to work within us and build that faith in our lives. We might think that we are beyond the days of fasting and prayer, but Jesus speaks to the contrary here. He says that sometimes victories are won only by this means.

Jesus spoke a parable about mustard seed. “Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof (Matthew 13:31, 32).” Although the concept here is the kingdom of heaven instead of faith, it helps us to understand this concept that all we need is just the little bit of what God gives us because it is so great. I hope that each one of us wants as much as he or she can get. The mustard seed is very small and becomes a great tree, compared to what it started off as, so that even the birds of the air come and lodge in it. Jesus says that if we have faith like a grain of mustard seed, not *small* faith, for even with a small *amount* of faith great things will happen because faith is so powerful, and, friends, we should want as many grains of faith as possible.

I would like to give you another illustration of the benefit of fasting and praying. The vision recorded in the ninth chapter of Daniel is an interpretation of part of the vision from chapter 8 and is given in answer to the fasting and praying of Daniel. “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes (Daniel 9:3)” (See also Daniel 9:4-23.) A more complete picture of the vision of chapter 8 is given in chapter 9, particularly the part concerning the *mareh* or the 2,300 days. From the instruction that Gabriel gave Daniel, he understood much of the vision as recorded in chapter 8, but he did not understand everything. He wanted to understand more.

“A few years afterward, however, the prophet desired to learn more of subjects not yet fully explained, and again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God (*The Sanctified Life*, p. 49).” “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled (Daniel 10:1-3).”

Daniel was not fasting for three weeks. It would be difficult for most people to fast for three weeks, even a strong person, and Daniel was an older man at this time. But Daniel, who already had a very temperate diet, was even more careful in his diet during this period of seeking God. He ate more simply. He was careful not to overeat or indulge in anything that could in any way cause his mind to be clouded and because of this God was able to do something very special for Daniel in answer to his prayer and his eating of no pleasant bread during that time. God enabled his faith to reach out and see even Christ: “Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his

eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude (Dan. 10:5, 6).” “This description is similar to that given by John when Christ was revealed to him upon the Isle of Patmos. No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel (*The Sanctified Life*, pp, 49, 50).”

Gabriel calls Daniel “a man greatly beloved (Daniel 10:11).” God would have us to know that we are each special to him and greatly beloved. Do you know how I know that? I know because Jesus died for each one of us and if there had only been one individual upon this earth, Jesus would have died for that individual. (See Luke 15:2-10.) Do you think that takes great love? You would have to be greatly beloved for God to give his only begotten Son for you. David was a man after God’s own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), and Abraham was called the friend of God (James 2:23). Part of the reason God could designate these men as such is because of their great desire and their great interest in knowing him better and loving and serving him.

If we have a faith as a mustard seed we can find peace and pardon through Jesus Christ. “Therefore being justified by faith [we need faith to be justified], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).” Justification by faith brings something in its train—it brings peace. I have known people who are desperately looking for peace, and they felt that if the Lord would just give them peace that they would then turn their lives over to him. That is not the order, however, the Bible gives. The Bible says if you want peace you have to turn your life over to God first. Paul continues, “By whom also we have access [how] by faith [and how much faith does it take? Just like a grain of mustard seed.]

into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience (vs. 2, 3).”

We need to realize, beloved, that even though we are greatly loved of God, even though God looks upon us as “the apple of his eye (Zechariah 2:8),” even though he has made all these provisions for us to be saved and indeed longs for us

to be in his kingdom, we need to realize there will still be tribulation and trials in our lives because there is dross that the Lord wants to remove and he knows that sometimes this purification of character only happens through trials and tribulations. If Christ were to deliver us from all the problems simply by removing them from us we could never develop character, for character is only developed through experiences as we choose to stand on



“Faith as a grain of mustard seed”

the side of truth and righteousness. Paul says that we can also glory through tribulation because he realized what the tribulation was going to do for him. It was going to draw him closer to Christ and it was going to teach him to be fearless in depending upon God through the faith of Jesus Christ, faith, “like a grain of mustard seed (Luke 13:19).”

REPORTS FROM ZIMBABWE

More Workers in Zimbabwe—Vusa Ncube

I really thank the Lord for sustaining His work. Door to door visits were made in one part of the city of Bulawayo, where we had short studies with those interested. It was really a blessed time in my experience of working for the Lord. Most of the people had some interesting questions, especially on the doctrine of the trinity, because the quarterly lessons of the mainstream church brought some false ideas about the Godhead. This contributed to sound studies resulting in some members taking a new stand to teach the truth about the God of the Bible. We closed these studies by inviting people to a meeting in which the Lord did wonders as the Word of God was humbly shared. This resulted in Brother Comfort Mguni [Youth Communication Director] and Elder T. Mithi, made decisions to follow the truth and provoked much trouble in their families. Thus it is my request in their behalf that we may remember them in our prayers. The good news and encouraging act was from Brother Mguni who, amid family disputes, could join me when I moved to the next planned

two week meeting in the outskirts of the city. His presence with me was a true living testimony that the Lord has power to save. The meetings started in a low profile with an attendance of about 20 people with young people out numbering other groups. It was nice to meet young people of great zeal for the Lord. As we neared the close of the second week the crowd swelled to about 60 people each meeting. Brother Mguni was of great inspiration and as he shared his testimony to the crowd, most hearts were moved. The Lord showered the sown seed of His Word and did bear fruits, and I saw eight souls make their decisions to be baptized and many more really appreciated the Word of the Lord.

As I’m writing my heart is filled with joy that the Lord is working wonders in his people. I thank God for raising up supportive brethren in the likes of Brothers Mithi and Mguni, who have helped spread the good news about God like wild-fire, even though they receive threats. Because of these Brothers’ influence a number of meetings have been conducted and video cassettes have been viewed. This has been a

Continued on page 24, column 1

Youth's Corner – The Story of Sam Dick

(This story was presented to the children at Smyrna Chapel on a recent Sabbath and is based upon God's Warrior of Vanuatu, The Story of Sam Dick, by Walter Scragg and Nancy Ireland. Onycha Holt)

Our story this month is very special and took place many, many years ago on the island of Malekula in Vanuatu. The people on this island did not know about Jesus. In fact, they were headhunters! That means the men on this island looked for other people to kill and once they killed them, they kept their heads and they even ate the people! So, it was a very awful and wicked place to be. On this island was a little baby named Sam Dick and our story is about how Sam Dick and his people learned of Jesus and learned how to be sweet, gentle, and loving people.

Sam Dick's father's name was Ool. He was a very important person in his tribe, and he was only four feet tall. That means he might have been about how tall you are, if you are still young or just short. Ool, Sam Dick's father, was strong, very mean, and a headhunter. He also was wealthy and had a lot of pigs, including a special wild boar which only the chief of the tribe and the second in command of the tribe could own. It was Ool's wife's duty, above everything else, to take care of this wild boar because owning it meant he was a very important person in the village.

One morning Mrs. Ool woke up with little Sam Dick beside her, but Sam Dick did not want to wake up. In fact, he had a very high fever and he was very sick. Mrs. Ool began to be worried that something was wrong with her baby and she knew Ool would be very angry if something happened to Sam Dick because her baby was a BOY and boys were very important in the tribe. She wondered what she could do. She stood up and tried to gently shake the baby awake, but he would not wake up. "Wake up little Sam Dick," she cried, "Wake up, please!" But Sam Dick was too sick to wake up. She started to walk around the hut with him, trying to wake him up. Outside the rain was pouring down, and then she saw it! The wild boar had gotten out of the shed and was standing at the door of the hut soaking wet from the rain. On no! To her, this was even worse than Sam Dick being sick. She quickly put the baby down and ran to the hut's door wondering how she was going to get the boar dry before Ool came home, but it was too late, for at that very time, Ool's shadow crossed the doorway. Angrily he shouted, "Why haven't you taken care of my boar? That is what you are supposed to do!" He was so angry that, and remember he was a headhunter and a very strong man, he threw his club at his wife and it hit her in the head. She fell over to the ground and lay very still. She had died.

But instead of being sorry and heartbroken, Ool thought, "That's okay. She did not take care of my wild boar." But then he heard little Sam Dick start to whimper and he thought, "How

am I going to take care of Sam Dick? I don't know how to feed him! I don't know how to take care of him!" So, he went next door, walked right into the hut and strode to the back where a woman was stirring food in a pot, and said, "I want you to take care of this baby." Well, the woman looked at him and said, "It is not my fault that his mother is dead," and she continued stirring the food. That made Ool very angry! Even though he was only four feet tall, he picked up a piece of firewood and hit her and she died also. This was a very bad place to be! Finally, Ool found another woman to take care of Sam Dick.

The reason I have told you all of this is so you will understand how wicked this island was and that the men and women on this island did not know about Jesus nor have his love in their hearts and minds. But now we are going to learn how Jesus changed all that.

He tried to squirm to get free but he couldn't get free, and then the drums started beating in rhythm.

In the neighboring tribe of Big Nambus a very important chief lived, and one night he was tired and laid down to rest. He went to sleep, and while he was sleeping, a dazzling light woke him up! It was so bright he had to cover his eyes. He lay there but nothing happened, so he peeked out between his fingers and standing in front of him was this tall being, a majestic being, a being full of light, and the being did not hurt him. So, Chief Nehambat said, "What do you want?" The bright, dazzling being said, "I am an angel and I have come to tell you, that you and your people must make many changes." And Nehambat said, "Who will teach us how to make these changes?" The angel said, "You must go to the next island and search and find a man who will come back and teach you the changes you are to make." Nehambat said, "How will I know which man to ask to come and teach us?" The angel said, "It will be a man carrying a black book." Do you know what that black book was? That's right, the Bible!

The light faded away, the being was gone, and Nehambat lay still in his bed, thinking: "Did I dream this? Is it for real?" What would you do? Well here is what he did. As soon as the sun came up, he arose and got ready to leave. He covered himself in pig grease and a layer of ashes to keep himself warm, and he silently went down the trail to the coast. He went silently and stealthily because he did not want any neighboring tribesman to hunt for his head!

When he arrived at the water's edge, he paid a fisherman to take him across the water to the next island. He was obeying what the angel told him to do, and after he arrived at the

island, he started walking back and forth in the island, going up and down the streets, looking for a man with a black book. He looked all day but he could not find anyone like that. As the day was starting to end, he was looking down one little road when, although there was no one near him, he heard a voice say: "The man coming down the road is the man you want." Nehambat watched and, sure enough, a tall white man, who was a missionary, was coming down the road. Nehambat was also only about four feet tall and compared to the tall white missionary, he seemed very small, but as soon as the missionary got up to where he was, Nehambat fearlessly stood in front of him and said: "You must come back to my island of Malekula and teach us!" He looked at the man and the man did not say a word because he did not know who Nehambat was. Nehambat continued: "We are on the west coast of Malekula. You must come back to my island and teach us!" And then he turned around and walked away, thinking: "I've done what I am supposed to do. The angel told me to go search for this man. I have done it, and I have told him he must come back to my island." So, Nehambat walked back to the coast, got into another boat, and another fisherman paddled him back to his island, and Nehambat waited. He waited for this man to come back and teach them. He waited and he waited. It was ten years before something happened.

Ten years later Nehambat's cousin, Lilingeto, was fishing on the coast in a lagoon when he looked out and a boat came into the lagoon where he was, and out of this boat walked Pastor Parker carrying a *black book*. He walked up to the beach and said to Lilingeto, "I need to speak to the highest chief on your island. Will you take me to him?" Pastor Parker knew a little bit of the language and could speak to Lilingeto. Lilingeto, who only came up to the elbow of Pastor Parker, looked up at him and slowly shook his head, yes, and said: "It is a long trail up and down the mountains to get to the chief, but I will take you." And so, off they went.


As they were hiking on the mountains, around the bends and through the jungle on a trail that was barely visible, Pastor Parker heard many animal sounds in the jungle, but one bird call he heard repeatedly, and each time he heard it, Lilingeto looked into the jungle. Pastor Parker began to get a little worried that all may not be right, because he heard the same bird call again and again as they went up the trail, and before he got to where the chief was, a group of headhunters jumped out of the jungle and surrounded him. They had necklaces of human teeth hanging around their necks and Pastor Parker knew he was in deep trouble. Before he knew what was happening, one of the men jumped on his back, grabbed his hands and tied them very tightly behind his back and threw him to the ground.

Pastor Parker thought, "Now what am I going to do?" He tried to squirm to get free but he couldn't get free, and then the drums started beating in rhythm. This sent a special message to all the people in the tribe that there was going to be a feast and everyone needed to come. What could Pastor Parker do?

The first thing, of course, was to pray! So, he prayed, and he prayed, and then he prayed some more. He knew God was aware of exactly what was happening. Then he remembered his flashlight in his pocket. He squirmed around and tried to get it out, thinking that since the islanders had never seen a flashlight before it might help him get out of this dangerous situation. Slowly he was able to get his flashlight out and he started turning it on and off. The headhunters were very surprised and they stopped their chanting and dancing and took it from him. They passed the flashlight around, but soon grew tired of it because they were more interested in Pastor Parker! So they started singing and dancing again and the drums started beating again. Soon they dragged Pastor Parker over to a sharp rock. Pastor Parker thought, "I think they are going to hit my head on that sharp rock!" But! Something happened! Into all of this commotion walked Nehambat! He had found Pastor Parker's Bible, the black book, that the hunters had tossed aside, in the pathway! He came up to his people and said, "What are you doing? Don't you remember that the angel said we must listen to the man with the black book? This is his book! Untie his hands now!"

The hunters quickly untied his hands. Pastor Parker stood up, and Chief Nehambat said: "Now teach us what we must change about our ways." Remember, the angel had said that Nehambat and his people had many changes to make.

The drums became quiet, and the people stopped singing and dancing. All was silent as they stood still and listened, and what do you think Pastor Parker told them? Did he say, "You must stop tying people up and killing them?" Did he say, "You must stop eating other people?" Did he say, "You must be kind to one another?" No, even though these were important changes they needed to make. The very first thing he told them was that God *loved* them. Instead of telling what they needed to do and to stop hitting people, he told them about God's love and how God sent Jesus to help us.

This is what Pastor Parker told them and this is what we need to remember. Even though there might be many things that must be changed about ourselves, the most important thing to know is that God loves us. When we know how much God loves us, then we will want these changes made for the Bible says that "the love of Christ constraineth us (2 Corinthians 5:14)." That means motivates us, and we will surrender our lives to God so that he can change us so that we will not hurt people and not tell untruths, steal or do other things that Satan wants us to do. It all starts with knowing that God loves us. It made a difference in Chief Nehambat, even though it took a long time for him and his people to understand that they were not supposed to go to the next tribe and kill people. It took many years for them to learn a new way of living, but Sam Dick is someone who learned this, and when he grew up, he was a missionary in his own island and helped his people learn to love one another the way God loves us. We love him, because he first loved us (1 John 4:19). 

Beachy Mission Trip Update

by Lynnford Beachy

For the past few months my family and I have been traveling across the United States holding meetings and visiting people in their homes. Last month I shared some of our experiences, and I would like to give you an update.

Grass Valley, CA - November 24, 25

Brother and Sister Maghiar hosted meetings in their home in Grass Valley. We broadcasted these meetings live over telephone conference and also over the Internet using Skype.com. More than thirty people listened around the world.

At these meetings we focused on the new birth and knowing God and his Son. After each presentation we opened the meeting for questions and comments. Several people in the room had questions, as well as people listening over the phone or Internet. We used a loud speaker to enable everyone in the room to hear the questions from those on the Internet. It was encouraging for us to know that others were with us, even though we could not see them.

Soledad, CA - December 2

I learned that a friend, John Record, recently moved from Maine to California, so I called him to arrange a visit. He invited me to speak at the church he had been attending, and it just so happened that I had one Sabbath free, December 2, on which I could not organize any meetings. He said that would work out well.

Brother Record has been working with a church where only three people had been attending and, through his labors, it is now up to about twenty-five, with mostly new believers. John informed me that these people were in need of some practical instruction, so I shared messages on the new birth and the testimony of my conversion. Some of the people were really touched, but the two people whom Brother John especially wanted to hear the message were not there. The meetings were recorded so this man and his wife could hear them later.

The following day I visited the elder of the church at his home, and the two people who missed out on the message the day before visited him at the same time I was there. We talked for a couple of hours, and I shared my conversion experience in more detail than I had the day before. It turned out that this man and his wife were struggling with the very same drugs and music that I had been into, so I could relate to them very well. They were in the process of trying to break free from those things, but had not been able to do it, so they had many questions. We had a delightful Bible study together on the steps to conversion and victory, focusing on receiving a new heart that delights to do God's will. As we departed, they

had a renewed zeal to follow the Lord, and some practical instruction on how that can be accomplished.

I could see that the Lord arranged this meeting, since they were going through much the same experience that I had, and others had a harder time relating to them.

California Camp Meeting - December 7-10

Our brethren in Southern California hosted a camp meeting in Temecula. Brother and Sister Hager put a lot of effort into making everyone feel at home, including providing some of the meals. The camp meeting was held in a scenic campground called Vail Lake, just east of Temecula. Brother Chuck Clifford and two of his children flew in from Colorado to help with video and audio recording, as well as to broadcast the sermons over the Internet and phone conference. They were a big help, and many people were able to listen who otherwise would not have had the opportunity. Brother David Sims, Brother Ben Turner, and myself shared several messages covering the truth about God and righteousness by faith.

There were about twenty-five people in attendance, with another thirty or more listening by telephone or over the Internet. At the end of each meeting we encouraged people in the room, as well as those listening to the broadcast, to ask questions or share comments. Our technical helpers connected loud speakers so those calling from the Internet or telephone could be heard by everyone in the meeting room. It was encouraging to hear from people in Australia, England, and various other parts of the world. After the public questions and comments, the speaker of the hour was available to talk with those interested in further discussion. In this way we were able to reach many people.

One highlight was a lady who called in from China, knowing little about the Bible and Christianity, but wanting to find help for her problems. She thought perhaps Christianity would be an answer. I talked with her and encouraged her to accept the Lord Jesus as her Saviour. Later, Brother David Sims was able to share with her also, and she is embarking on a new relationship with God. Please keep her in your prayers.

Another highlight was when a brother from West Virginia, who had been listening to our broadcasts for several weeks, decided to put us in touch with some of his church brethren in the Los Angeles area. The day after the camp meeting, these brethren agreed to visit with my family and me in our RV. We visited and studied together for about three hours. It was a real blessing to get acquainted with them. They call themselves "The Church of God," but they are not affiliated with any denomination. In fact they call themselves "anti-denominational." They shared several beliefs with us, but there are a few differences. I really appreciated their zeal to share with

people on the streets of Skid Row and Hollywood Boulevard. They go out as a group and sing songs while the young people distribute tracts.

It was intriguing to find Sunday observers who believe that it is possible for Christians to live a holy life, free from continual sinning and repenting, in this present world. So many denominations teach that we will continue to sin until the Lord comes, thus removing from their adherents any desire or goal to abstain from sinful lusts. Jesus instructed a woman caught in adultery, “Go, and sin no more (John 8:1; 5:14).” Jesus did not so, “Go, and sin a little less. Only commit adultery two times a week instead of seven, and later cut it down to only one day a week.” Nor did Jesus instruct her to do something that was impossible to be accomplished in this present life. The Bible says that God is “able to keep you from falling (Jude 1:24).” Notice it is God who can do this, not you, but He is able, if you allow Him to. The biggest obstacle in the way of people living a victorious life is the idea that it is not possible. Yet, Jesus said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48).” With Christ in your heart, this is possible, for He is perfect as His Father is perfect.

The Lord impressed me to share a study with them on the great controversy between Christ and Satan over the character of God. We saw the importance of understanding that Jesus is truly the Son of God. We exchanged some literature, with a desire to study into these things further.

As we were leaving the Temecula area to go to our next destination we passed through San Diego. This was our last chance to see the ocean, which we had only seen on the trip once while driving by at night. We asked a lady in front of a store if there was a beach close-by. She informed us of a beach at the end of I-8. When we arrived we found a city park near the ocean, and parked our RV. We saw two homeless men sitting under a tree, and my wife wanted to bring them some food and money. After she talked with them for a long time, I brought the children out and visited with them.

Very soon, our children were playing with them and giving them hugs. These two men were thrilled to have the opportunity to be close to young children. They remarked that it is very rare for them to be around young children. One of them told me that it was the best Christmas present they ever had, to be able to play with the children. He said he has a daughter whom he has not seen for many years. He was very sad about that but delighted to spend some time with our daughter. After a couple hours talking with them about the Lord and current events, it was too dark to see the ocean in the daylight, so we walked close to it but then turned back to the RV to leave before it got too late. Afterwards, I told my wife that we went to the beach only to see those two homeless people. God had arranged it. Please pray for these men, that they will give their hearts to God.

Yuma, AZ - December 15-23

We purchased our RV in Yuma, and finally we returned and had meetings with our friends, John and Judie Brown, who had been instrumental in finding the RV for us. Our friends live in an RV similar to ours, and this was our first opportunity to have home-church in our RV. We had several evening meetings and two Sabbath meetings while we were there. We broadcast some of them over the phone and Internet. A couple from Montana, who had been spending the winter in Arizona, also came to the meetings. We had met them at the last West Virginia camp meeting. It was a real blessing to be with them again.

We had our meetings in an RV park, where I visited with several of the tenants, and studied some with the manager. He was reading the book, *God's Love on Trial*, while we stayed at his park.


While we were in Yuma, the Lord worked it out for me to go across the border into Mexico to get some dental work done.

Conclusion

I am grateful to the Lord for allowing us to be able to travel and visit members of the body of Christ.

Some of you have asked how my wife, Kendra, is doing. She has developed a strong reaction to mold from living many years in a moldy trailer in a damp valley in West Virginia. Whenever we are near mold she has trouble. Along with this, she also developed a strong reaction to chemicals, such as deodorants, perfumes, etc. Before we left on our trip, she would have an occasional good day when she felt normal, but most of the time she struggled. Now, I am happy to report that she has almost all good days, with only an occasional moment when she has trouble, especially when going around crowds where many perfumes and other chemicals bother her, or into a moldy building. Yet, thanks to the Lord, she is doing much, much better, for which we are very grateful to the Lord.

My wife and I are currently in Tucson, Arizona, doing a twenty-day raw food and juice fast, along with taking herbs to cleanse our bodies. Please pray that this will be helpful for both of us, that we may better be able to help others.

If you would like to host meetings in your area, or if you would be interested in attending meetings or receiving a visit or study in your home, please contact me on my cell phone: 304-633-5411. I have a limited number of minutes on my cell phone during the day, but if you call before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. (my local time - currently Mountain time) I have unlimited minutes. Also, if you call using a Cingular cell phone we can talk anytime without using your minutes or mine. You may also email me at meetings@presenttruth.info to arrange a meeting. We hope to see you soon. Until then, keep looking up, “for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:28) 

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area With Lynnford Beachy

Here is the planned 2007 itinerary for Lynnford Beachy:

Feb. 16, 17 . . . Dallas, Texas, contact John Fibranz, 817-380-3000.

Feb. 23, 24 . . . Pensacola, Florida, contact Chaplain Jack VanOrd, 850-458-5549.

Feb. 28-Mar. 4. Florida Camp Meeting near Orlando, contact Jim or Jerri Raymond, 407-291-9565.

June 12-16 . . . West Virginia Camp Meeting, contact Smyrna Gospel Ministers, 304-732-8609.

July 11-15 . . . Northwestern Pennsylvania Camp Meeting, contact Calvin and Paula Bickel, 814-676-8660.

Between these meetings we will be available to visit people in their homes and to have additional meetings. Check upcoming issues of *Present Truth* (available on our website) to keep informed about these meetings, and others, in your area. If you would like to host meetings in your area please contact us (see contact info on page 22).

Many of these meetings will be broadcast live over the Internet and by telephone conference. To listen to these sermons go to www.skype.com, download and install the free software, then click on the "Explore the skypecasts directory" link on the Skype homepage. You will see a list of all of the skypecasts available at that particular time. You can also check those "Starting soon" in case you arrive early. Look for the broadcast entitled, "God's Love on Trial." Often we will be broadcasting at 7 p.m. Friday evening, and again at 11 a.m. Sabbath morning, and usually on Sabbath afternoon as well, such as 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. (These are local times for wherever I am scheduled to speak, currently Mountain time. You can also call from any phone (long distance charges may apply). **In the US call: 712-432-4000**, in Austria call: 0820 400 01562, in Belgium call: 0703 59 984, in France call: 0826 100 266, in Germany call: 01805 00 7620, in the UK call: 0870 119 2350. You will be prompted to dial this room number: **5225823**. You can dial directly from Skype at: +99008275225823. (When you use Skype this is a free call from anywhere in the world.) I often will be broadcasting using my cell phone, and I am unable to broadcast it over the Internet. **If you have a highspeed Internet connection, and would like to help with these broadcasts, please let me know.** You can call me at 304-633-5411.


"More on Internet..." continued from page 15.

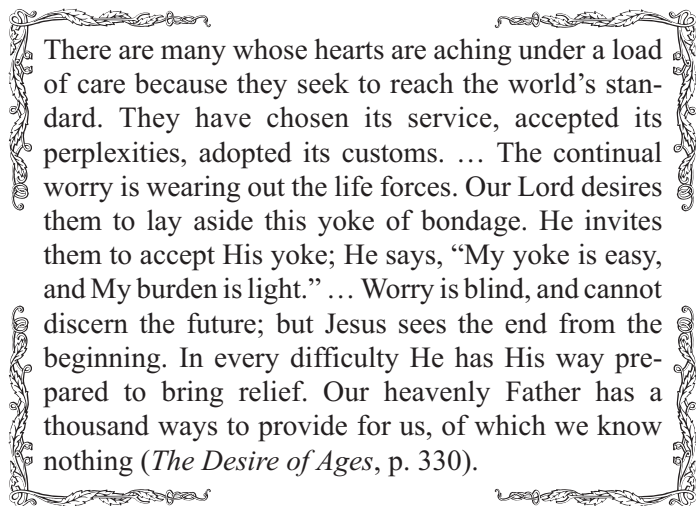
will receive the message, "You may now speak." A message is not played when the line is muted again by the moderator.

We are currently opening the Wednesday evening sessions for testimonies at the beginning of the service, as well as for prayer requests and prayers at the end of the service. On Sabbath we are currently opening up the lines for discussion, prayer requests, and testimonies after the local service has finished. You may also email prayer requests for the services to us at allen@smyrna.org.

Other Internet Broadcasts

Brother Lynnford Beachy of Smyrna Gospel Ministries is also broadcasting most of the meetings he is holding as he travels to different areas of the United States. Please see the left column of this page for details on when and how you may listen to his broadcasts or become involved.

Brother David Sims from historyinfo.net also does a regular Sabbath Internet broadcast. It begins at 11:00 a.m. PST (2:00 p.m. EST). If you use Skype you may dial: +990008275782729. From a standard telephone line you may call 1-712-432-4990 and when prompted for the conference room number, key in 5782729. 



There are many whose hearts are aching under a load of care because they seek to reach the world's standard. They have chosen its service, accepted its perplexities, adopted its customs. . . . The continual worry is wearing out the life forces. Our Lord desires them to lay aside this yoke of bondage. He invites them to accept His yoke; He says, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." . . . Worry is blind, and cannot discern the future; but Jesus sees the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief. Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330).

"Prayer Requests" continued from page 1.

Florida camp meeting and that the work overseas will continue to grow and be fruitful in spite of adverse circumstances. Will you join us in heartfelt prayer that these needs will be richly met? Many in our extended church family continue to experience poor physical health and we ask an interest in your prayers that they may prosper and be in improved health. We also acknowledge a great dependence upon God to advance his truth through the resources of the Internet and telephone, and we ask that you will seek God on our behalf as we utilize these opportunities.

Onycha Holt

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“Reports from Zimbabwe” continued from page 18

great blessing. But, it has been evident that the devil was, and is, not happy with the proceedings, because last Thursday when I returned from an all night Bible study and prayer I found that my house was vandalized by thieves who took all the blankets and clothes and left the room empty. Surely, I learned that the devil is not happy at all. Anyway, this of less importance compared to the great work that the Lord has commissioned to the human race.

Zimbabwe Camp Meeting Report—Vusa Ncube

We have all the reason to thank God for tremendously blessing us during our camp meeting whose theme was “true Liberty in Christ.” On the first day the turn out was very low as compared to the previous year. But by the middle of the week the crowd grew. Although all brethren could not come due transport problems and high inflation sweeping the country, we had a joyful time meeting each other. Above all, the presence of Brother Mithi was a great inspiration, seeing that it was the first time for him to come to our camp meeting, and he was one of the speakers.

It was a great joy to me, and the gathering as a whole, to see that the Bible is full of promises that awaits our claiming in the name of our Lord Christ Jesus, and they will be rendered for our good.

This camp was unique in the sense that as we neared the close of the meeting there were many visitors from the SDA church and Apostolic faith. They were so moved by the message that about four people from the SDA faith and two from Apostolic faith took a stand for the new faith and are awaiting for baptism to be arranged. 



Correction: The reference noted as *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 634 on page 4 of the January 2007 issue of *Old Paths* should have been volume 5, page 634.

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