

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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They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. Isaiah 49:10



The True Christ vs. Antichrist

(Changing Leaders without Knowing It)

The Bible speaks of two Christs. Jesus Christ is really the only true Christ or anointed one chosen of God for the salvation of humanity and the restoration of his name and character. There is another, however, who wishes to usurp the place of the Son of God. This usurper claims to be the salvation of man, and he certainly has something to say about the character of God, but he is a deceiver. He is antichrist.

The Bible speaks of Lucifer in Isaiah 14:12–14, which says: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; *I will be like the most High.*”

Sin began with Satan when he was an exalted angel in heaven. He had great honor there among the angels. The first sign of his dissatisfaction was the manifestation of his desire to be equal with God, to be worshipped as God. (*The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1886)

However ridiculous it may appear to us for any of God’s creatures to think that he or she could be worshipped like God, this was the desire of Satan. His desire was not to have the character of God, but rather to have the power, authority, and especially the worship which is due alone to God and his Son.

Had Lucifer really desired to be like the Most High, he would never have deserted his appointed place in heaven; for the spirit of the Most High is manifested in unselfish ministry. Lucifer desired God’s power, but not His character. (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 435, 436)

But how would Lucifer accomplish this usurpation of power? There was someone ahead of him who stood between him and God—God’s only-begotten Son. That place would have to be taken first.

Satan sought to undermine the confidence of the angels in God’s government. He desired the place occupied by

Christ, having it in his mind, that if he gained this position, to make an effort to take the place of God. (*The Upward Look*, p. 135)

So Lucifer claimed to be on the same level as the Son of God. “Lucifer’s envy and misrepresentation and his claims to equality with Christ had made necessary a statement of the true position of the Son of God; but this had been the same from the beginning” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 38).

The desire of Lucifer to have equality with God and Christ led to war 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” (Revelation 12:7–9). Satan was cast out of heaven and brought his rebellion to this earth, and he began his masquerade as Christ, as a Saviour. Satan started in the garden of Eden. He began by misrepresenting God to Eve and by implication expressed his desire for them to be free from the bondage that God had placed them under. If Eve would only listen to the serpent and follow him, she could truly be free and yes, even be as God, the very thing that Lucifer had desired!

Since the fall of man, Satan has been working to receive the worship and homage that belong only to Christ and God. He has enjoyed a measure of limited success, in different places at different times, but he has great and grand plans to harvest the

Also in this issue:	
Religious Liberty	p. 6
Persecution	p. 8
The Sword of Islam	p. 10
Compelled to be Witnesses	p. 15
Youth Corner	p. 16
The Transforming Power of Christ	p. 17
The Spirit of Prophecy	p. 18
West Virginia Camp Meeting	p. 22
The Heavy Cost of Obesity	p. 23
Follow the Light	p. 24

whole world into his trap. Paul tells us that his plan involves personating Jesus Christ, coming to the earth and appearing as Jesus would at his second coming. But before Satan comes as Jesus, he has a different Jesus presented to the minds of the people, the kind of Jesus that he will be when he comes personating the real Christ. Paul noted:

I am afraid that your minds may be seduced from a single-hearted devotion to him by the same subtle means that the serpent used towards Eve. For apparently you cheerfully accept a man who comes to you preaching a different Jesus from the one we told you about, and you readily receive a spirit and a gospel quite different from the ones you originally accepted. (2 Corinthians 11:3, 4; Philips)

This new Jesus, though outwardly similar in many ways, is actually quite different from the true Jesus. He will be clothed in light, but inside he is the prince of darkness bringing “another gospel” (Galatians 1:6). “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14). Before Satan comes, he sends his agents, speaking lies, to prepare the way for him. They, too, come as messengers of light, so that the people are not alarmed, but, rather, settle into a false sense of serenity.

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (2 Corinthians 11:13–15)

This personating would be preceded by misrepresentation. As Wieland and Short noted, “. . . the false Christ will appear through misrepresentation before he appears through impersonation, . . .” (R. Wieland, D. K. Short, *1888 Re-Examined*, 1950 ed. p. 147). This misrepresentation comes mostly through false teachings and doctrine.

Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure the truth. Error cannot stand alone, and would soon become extinct if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the truth of God, and men regard them as a part of the truth. Through false doctrines, Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in truth. (*The Review and Herald*, October 22, 1895)

This spirit of deception was working in the days of the apostles. John wrote: “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (1 John 2:18). John calls this spirit the “spirit of antichrist” (1 John 4:3).

The word *antichrist* in the Greek means one who takes the place of Christ and, by implication, would be one against

Christ. Antichrist is from *anti* (ἀντί) and *christos* (χριστός). *Anti* means against, or in place of, and *christos* anointed one.

Jesus warned about the agents of Satan that would come claiming to be Christ.

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. (Matthew 24:5, 23–25).

Satan’s work is described in Revelation as one of deception (Revelation 12:9) and even after the millennium he renews his work of deception:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. (Revelation 20:7, 8)

Before we proceed let us go back now to the times of Israel in the Old Testament, for there we see a pattern that Satan used and will continue to use to deceive others into worshipping him as Christ. “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Corinthians 10:11). In the days of Israel, Satan masqueraded as Christ under the name of Baal. King Ahab, encouraged by his wicked wife, Jezebel, led Israel into Baal worship.

And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. (1 Kings 16:30–33)

And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel’s table. (1 Kings 18:17–19)

Perhaps we wonder with astonishment that Israel could be induced to replace the worship of Yahweh with the worship of Baal, but this did not occur overnight:

What astonishing deception and fearful blindness had, like a dark cloud, covered Israel! This blindness and

apostasy had not closed about them suddenly; it had come upon them gradually as they had not heeded the word of reproof and warning which the Lord had sent to them because of their pride and their sins. (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol, 3, pp. 280, 281)

It is important to note that this apostasy did not happen suddenly. "It is assumed that the departure from truth was so obvious and striking as to make the Israelites of that day seem to us unusually obtuse and inexcusable. The facts are that Israel's apostasy was gradual and unconscious, requiring about a century to assume the serious proportions Elijah recognized" (R. Weiland and D. K. Short, *1888 Re-Examined*, 1950 edition, p. 152). A historical study of Baal worship reveals that many of its aspects were close to or mimicked the worship of Yahweh. Remember, beloved:

The track of truth lies close beside the track of error, and both tracks may seem to be one to minds which are not worked by the Holy Spirit, and which, therefore, are not quick to discern the difference between truth and error. (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 202)

So we should expect that Satan, while he uses many different ways to deceive various kinds of people, would use a type of worship that is close to the worship of Yahweh to deceive Christians. Paul C. Heubach, writing in a seminary thesis, noted:

In spite of all the changing ideas through the years, ancient Babylon in the days of the Old Testament prophets still presents to the student a marvelous counterfeit of the revealed religion of God . . .

In general plan, for instance, the temples of Solomon . . .

Not only were the Babylonian temples similar to that of Solomon, but striking similarities are found in their priesthood and ritual. Every great Babylonian sanctuary had its priests with a High Priest at their head. The priest was the mediator between the worshipper and his god . . . Animals without blemish were offered as sacrifices, and there were also meal offerings. The morning and evening sacrifice was conducted daily . . . A tithe of all that the land produced belonged to the priests as well as certain portions of the sacrifices . . .

Old Babylon had her sacred books . . . and the penitential psalms. The latter resemble somewhat the Psalms of the Old Testament. (Paul C. Heubach, *The Prophetic Significance of God's Judgments upon Babylon*, thesis Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, pp. 6–14)

According to Jeremiah, Baal worship moved even within the sacred temple.

Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other

gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. (Jeremiah 7:9, 10, 30)

It should be noted that the word *baal* simply means lord or husband. As Elder Wieland wrote:

Thus, when the prophets of Baal prayed at Mount Carmel, they merely cried "O Lord, Lord, hear us", . . . It was difficult for Israel to sense that they were really worshipping a false god, when the name was the same as commonly used for the true God. Likewise, today, the name of Christ and other Christian terminology means nothing so far as identifying the truth is concerned. (*1888 Re-Examined*, 1950 edition, p. 151)

Baal worship at the end of time still looks like the worship of Yahweh. Jesus noted something important about it in the Sermon on the Mount.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:21–23)

Notice that these people called Jesus, "Lord, Lord." How do you think they address the one they worshipped before? No doubt as "Lord, Lord."! We are told:

The present age is one of idolatry, as verily as was that in which Elijah lived. No outward shrine may be visible; there may be no image for the eye to rest upon; yet thousands are following after the gods of this world—after riches, fame, pleasure, and the pleasing fables that permit man to follow the inclinations of the unregenerate heart. Multitudes have a wrong conception of God and His attributes, and are as truly serving a false god as were the worshipers of Baal. Many even of those who claim to be Christians have allied themselves with influences that are unalterably opposed to God and His truth. (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 177)

The bottom line in ancient Israel was that they changed leaders and did not know it. Jesus informed the Jews in his day that they, too, had changed leaders, though they did not realize it.

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not under-



stand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (John 8:42–44)

Leadership change happened in ancient Israel and happened during the time of Jesus. History records the early church changing leaders, and, today, we have the beast of Revelation 13. Jesus tried to warn his church. “Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:4, 5, 24).

Sister White wrote repeatedly of the possibility of our changing leaders and not knowing it:

There never will be a time in the history of the church when God’s worker can fold his hands and be at ease, saying, “All is peace and safety.” Then it is that sudden destruction cometh. (*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 407)

For the last twenty years a subtle, unconsecrated influence has been leading men to look to men, to bind up with men, to neglect their heavenly Companion. Many have turned away from Christ. They have failed to appreciate the One who declares, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (*The Review and Herald*, February 18, 1904)

A Boeing 747 jumbo jet is a very large, powerful airplane. The thrust is enormous when one of these giant planes takes off into flight, with the passengers feeling the jolt of being set back in their seats. But once in the air, this graceful plane can make slow, wide-arching turns in such a manner, that without instruments or a visual field of reference, the plane can be turned 180 degrees into a different direction without the passengers knowing it has happened. How could this be? The turn is very gradual. People do not awake or even take notice. The same is true spiritually. Satan usually does not try to bring rapid change, but slow, gradual change, so that the people do not even know it has happened!

The necessity of daily study in the word of God cannot be overemphasized. It is our only true safeguard against error and especially against that of changing leaders and directions.

Those who can so easily be led by a false spirit show that they have been following the wrong captain for some time—so long that they do not discern that they are departing from the faith, or that they are not building upon the true foundation. (*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 25)

To be continued
Allen Stump

“The Sword of Islam” continued from page 10

and brought before the prophet. Omar demanded his head, but Mohammed was less hasty.

“Well, Abu Sofian,’ cried he, ‘is it not at length time to know that there is no other god but God?’

“That I already know,’ replied Abu Sofian.

“Out upon thee!’ cried Omar, ‘testify instantly to the truth, or thy head shall be severed from thy body.’


“Having plainly the worst of the argument, under the circumstances, Abu Sofian acknowledged the divinity of Mohammed’s mission, thus furnishing, says Irving, “an illustration of the Moslem maxim: ‘To convince unbelievers, there is no argument like the sword.’”

“Yet one other illustration of the sword as a weapon in theological argument. This same Omar, when calif successor of the prophet, was preaching in the Moslem camp, a day’s march from Jerusalem. He had stated that there was no help for the man whom God should lead into error. “A gray-headed Christian priest, who sat before him, could not resist the opportunity to criticize the language of the calif preacher. ‘God leads no man into error,’ said he, aloud.

“Omar deigned no direct reply, but, turning to those around, ‘Strike off that old man’s head,’ said he, ‘if he repeats his words.’”

“The old man was discreet, and held his peace. There was no arguing against the sword of Islam.”

It is all grotesque—considered in the light of divine religion, to be received by conviction and faith. George Sale, in the preface to his translation of the Koran, remarks: “The method of converting by the sword gives no very favorable idea of the faith which is so propagated, and is disallowed by everybody in those of another religion, though the same persons are willing to admit of it for the advancement of their own; supposing that, though a false religion ought not to be established by authority, yet a true one may; and accordingly force is almost as constantly employed in these cases by those who have the power in their hands, as it is constantly complained of by those who suffer the violence. It is certainly one of the most convincing proofs that Mohammedanism was no other than a human invention, that it owed its progress and establishment almost entirely to the sword; and it is one of the strongest demonstrations of the divine origin of Christianity that it prevailed against all the force and powers of the world by the mere dint of its own truth, after having stood the assaults of all manner of persecutions, as well as other oppositions, for three hundred years together.”

The moral is just as timely now as when Sale wrote, over a hundred years ago. 

(William Ambrose Spicer was a General Conference secretary and president. A veteran of long missionary work, a prolific writer, and a strong supporter of the prophetic gift, Spicer’s contributions to the cause would be difficult to calculate. Editor)

Religious Liberty or Tyranny

Seventh-day Adventists have historically taught the importance of religious liberty and demonstrated their commitment to the cause by being willing to support and defend the religious rights of others, even when they did not agree with all of their positions. For example, Adventists have been against Christmas programs in public schools, where Jewish children might have to sing Christmas hymns.

Sadly, this staunch position has been discarded. While there is a façade of support for religious liberty, the General Conference has moved away from supporting all forms of religious liberty to a position of tyranny against those who would cross their own precious ways.

From 1886–1900 the General Conference published *The American Sentinel*, a magazine devoted to religious liberty. *The American Sentinel's* first edition noted:

The defense of American Institutions, the preservation of the United States Constitution as it is, so far as regards religion or religious tests and the maintenance of human rights, both civil and religious.

It will ever be uncompromisingly opposed to anything tending toward a union of Church and State, either in name or in fact. (*The American Sentinel*, vol. 1, no. 1, January 1886, p. 8)

Starting in 1906, *Liberty* magazine was published by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to help promote religious liberty, especially among judges and legislators. The cover of the very first issue carried the following caption:

Devoted to the American idea of Religious Liberty Exemplified in the Complete Separation of Church and State (*Liberty*, vol. 1, no. 1, April 1906)

In the last quarter century, though, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has backslidden in its approach. While professing religious liberty for itself, it has forgotten liberty for those with whom it disagrees. In what way has this happened?

In 1981, the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference Corporation, the legal entity of the church, obtained a trademark registration for the name *Seventh-day Adventist* with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. In doing this the Adventists became the first Protestant and the only church denomination in America to appeal to the state for protection of its name. Prior to obtaining the trademark, certain independent ministries and/or pastors were using the name *Seventh-day Adventist* without being a member of the conference or without returning tithes to and/or supporting the General Conference.

One of the common goals of these groups was to speak out against apostasy within the corporate church and to teach the three angels' messages in a way that would be representative of the message as historically given by the early Adventist pioneers. The corporate church, fearing that her *good name*

was being misrepresented and tarnished by these offshoot movements, obtained legal rights to the name and began to plan legal prosecution. This tyranny began with the corporate church's first prosecution in 1986 in a case against former conference Pastor John Marik and the Kona, Hawaii, Seventh-day Adventist Congregational Church. Since that time the General Conference has threatened many small groups into submission without needing to go to court; however, there have been exceptions. The Eternal Gospel Church, led by Pastor Raphael Perez and known for their billboard campaigns, at first refused to change its name. Formerly they were known as The Eternal Gospel Seventh-day Adventist Church. Perez and others went to court and testified that their faith demanded the use of the name *Seventh-day Adventist*. However, this portion of their faith did not stand the test, for when the courts ruled against them, the name was changed rather than face fines and jail terms.

More recently the Creation Seventh-day Adventist Church (CSDAC) has been attacked by the corporate Seventh-day Adventist Church. The CSDAC is a very small group of believers, with its main church in Guys, Tennessee. Part of the faith of the believers involves using their name which includes Seventh-day Adventist. These believers are very convicted about the use of their name and are intent upon upholding their principles, regardless of fines or of threatened jail time.

We wish to note that there are some aspects of the CSDAC with which we cannot agree. The CSDAC observes the feast days and bases the doctrine of their specific church name upon a professed revelation to their main pastor, Chick McGill. While we at Smyrna have many of the Advent doctrines in common with the CSDAC, we do not agree with them on some major points of faith.

The support of true religious liberty, however, is not dependent upon the total or even any agreement between parties. One is reminded of the Diet of Spires in 1529. Ironically, *Liberty* magazine well explains the paradox of the Diet.

The princes in the Lutheran minority were unwilling to accept the limited toleration offered by the Diet. In language oft-quoted by Protestant historians, the minority princes declared "Let us reject this decree. . . . In matters of conscience the majority has no power." One influential Protestant historian asserted that "the principles contained in this celebrated Protest . . . constitute the very essence of Protestantism. . . . Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate and the authority of the Word of God above the visible church." Indeed, the very term "Protestant" originated from the protest lodged by the Lutheran princes at Speyer. Over the centuries both the event and the name have become associated with the ideas of the rights of conscience and religious freedom.



Only the court in heaven can be counted on to always deliver justice.

But these same Protestant historians often leave unmentioned another, darker side of the Diet of Speyer. The Diet, including the Lutheran princes, condemned the Anabaptist movement, and decreed that rebaptizers should be punished, even with death if recalcitrant and persistent in their errors. While nobly championing their own “rights” to conscience and religious freedom, the Lutheran princes were apparently blind to any inconsistency in their attitudes and actions in condemning and persecuting the Anabaptists. Thousands of Anabaptists died in the years following, at the hands of both Catholics and Protestants. (*Liberty*, May/June, 2007)

Blindness struck the Protestant reformers, and it has struck Adventism, too. While we profess liberty for ourselves, we punish those with whom we disagree, who come, not from without our ranks, but sadly, from within our ranks.

The CSDAC was sued by the General Conference Corporation, demanding that they quit using their name and that they remove their church sign and destroy any printed materials using that name. While others before them had backed down, either before or after court, the CSDAC leaders have not backed down. The General Conference Corporation won its case against the CSDAC. The CSDAC appealed the case to federal court, but lost. The United States Supreme Court turned down the chance to hear any further appeals.

On April 5, 2012, a court order was issued by Judge J. Daniel Breen, clarifying and modifying the prior court order. Pastor Walter McGill and Brother Luke Chartier were each fined \$500. Pastor McGill was also ordered to pay the attorney fees of the lawyers from the General Conference Corporation (amounting to several thousand dollars). Both

were to refrain from further posting of a sign using the name Seventh-day Adventist. If McGill or Chartier failed to meet the requirements of the order, they were to spend thirty days in jail, with Chartier’s sentence being reduced to ten days for good behavior.

As of this writing (May 22), neither McGill nor Chartier have complied with the court’s order, nor appear to have any plans to do so. The Bible speaks of a time coming soon when the entire world will either worship the beast and his image, receive his mark or be killed. The choices will be clear, either obedience to God which receives a death sentence from man, or obedience to man and an eternal death sentence from God. Looking at this today, from an intellectual basis, the choice is simple—a *no-brainer*—but to choose, during the coming crisis, the right because it is right will require faith, hope, and love in order to stand the test.

Many people believe that they have convictions, when, in reality, they only have preferences. A preference is an ideal or belief that may be very important, but something that a person is willing to change or give up under pressure of circumstances or the threat of death. Convictions are beliefs or ideals for which we are willing to die. If one is not willing to die for their beliefs and their Lord, one does not have convictions and their Christianity must be examined for its genuineness.

If a Christian does not have convictions today in times of relative ease, convictions will not be developed under the stress of the greatest religious pressure ever to be put upon humanity! “If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan” (Jeremiah 12:5).

Allen Stump



The CSDAC in Guys, Tennessee

Persecution

“Yea and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

The disciples certainly faced much persecution in their day. When called to answer for their convictions Peter and John replied:

Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (Acts 4:19, 20)

Perhaps Peter had this experience in mind when he later wrote:

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:12–17)

Careful Bible students date this writing about AD 65. This places the writing during the reign of the Roman emperor, Nero, who ruled from AD 54–68. Nero was a despot who only cared for himself, even murdering his mother. When much of Rome burned in July of AD 64, Nero blamed the Christians, resulting in terrible persecution. This letter was written either just before the beginning of the persecution or shortly after it began. In light of this, certain passages, such as 2:12, 17, take on extra meaning.

Peter begins his letter by addressing it to “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Peter 1:1). The Greek for *strangers scattered* is *sojourners of the dispersion (diaspora)*; therefore, this letter was written to the “temporary residents of the Dispersion” and included “Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.”

These believers were dispersed and scattered already due to persecution that had come primarily from the Jews but would now, or very soon, come from Rome. Therefore, those who received this letter were not simply unique Christians unlike others in situation and circumstances, but rather were a representative group that would mirror the experiences of

many through the age, even to our own day, for persecution knows no boundaries with regard to time or place.

One outline of the epistle could look like this:

I. The recipients’ standing in Christ (1:1–2:12)

II. Submission in Christ (2:13–3:12)

III. Suffering in Christ (3:13–4:19)

IV. Serving in Christ (5:1–14).

Today the United States of American does not contain much persecution like that endured by many of our brothers and sisters in Christ in other nations. The idea of persecution may not even come to mind until some shocking story in the news arrests our attention.

Persecution however, has been around since the beginning of sin. Cain killed Abel. The Egyptians persecuted the Hebrews. Wicked kings persecuted the prophets. The early Christians were persecuted such as the Apostles and soon after his appointment as deacon, Stephen was killed for his faith. Hebrews 11 is God’s honor roll for faith but it also notes that many died due to their faith. Church history tells of men like Polycarp, John Huss, William Tyndale, and others who died for their faith in Christ.

Persecution though is not a relic of past history. Persecution is a reality in many places such as Iran, China, Burma, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and other places. Bible prophecy is clear that the United States will be a leader in persecuting the true people of God in the last days, days of which we are living on the eternal edge.

While many Christians have been called upon to die for the cause of Christ, those persecuted Christians, who, for the infinitely wise purposes of God, that were allowed to live shared a basic character with those who died. John Foxe describes this in the introduction to his book *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*:

In him [the martyr] we behold a spirit upheld, not by the motives of vanity, self-sufficiency, or indifference, but by the simple power of truth; we witness a soul so under the influence of good, that evil, even in its most cruel form, cannot dim its beauty, but serves as a contrast to heighten its luster. Here is self-sacrifice, springing not from pride, but from humility; founded not upon ignorant prejudice, but upon a faith based upon conviction; arising not from hatred or contempt for man, but from the love of God. Truly theirs was the victory that overcame the world, even their faith—a faith which, accepting the future as a true inheritance, enabled them to give up for Christ’s sake houses and lands, children and relationships, yea, and their own lives also, rather than be false to their conscience and their God. The history of Christian Martyrdom is, in fact, the history of Christianity itself; for it is in the arena, at the stake, and in the dungeon that the religion of Christ has won its most glorious triumphs. (*Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*, pp. 1, 2)

Persecution To Be Expected by Believers

Christians should expect to be persecuted for bearing Christ’s name:

But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. (Luke 21:12)

But Jesus adds that "it shall turn to you for a testimony" (Luke 21:13).

Christians should expect to be persecuted because the end is near, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:12).

Christians should expect to be persecuted because of a godly life-style, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

Why Persecution Exists

Interestingly, the Bible gives several reasons why the wicked persecute Christians. Believers are persecuted because of their faith and because unbelievers do not know Jesus nor his Father. Jesus said:

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. (John 15:20, 21; 16:2, 3)

Believers are persecuted because the wicked hate Christ and the Father:

He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. (John 15:23, 24)

Among the wicked there is to be seen an attitude of arrogance, "The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor" (Psalm 10:2).

There will be some, like Paul, who persecute through misplaced zeal.

I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. (Acts 26:9-11)

Believer's Response to Persecution

In Peter's first letter he helps the believer to know that persecution is coming and how to relate to it. Firstly, Peter says that we should not be surprised by persecution: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (1 Peter 4:12). He says to not be surprised. When persecution comes say, Yes, I have been expecting you, and by God's grace I am ready for you.

Secondly, Peter tells the believer that he is to rejoice in persecution, "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" (1 Peter 4:13, 14). To this we would add the words of Jesus:

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (Matthew 5:11)

Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. (Luke 6:23)

Thirdly, Peter says that the believer is to give glory to God when persecuted. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (1 Peter 4:15, 16).

Fourthly, Peter says that when persecution comes, the believer is to commit himself to God. "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:19).

Fifthly, God would have us demonstrate patience, "Men curse us, but we return a blessing: they make our lives miserable but we take it patiently" (1 Corinthians 4:12, Philips Translation)

Sixthly, Jesus tells us when we are persecuted to pray for those who persecute us. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).

Seventhly, we are instructed to bless those who persecute us. "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not" (Romans 12:14)

Lastly, we are to pray for deliverance. "O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me" (Psalm 7:1).

Conclusion

Beloved, if we are loved by the world and if persecution does not come, then our lives are not godly. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not

of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19). But if we will live for Jesus persecution will surely come to all who will live Godly lives. The believer should expect persecution, but he or she can be prepared to face it with trust and with the assurance that God will care for his own. Peter also says in his first epistle, “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

We are certainly at the threshold of eternity.

The “time of trouble, such as never was,” is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. “Though Noah, Daniel, and Job” were in the land, “as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.” Ezekiel 14:20.

Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father’s commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble. (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 623, 624)

Those who stand in the time of trouble will have first stood brave and bold through minor persecutions. Now is the preparation time. May we be faithful to stand and stand firmly for the right, though the heavens fall.

Allen Stump

The Sword of Islam

W. A. SPICER

ISLAM, meaning “submission,” originally meant, as a religion, submission to God, resignation to his will, even in suffering and persecution. But ere long it came to mean submission to the creed of Mohammedanism, enforced at the point of the sword. When Mohammed began to formulate the new religion, he accepted many precepts from the Christian Scriptures. “Do unto another as thou wouldst he should do unto thee,” was his Arabic rendering of the golden rule. He himself was persecuted by the people of Mecca, as he denounced their idol-worship and proclaimed the faith of Islam. George Sale, translator of the Koran, says of Mohammed’s early teaching:

“He declares his business was only to preach and admonish, that he had no authority to compel any person to embrace his religion; and that whether people believed or not, was none of his concern, but belonged solely unto God.”

But when the strong city of Medina espoused his cause, and Mecca itself surrendered, the possession of power changed the prophet’s policy. The first passage in the Koran authorizing the use of force is said to be that in the twenty-second chapter: “Fight in defense of God’s true religion as it behooveth you to fight for the same.” The announcement that Islam was to be preeminently a religion of the sword was later put forth by Mohammed in these words:

“Different prophets have been sent by God to illustrate his different attributes: Moses his clemency and providence; Solomon his wisdom, majesty, and glory; Jesus Christ his righteousness, omniscience, and power; — his righteousness by purity of conduct; his omniscience by the knowledge he displayed of the secrets of all hearts; his power by the miracles he wrought. None of these attributes, however, have been sufficient to enforce conviction, and even the miracles of Moses and Jesus have been treated with unbelief. I, therefore, the last of the prophets, am sent with the sword! Let those who promulgate my faith enter into no argument nor discussion; but slay all who refuse obedience to the law. Whoever fights for the true faith, whether he fall or conquer, will assuredly receive a glorious reward.” Unbelievers were offered quick choice of three things—immediate conversion, an exemption clause in the form of payment of tribute, or the edge of the sword. Some of the famous advocates of the new religion had themselves professed conversion under pressure. For instance, Abu Sofian, captain of the Mecca forces in opposition to Mohammed, was captured one night



W. A. Spicer

Continued on page 5, column 2

Family and Youth Camp

Pacific Virtual Fellowship Family Camp and Smyrna Gospel Ministries Youth Camp will be combined into one camp during July 24–29, 2012. Spiritual talks will be held amid the lofty peaks of Lassen National Park, interspersed with hikes along beautiful mountain trails. Healthful vegetarian and non-dairy meals will be provided by the hardworking ladies and gentlemen of PVF and Smyrna (thank you gentlemen and ladies!). This will be a true camp-out, so remember to bring your camping gear. If you are unable to bring certain of your own items, we have some extra things, such as tents, tools, and sleeping bags. Please let us know if you will need to borrow some of these things.

Transportation

A brother has graciously offered the use of his fifteen-passenger van to those who live in the eastern or central United States who would like to attend camp but who do not have reliable transportation or the funds to travel alone. The van will travel along a route designed to accommodate as many travelers as possible, so if you are in the eastern or central part of the United States and would like to attend camp, this may be an answer to your prayers. Each traveler will need to share the fuel and required road insurance expenses proportionally. If you would be interested, please contact us at the Waldensian Center soon (530–294–1115).

Location

Butte Lake Group Campground, Group sites A and B, Lassen Volcanic National Park. GPS Information—Latitude, Longitude: 40.565° N, 121.30528° W or 40°33'54" N, 121°18'19" W.

Access to the Butte Lake area is via a dirt road off Highway 44, east of Old Station. From Redding, drive 63 miles east on state highway 44 to Old Station. From intersection of state highways 89 and 44, continue east on state highway 44 for 11 miles. Watch for sign to Butte Lake

Campground. Turn right and continue for 6 miles on a rough gravel road.

General Information for Campground

- There are no electricity/water/sewer site hook-ups at this campground.
- All equipment must fit on the site pad.
- Six licensed vehicles are allowed per site (some may need to carpool).
- Campers must have a valid entrance permit/pass before camping.
- An entrance fee of \$10.00 per vehicle will be collected at the campground.
- No motorized boats are permitted on the lake.
- Pets must be on a 6-foot leash, must not be left unattended, and are not allowed on park trails.

CAUTION: Bears frequent the area; all food and scented products must be kept in the bear boxes provided at each campsite.

Within the Facility

- Accessible Flush Toilets
- Amphitheater
- Boat Ramp
- Canoeing
- Drinking Water
- Food Storage Locker
- Hiking
- Kayaking
- Lake Access
- Parking Area
- Picnic Tables
- Ranger Station
- Recycling
- Showers (but not at our campground)



Kings Creek, with Lassen Peak on the horizon, at Lassen Volcanic National Park



Pure C



*Whosoever
the water that
him shall never
the water that
him shall be
of water spr
everlasting li*



Water

Whoever drinketh of
the water that I shall give
him shall never thirst; but
the water that I shall give
him shall be in him a well
springing up into
life.

John 4:14





Cinder Cone at Lassen Volcanic National Park

- Swimming (no mixed swimming, however)
- Trailheads
- Trash Collection
- Vault Toilets
- Visitor Center

Attention: All meetings will be held outdoors, so bring appropriate clothing

Necessities Check List

- Tent (make sure your tent has all its stakes, ropes, etc.)
- Sleeping bag
- Pajamas
- Flashlights and batteries
- Socks and underclothing
- Camp clothing (thick, durable, washable, and modest, e.g., denim)
- Appropriate outer clothing for Sabbath (suits are not recommended)
- Comfortable hiking shoes

- Second pair of shoes for around camp (in case first pair becomes wet or damaged)
- Warm jacket and or sweater (evenings and mornings can be cool at 6,000 feet elevation)
- Hat or other head shade
- Soap, shampoo (natural and biodegradable products are recommended)
- Toothbrush, tooth powder/paste, comb, and other personal hygiene items
- Towel and washcloth
- Bible, notebook, small S.O.P. books, and pen or pencil
- Toilet tissue
- Medium-sized bowl and sponge for bathing

Optional Check List

- Sleeping pad(s) (for those who don't like a hard bed)
- Mosquito repellent (citronella oil works well, and there are other good natural repellents)
- Mosquito netting for the face, with wide hat and long sleeve shirt/jacket
- Camp chair(s) (for those who prefer to sit in a chair)
- Rope for a clothesline and emergency tent repair
- Solar-heated shower bag(s)
- Pillow(s)
- "Moleskin" or equivalent, to help prevent blisters
- First aid kit (important!)
- Bathing suit(s) for both swimming in the lake (no mixed swimming) and/or bathing
- Bucket for night time use (if you are prone to going to the toilet at night)
- Hammer for driving tent stakes, and any other handy tool
- Musical instrument(s)
- Herbs, essential oils, charcoal, or any other "medications" you might need

We certainly hope to see you there!

Bumpus Hell is one of the many interesting and dynamic features at Lassen Volcanic National Park.



Compelled To Be Witnesses

The Bible says “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). The disciples certainly faced a lot of persecution in their day. When called to answer for their convictions, Peter and John replied:

Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (Acts 4:19, 20)

The fifth chapter of Acts also records the disciples being confronted by the high priest with their response:

Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:28, 29)

The Greek word from Acts 4:19 that is translated right is *dikaion*, from the root word *dikaios*. It carries the concept of that which is lawful. Peter taught that it was always lawful or right to proclaim the truth which a Christian sees and hears, for we are commanded by God to share our faith, and we must obey him first, rather than man.

Jesus declared that there were two spheres of existence that man has a responsibility towards: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's” (Matthew 22:21). Of these two spheres, secular authority and God's authority, God is to have the first, the best, and all that he requires.

Paul expresses the same idea in Ephesians 6:1, 2: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.” Paul could have referred to tradition to impress upon children the need to obey their parents, but instead he says “this is right” (*dikaios*) and makes reference to the fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12) to support his claim. While obeying parents might be a good social custom or tradition, obeying one's parents is the lawful and right thing to do, according to the most important of the two authorities—God.

Jesus had commanded the disciples to witness for him. “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19) “and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Not simply the secular authorities, but the professed religious authorities required the disciples to remain silent. It would be impossible, however, to fulfill the commands of Jesus, if they were to remain silent.

Christians today face a similar dilemma. Every day Christians are confronted with efforts to silence their witness. Children often are discouraged from sharing their faith in

school, and as we have noted, some professed Christians threaten others with lawsuits because of their testimony. (See “Religious Liberty or Tyranny” article on page 6.) And though this world would like to proclaim its peace in the 21st century, Christians are beaten, jailed, and, all too often, killed for their faith and witness.

The disciples said, “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” A. T. Robinson in his Word Pictures in the New Testament notes that the Greek says:

“For we (note emphatic ἡμεῖς [*hemeis*]) are not able not to speak” (what we saw and heard).

The Greek word translated able is *dunametha*. It comes from the Greek word *dunami* which means explosive power. The English word dynamite is derived from this Greek word.

The insight we have from the original Greek then is simply that the disciples did not have the power within themselves to resist the commission to witness about what they had seen and heard, according to the command of Jesus. They had found the pearl of great price and, like the Samaritan woman, could not be silent. The disciples told the Jewish leaders that they could not help themselves!

Beloved, the goodness of the good news is no less today than it was 1900 plus years ago. Today Christians must share their faith with others, for they have good news that is too exciting to keep to themselves.

The Bible is the source of the teachings of Jesus. It also tells us that “neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). If we, as Christians, refuse to tell others what we have seen and heard, then we not only forsake the Lord's command to be his witnesses, but we also withhold from others the very truth they must have, if they are to be saved. Paul condemns this holding back of the truth: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18 NKJV). The eternal destiny of others is upon us, who have seen and heard, to be faithful witnesses for Jesus.

Allen Stump

Youth's Corner—Larry and His Glasses

When Larry was a young boy, he lived on a farm in the middle part of the United States about seventy years ago. His parents were poor and worked hard to provide food and clothes for Larry and his six brothers and sisters, and starting from when he was very young, his mother taught him and his brothers and sisters to pray.

When Larry was nine years old, he wanted really wanted to wear glasses because one of his sisters wore glasses and he thought it would be a lot of fun, but his parents weren't convinced, for they knew the glasses would cost money. One day a traveling salesman came to town, and guess what he sold! Glasses! They probably were not prescription glasses and most likely only had plain glass for lenses, but Larry wanted them very much. He began anew to tell his parents how much he needed them to help him see better. His parents were godly parents and loved Larry very much and did not want him to have poor vision, so they bought a pair of glasses from the traveling salesman. Larry was overjoyed, and he remembered to thank God for his glasses that night when he prayed.

He proudly wore his glasses everywhere, but one day he couldn't find them! A whole week went by and still no glasses! One of his brothers began to say, "Now you have to do what I tell you to do because if you don't, I'm going to tell father you lost your glasses, and you know what that means!" So his brother, who was younger than Larry, started to dictate to Larry what he had to do at home, such as the brother's chores, and his brother even told him what to do at school. Everyone in the neighborhood went to a one-room school, so they all knew Larry had lost his glasses, and one day as they were walking home from school, Larry's brother said, "When I get home, I'm telling dad that you've lost your glasses." The other boys and girls started chiming, in a sing-song way, that he was going to be in trouble when he got home. They all seemed to enjoy making fun of him.

Larry said, "I'm going to pray and ask God to help me find my glasses, and I'll find them. You'll see," for Larry remembered how God had helped his sister find her glasses.

She had gone horseback riding, but her horse bucked, and she fell off. Her glasses went flying into a large field. She looked and looked, even though she couldn't see well without her glasses, but she couldn't find them. She knew it would be terrible news if she went home without them, and she started to cry. She was only about seven years old, but then she remembered how her mother had taught her that whenever she was in trouble, she could ask her heavenly Father for help. And that is just what she did, but isn't it sad when children don't know they have a heavenly Father who loves them? This little girl knelt down in the field and asked God to help her find her glasses, even though the field was very big and she did not know where to look. When she

opened her eyes, do you know what she saw? Her glasses right by her feet!

But Larry's friends made fun of his desire to pray, saying, "Oh, sure, go right ahead, but you won't find your glasses. You haven't found them all week, and you won't find them now!"

But Larry said, "I'm going to pray right now." And there in the pathway, he knelt down. Even though everyone was taunting him, he started to pray. He was distracted by all the noise and was a little upset, but that didn't stop him, and as he prayed, he knew God heard him. A calmness came over him. He was only nine years old, but he believed God would help him find his glasses, just as he had helped his sister. Peace filled his heart, and when he got up from praying, he said, "I know where they are!" When he got home he went straight to the barn and up into the loft, where he had been playing a week earlier. He looked on a nearby ledge, and there they were—just where he had placed them so he wouldn't lose them in the hay. He was so happy, and his faith in God grew.

Larry and his brothers and sisters learned to trust God whenever they had problems. Larry eventually became a medical doctor, and he has written a few books about how God blessed and helped him through the years. For example, when Larry arrived at Loma Linda Medical School, he had only \$18 in his pocket, and he did not know how he would be able to go to medical school, but God provided a way, and God never failed him.

One day when Dr. Lawrence Joers was in his medical office, an elderly lady and her elderly husband came in to see him. The husband was very ill; in fact, he was too sick for Dr. Joers to be able to help him because he had waited too long to be seen. The only thing Dr. Joers could do was to give him something to help him feel a little better and to send him home. He told them both that he wanted to see them again in the office in two weeks.

Two weeks came and went. The elderly lady and her elderly husband did not keep their appointment. The Dr. Joers inquired and learned that the husband was too sick to travel, so Dr. Joers decided to visit them at home. He stopped by late one evening, when all his work was done. The sick man was in bed and could not get up. There was nothing the doctor could do, but he said, "Could I have prayer with you before I leave?" So the doctor had a short prayer with this gentleman and his wife and then left.

About a week later the elderly lady called and said, "Oh, doctor, would you please come to our home just once more? My husband wants to see you one more time. I know you are going on a missionary trip and are very busy packing and getting other things ready, but won't you please come one more time?" The doctor thought, *I don't have time to go there, and there is nothing I can do for him anyway.*

The Transforming Power of Christ

But the lady was so persistent that he said, "I'll see what I can do," and late one day he returned for a visit. The gentleman lay in his bed, with little strength and energy. The doctor talked with him for a few moments and then prepared to leave.

It was then that the lady said, "My husband wants to tell you something. Please don't leave just yet. There is something he wants to say."

The doctor turned around and faced the man lying in bed. Tears were falling from his eyes and trickling down his cheeks. He said, "Doctor, my wife has been a Christian all of our married life. She prayed for me throughout this time. She went to church and invited me many times to go with her, but I always refused. God tried to speak to my heart, but I did not want to listen. Then when I became sick and you told me there is nothing that could be done to help me, I thought, *It's too late! She has tried. She has asked me to be a Christian. She has prayed for me all of these years, but I have refused to listen, and now it is too late.* But then you prayed for me when you came to see me, and when you prayed, God spoke to my heart once more, and now I have given my heart to Jesus! And I wanted you to know that. Your simple prayer provided God another opportunity to speak to my heart! And not only that, when my daughter visited me later, I told her what had happened, and she gave her heart to Jesus! And then my granddaughter did! All because you prayed for me two weeks ago."

We should ever pray for others, even if it is a short prayer for someone we do not know very well, because God is always seeking those who do not know him.



In just a few more days, this elderly gentleman slipped into the sleep of death, but his trust was in Jesus to raise him up to eternal life when he returns, and he died a very happy man, for not only he, but his daughter and granddaughter also, had accepted the gift of eternal life.

Dr. Joers also wrote of another patient who was unconscious and close to death—an elderly lady, with a tired face, who couldn't speak, open her eyes, or move. He sat by her side, holding her hand, during the last few minutes of her life, and while there, he saw her face break into a sweet smile and then heard her say, "Thank you, Jesus." Jesus loves us at all times, even when we cannot move or speak, and Jesus comforted and blessed this little lady in the last moments of her life. Isn't Jesus wonderful? His presence allowed her to smile one more time and for her last words to be in praise of him. We don't need to face our problems alone. Just like Larry with his glasses, we can turn to our heavenly Father when in need, for he is faithful and true and loves all of his children.

Onycha Holt

Of the twelve disciples, four were to act a leading part, each in a distinct line. In preparation for this, Christ taught them, foreseeing all. James, destined to swift-coming death by the sword; John, longest of the brethren to follow his Master in labor and persecution; Peter, the pioneer in breaking through the barriers of ages, and teaching the heathen world; and Judas, in service capable of pre-eminence above his brethren, yet brooding in his soul purposes of whose ripening he little dreamed—these were the objects of Christ's greatest solicitude and the recipients of His most frequent and careful instruction.

Peter, James, and John sought every opportunity of coming into close contact with their Master, and their desire was granted. Of all the Twelve their relationship to Him was closest. John could be satisfied only with a still near intimacy, and this he obtained. At that first conference beside the Jordan, when Andrew, having heard Jesus, hurried away to call his brother, John sat silent, rapt in the contemplation of wondrous themes. He followed the Saviour, ever an eager, absorbed listener. Yet John's was no faultless character. He was no gentle, dreamy enthusiast. He and his brother were called "the sons of thunder." Mark 3:17. John was proud, ambitious, combative; but beneath all this the divine Teacher discerned the ardent, sincere, loving heart. Jesus rebuked his self-seeking, disappointed his ambitions, tested his faith. But He revealed to him that for which his soul longed—the beauty of holiness, His own transforming love. "Unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world," He said to the Father, "I have manifested Thy name." John 17:6.

John's was a nature that longed for love, for sympathy and companionship. He pressed close to Jesus, sat by His side, leaned upon His breast. As a flower drinks the sun and dew, so did he drink in the divine light and life. In adoration and love he beheld the Saviour, until likeness to Christ and fellowship with Him became his one desire, and in his character was reflected the character of his Master.

"Behold," he said, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:1-3. (Ellen G. White, *Education*, pp. 86-88)

THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Elder M. L. Andreasen

(The follow is a copy of a chapel talk given by Elder M. L. Andreasen at Loma Linda, California, on November 30, 1948. This talk reveals a young Andreasen who struggled to keep a clear conscience, yet fell into a bit of fanaticism. It reveals that as he got older, his pendulum, perhaps, swung a little the other direction from center. However, it is full of wonderful insights about the Spirit of Prophecy, how he related to the testimonies of Ellen White, and his strong faith in her reception of the prophetic gift.

It will be noted that Andreasen believed that the book The Desire of Ages taught the doctrine of the trinity and that he went to visit Sister White to see if she had actually written all that was in the book. This he certainly confirmed; however, we do not believe that Andreasen came to the correct conclusion about what The Desire of Ages taught. Interestingly, though he relates several conversations he had with Ellen White, he never mentions discussing this subject with her. If he did, we have no record of its contents. Editor)

A few weeks ago I spoke in Los Angeles at the White on the subject of the Spirit of prophecy. I have been asked to repeat that speech. I do not know that I can do that, but I'll do my best.

I became an Adventist as a young man. I was not brought up an Adventist—you might say not a Christian either. When I accepted the truth, I accepted it without knowing all that was involved as a part of a general program.

I soon came face to face with the question of the Spirit of prophecy, as revealed in the writings of Sister White. I read her published volumes and found them to be very good, but I didn't find any special inspiration in them. Indeed, I did not know they were supposed to be inspired. However, I considered them very good writing. At that time I was taking work in Chicago University, and majored in English. As you can hear, I'm a foreigner. I came to America as a young man and hence did not grow up here. If I were American-born, I would be a teacher of English today, for I love the language.

The first time I became conscious of the beauty of language and of poetry was when a teacher in the university quoted this line: "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this

bank." I said to myself, "The writer is evidently attempting to say that the moon is shining. Why not say so?" The teacher seemed to read my mind and almost quoted my thoughts when he said, "You might ask why he didn't say that the moon is shining. That would be a fact, but it wouldn't be poetry." Then he gave illustrations. The poet could have written, "How sweet the moon shines." That would have been better than the first statement. "How sweet the moon shines upon this bank," would be still a little better, but not yet poetry. But when he said, "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank," something happened to me. That moment I saw a beauty in poetry that I had not seen before, and as he enlarged upon it—that many things in this world could never be said except in poetry—then I woke up to the fact that I was losing out on something, and that men, real men, could love language and poetry without losing any of their manliness. This was a revelation to me and was the beginning of my love for language and poetry.

In the hymn today we sang, "The cedars of Lebanon bow at His feet: the air is perfumed with His breath." That is poetry, a beautiful poetic representation. We are not to take such words in a literal sense, nor are we to make prose out of poetry in the Bible.

I had read *Desire of Ages* before I came to the University of Chicago, where I took a class in the life of Christ. We had many books for collateral reading, and I chose *Desire of Ages* as one of them. This gave me an opportunity to read it carefully day by day. I found there a beauty of expression that caught my attention, and I said to myself, "I do not see how Sister White could ever have written that; she was a woman of but little education, and hence would be unable to produce such a work." I said to myself again and again, "She never wrote that."

I was interested not only in her language, but also in her theology. If you have ever attempted to write on the life of Christ, you have no doubt found many places where it was easy to make a misstep. Chicago University was not at that time any more than now noted for its orthodoxy and correct theology, but some of the men had some good work on the life of Christ. As I read *Desire of Ages*, I found that Sister



M. L. Andreasen

White had treated certain subjects in such a consistent way, avoiding some pitfalls and stepping over others, that I again said to myself, "Sister White could never have written that."

In another class I was attending, I was asked to collect as many "immortal lines" from Shakespeare as I could find. This gave me an idea. "Why not try to find immortal lines in *Desire of Ages*?" I did this, and found more immortal lines in *Desire of Ages* than in Shakespeare. That may have been because of my limitation or prejudice. I shall leave that an open question.

When I began to preach, I came directly face to face with the question of Sister White. If I were to teach others, I felt I must know for myself. Believing in direct action, I went out to California to see Sister White. She received me graciously and I stayed for some months. I told her what I had come for. She listened kindly to me and said that I might have access to her writings. I said, "I am not interested in that which has been printed. I think I have read it all. I want to know in what form it was *before* it was sent to the printer." I believed at that time that her copyists and proofreaders had fixed it up, for it seemed certain to me that she could not have written it in the form it appeared in print. I had with me a number of quotations that I wanted to see if they were in the original in her own handwriting. I remember how astonished we were when *Desire of Ages* was first published, for it contained some things that we considered unbelievable, among others the doctrine of the Trinity which was not then generally accepted by the Adventists. Some of the quotations concerned theology, others I had selected for their beauty of expression. I wanted to see how these quotations looked before they were corrected by the proofreaders.

So I was given access to the manuscripts. I stayed in California several months. Being a reasonably fast reader, I read nearly all Sister White had written in her own handwriting. I was particularly interested in the statement in *Desire of Ages* which at one time caused great concern to the denomination theologically: "In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived." p. 530. That statement may not seem very revolutionary to you, but to us it was. We could hardly believe it, but of course we could not preach contrary to it. I was sure Sister White had never written, "In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived." But now I found it in her own handwriting just as it had been published. It was so with other statements. As I checked up, I found that they were Sister White's own expressions.

Were there no corrections made in her manuscripts? Yes, corrections were made. She wrote rather fast, yet her writing were quite legible. But she would make spelling mistakes at times. There were also errors in punctuation. To her, punctuation was a minor matter. At times she would leave out not only a comma and semicolon, but also periods. This would cause difficulty at times to decide where the period should be. In all cases where Sister White wrote by hand the manuscript would be taken by the copyist and commas or periods

inserted; then it would be taken to Sister White for her approval or correction. In the final analysis it was her work all the way through.

In the mornings I would often sit with Sister White and visit. She began her work early, as you will find mentioned in her writings again and again. She got up at six o'clock, or at five, or four, and even earlier.

As I asked her all manner of questions she would sometimes say, "My mind does not work along that line today." At other times she was ready to speak on almost any subject. I was pleased to find that Sister White could both smile and laugh. I had thought of her being always serious. I confess that to begin with I was a little scared, but tried not to show it. I found her to be very congenial, with a delicate sense of humor. At times she would laugh, not one of those heavy laughs which we sometimes hear, but a tingling, girlish, beautiful laugh.

Once we got to talking about olden times. She had asked my counsel on a certain chair she had purchased. It was a rocking chair, and a sister who had visited her had reproved her for her extravagance in buying such a chair. She had asked me if I thought she was extravagant. A few days previously I had tried to gather up courage to tell her that I thought she needed some new furniture, but I didn't dare tell her. Her office furniture was antiquated, not modern. Her house was in the old New England style—clean, neat, hand woven rugs on the floor. I thought that when the opportunity should come I would tell her what was on my mind.

This morning we got to talking about this rocking chair. "It is second-hand" she said, "and I paid eight dollars for it." I assured her that I did not think the price extravagant. "It is comfortable to sit in," she said, "and I have a lap board in front of me so I can sit here and write." I then told her a story of a young Methodist couple who had been given a rocking chair as a wedding present. In my innocence I had thought rocking chairs had always been in existence. I didn't know they were a new invention, and that only in the latter part of the 18th century they came into common use.

This young couple had been given a rocking chair, which the elders considered a questionable piece of furniture. To sit in a rocking chair and rock back and forth and not get anywhere—such was surely of the Devil. Hence real Christians did not have rocking chairs. When, therefore, these young Methodist people accepted the present of the chair, the elders of the church felt something should be done about it. They appointed a committee to visit the two. Later, in presenting their report, they stated that when they left the rockers had been removed and the chair stood on four legs as a good Christian chair ought to stand. Sister White laughed, and we had a pleasant time talking on various matters.

She told me about her husband bringing a bedspring to campmeeting once. Many here are not old enough to remember the kind of beds we slept in fifty or more years ago. At times the beds were just board with no springs at all, or they

might have ropes stretched, or consist of slats on which straw was placed. Only comparatively lately have springs come into existence. At first they were not the kind of springs we have now, but curly springs, the kind that sags in the middle. Brother White had bought one of those springs. Being a new-fangled invention, it was highly debatable whether it was right to use one. When he arrived in camp in his lumber wagon and brought the springs, the brethren felt that something should be done about it. So they had council and talked with him about it. He escaped censure by stating that Sister White was not very well and needed the springs to sleep on. He was permitted to keep the springs, but never brought them to campmeeting again. I enjoyed the story.

Mostly we discussed serious matters. I had become profoundly impressed with the fact that *Desire of Ages* was really her work. I could account for the writings of Sister White only on the basis of inspiration. I cannot define inspiration as regards her work any more than I can define inspiration as applied to the Bible. I accept her writings as being given by God; I believe she was divinely guided and inspired. This is not the same as infallibility. Even the Bible we do not accept as verbally inspired.

Sister White had great difficulty in bringing to the people the message as she intended it. Again and again men would take certain things in their extreme meaning, and she had to correct it. And she did correct it.

Before speaking of this, however, may I digress and say that when I became connected with the Seminary, and was asked if I would teach there, I said to them, "Yes, on one condition. That is that I be permitted to read again carefully and critically all that is in the Vault." By the Vault I mean the place where these writings are kept in their original form. I was by that time thirty years older and presumably had better judgment and a little more critical ability. I reasoned that if I was to teach teachers I must know of a surety what I teach, definitely and absolutely. Accordingly, I spent three summers going over everything thoroughly. I give it as my testimony that I believe those writings to be divinely inspired, that God guided Sister White in the writing of them. They are not to take the place of the Bible. We are not to preach Sister White. We are to preach the Word! As Protestants it must always be the Bible and the Bible only. But I must also take the stand that I cannot afford to neglect these writings given by God. I do not put Sister White on a pedestal. I do not worship her. I worship God. I can use her writings as a help and I am doing it continually. But I must not put them above the Bible. The Bible must always come first. There are statements in the *Testimonies* I cannot understand, as there are statements in the Bible I cannot understand. I have a compartment in my brain for which I arranged while yet a young man. There I put questions I do not understand. For a long time I worried over questions I could not fathom. As a teacher I felt that I must answer every question put to me. It was a helpful revelation to me when I found out that it

was far better to say, "I don't know," when I don't know rather than to attempt an answer. When I now come across a statement that I do not understand, instead of worrying over it I put it in my special compartment—in storage, as it were. At first I had the naive idea that the questions would shortly come out again and all be clear. Well, once in a while one answer gets out and the problem clears up; but for every one that gets out, ten go in, and my compartment grows larger and larger. In fact, I'm gathering questions "for eternity." I would advise others to do the same.

You will constantly find questions you cannot answer. The Bible contains principles for our guidance but does not go into detail. To illustrate: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." That settles the question of the day. But how are we to apply the commandment in detail? That is left for the individual. I remember the time when we discussed the question what a doctor should do on the Sabbath. Should he answer calls? And if he did, should he charge for such calls? Some thought that would be wicked. It would be earning money and working on the Sabbath. Some doctors decided not to charge for work done on the Sabbath. That worked, but only for a short time. Everybody got sick on the Sabbath because it didn't cost anything. And then the doctors did not know what to do. They tried different methods but no set rule was decided on. It was left for each to apply the principle for himself.

Chickens lay eggs on the Sabbath. What can the farmer do about it? Some feel they cannot profit by the chickens working on the Sabbath. On this and other problems our farmers have had no end of trouble. There are no specific directions in the Bible concerning eggs. The principle is there; it is for each to apply it. The trouble arises when one applies the principle to someone else. Apply it to yourself. Be as strict as you please, but don't attempt to force somebody else to do as you think. God has left each to decide for himself.

Take the liberty question. "Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This is a clear principle, but you will find a thousand applications of it, and opinions differ. The trouble comes when somebody tries to apply it to someone else. Again, take tithing. The principle is clear. But there are a thousand questions that come up, and again the trouble arises when one attempts to apply his own ideas to someone else.

It is so about health reform. The principle is very clear. But when it comes to certain questions, you better not apply your idea to somebody else. At two campmeetings in California three years ago two different sisters came to me. "Do you eat butter?" I confessed that I did. "Then you don't believe the *Testimonies*." I answered, "Fine day today, isn't it?" for I find it little use to argue the question. Do not the *Testimonies* bear positive testimony against milk, butter, and eggs? They do. Let us think this through. I was in the Far East this year. I saw there what I saw here in this country years ago. In milking the cows, a small stream of milk would trickle down the

not-too-clean arm down into the pail. When we got the milk in bottles later on, we were very careful in pouring it out so we wouldn't get the last eighth or quarter of an inch, for that was simply black dirt. There was no inspection of cattle or milk, and no pasteurization. When I was in certain countries I did not drink milk. I, also, would bear positive testimony against that kind of milk.

My father used to tell me about cheese making in the old country. In those days they had no milk separators. The milk was simply put out in a shed where the wind blew and all manner of things happened to it and the cream. I'm afraid the milk was not free of bacteria. From this kind of milk they made cheese. Having made the cheese, they dug it down in the ground where it stayed for months to ripen. It did ripen, and when it came out it was indeed ripe! Under conditions such as these, the statement about milk, butter, and eggs holds true today as much as ever. But when conditions changed, Sister White herself began to use milk, butter, and eggs. When conditions change, we should not apply certain statements to these changed conditions that are not applicable.

I passed through the health reform period in the early part of the century. We took health reform seriously and in its extreme meaning. I lived practically on granola and water only. Some of you may not know what granola is. It looks like toast ground up, but it is better than toast. I used neither milk, butter, nor eggs. My older daughter was ten years old when she first tasted butter. We used no meat, of course, nor milk, butter, or eggs, and almost no salt and sugar. We did not have much left but granola. I canvassed on granola. It never occurred to me to accept an invitation to a meal. I carried my granola with me in a sack. I sold granola also. That was part of health reform. I ate my granola and drank water three times a day. Then my attention was called to the fact that two times were better and so I ate granola twice a day. You might think I would have suffered on such a diet but I didn't. In fact, I prospered and grew stout.

But I got tired of granola alone after a while. I wondered if it would be all right to eat raisins with it; and so I bought some raisins with a little trepidation and anxiety. Now it was granola and raisins, but my conscience smote me, so I gave up the raisins. Then I bought a pineapple and ate all of it, with the result that my mouth became sore. I took that to be punishment for eating pineapples. So I went back to granola again. Then I read somewhere in Sister White's writings that people eat altogether too much. I applied that to my two meals of granola a day. That statement in itself is true, but not true under those conditions. I cut down on my granola and henceforth lived mostly on granola and a few simple vegetables and peanuts, not for a day or a month or a year, but for ten years.

We were serious and honest in doing this, and thought we had testimony for it—not testimony in its broad application but only in that narrow sense which some apply today. The

principles in the *Testimonies* in regard to health reform are true and applicable now as they were then, under like conditions. Let no one set aside the *Testimonies*. They are given of God. But let all beware lest they apply to conditions other than those under which they were given.

Sister White has written much on playing games, and many have gone to extremes in making application of sound principles. Note what she says:

“In plunging into amusements, match games, pugilistic performances, they declared to the world that Christ was not their leader. All this called forth the warning from God. Now that which burdens me is the danger of going into extremes on the other side.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 378.

Some condemn games of all kinds and quote Sister White. Then she reproves the extremist and says that now her burden is the extremes on the other side. In everything you will find a beautiful balance in the *Testimonies*. I believe that what Sister White has written was true under those conditions and that they are true now wherever like conditions prevail. We are to use the sense that God has given us, and there is danger of going to extremes on both sides.

We ought to take exercise. We have a right to play, but the moment you make play the chief thing in life you are on the wrong track. When you go to extremes in anything, however good it may be in itself, you are wrong.

“Probably there has not been an important movement or reform for the benefit of fallen man, which would, if properly conducted, result in his own spiritual advancement, that has been free from extremes. There are always many who move too slowly, and that testimony necessary to urge them to duty, is always sure to be taken advantage of by some who have more zeal than caution. While Satan tempts the many to be too slow, he always tempts these to be too fast. Mrs. W.'s labors are made very hard, and, sometimes perplexing, by reason of the course of extremists, who think the only safe position is to take the extreme view of every expression she has written or spoken upon points where different views may be taken.

“These persons will often hang upon their interpretation of an expression, and push matters at all hazards, and utterly disregard what she has said of the danger of extremes. We suggest that these loosen their hold of some of her strong expressions designed to move the tardy, and for a while suspend their whole weight upon some of the many cautions she has given for the benefit of extremists. In doing this, they will be more safe themselves, and will get out of her way, that she may speak freely to those who need urging to duty. Now they stand between her and the people, and paralyze her testimony, and are the cause of divisions. . . .

“Mrs. W. needs the help of all who can help in the cause of truth and reform. The people generally are slow to move, and hardly move at all. A few move cautiously and well, while others go too fast. The work of reform is not brought about in

a single day. The people must be helped where they are. They can be helped better by one standing on the line of truth nearest them, than on the side the greatest distance from them. It is best for them to be taught on all points of truth and duty by persons of judgment and caution, and as fast as God in His providence unfolds them to His people. He who is but partly reformed himself, and teaches the people, will do some good. He who sees the duty of reform and is full strict enough in any case, and allows of no exceptions, and drives matters, is sure to drive the reform into the ground, hurt his own soul, and injure others. Such do not help Mrs. W., but greatly burden her in her arduous work. We invite, yea, entreat, such to get out of the way, and let Mrs. W. come to the people.

“She works to this disadvantage, namely: she makes strong appeals to the people, which a few feel deeply, and take strong positions, and go to extremes. Then to save the cause from ruin in consequence of these extremes, she is obliged to come out with reproofs for extremists in a public manner. This is better than to have things go to pieces; but the influence of both the extremes and the reproofs are terrible on the cause, and bring upon Mrs. W. a three-fold burden.


“Here is the difficulty: What she may say to urge the tardy, is taken by the prompt to urge them over the mark. And what she may say to caution the prompt, zealous, incautious ones, is taken by the tardy as an excuse to remain too far behind.

“We say to those who wish to help Mrs. W. in her work, you will not find her far ahead of the people, with a few extremists. No, she is back with the people, tugging away at the wheel of reform, and has to lift all the harder because of your extreme advance. Come back, good, wholehearted souls, and stand by her side, and lift where she lifts. What can you do there at such a distance from the people? Come back. You must meet the people where they are.”—by Elder James White to “A Brother at Monroe, Wisconsin,” and printed as an editorial in the *Review and Herald* of March 17, 1868. Vol. 31, No. 14, p. 220.

In regard to health reform, be as strict as you please, but do not judge others by your standard. What you need is to straighten yourself up and guide your life by what has been written. You do not need any encouragement in being more slack; rather, be more strict, but with yourself. As I think of this and of some other things, I wish that we could come back to the faith once delivered to the saints—to a balanced view, not extremes on one side or the other. As stated, you will find that Sister White was well balanced. You cannot bring a single statement to me written anywhere of which I cannot say, “I believe that.” But I must also have in mind that there are balancing statements and that we may not take extreme views.

I have no intention of deceiving you nor deceiving myself. I believe, friends, that we ought to give heed to the messages God has given, apply them to ourselves and not judge others. Oh, the intolerance of some who think they are right! Let them be right. But do not judge others.

I believe we have come to the time when Sister White must be given a definite place in our teaching. We must not place her above the Bible, nor must we reject her. We must use the sense God has given us, the sense that James White used when he wrote what has been quoted above. Be cautious of your application and your assertions. Never say that because someone disagrees with you that he does not believe the Testimonies. He may not believe your interpretation of them, but still he may believe them as fully as you do, and have a more balanced view.

Men and women, you have a message to the world, a health message, a medical message. You must see to it that the writings of the Spirit of prophecy are held in reverence, and given their rightful place. They are given for us to read and to study, and they will be a help to us. I hope that what I have said today may strengthen your faith in these writings. Also that it may make you cautious of your judgment of others, and that you will take the view of them which I believe God would have you take so that we unitedly can go forward, believing the whole truth, and believing in the gift God has given to His people. 




West Virginia Camp Meeting Planned

The annual West Virginia camp meeting will be held June 26–30 in Smyrna Valley. While we want as many as possible to attend the youth camp we are co-hosting with the Pacific Virtual Fellowship, we certainly hope all interested brothers and sisters can attend this gathering in the east.

The theme for the West Virginia camp meeting is *Created for His Glory*.

Camping is free and the Sabbath afternoon meal will be provided. We are planning a baptism on Sabbath and communion on Friday morning, so please be ready for these special services.

Our featured guest speaker is Pastor Paul Agyeman from Ghana, Africa. Other speakers include Thomas Akens, Elvis Alberto, Lynnford Beachy, Ed Cyrus, Onycha Holt, Morgan Polsky, Dennis Robertson, David Sims, and Allen Stump.

Sister Betty Fairchild, who has graciously helped with several Sabbath meals at the camp through the years, recently had a heart attack and is home resting. Please keep Betty in your prayers. While she will not be able to help this year beyond the helpful planning and arranging already done, we certainly do not want her to miss the blessing of the camp meeting. 

The Heavy Price of Obesity

RED ALERT #104, May 21, 2012

by Herbert Douglass

“True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful. There are few who realize as they should how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. The appetite should ever be in subjection to the moral and intellectual powers. The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body. . . . God has promised wisdom; but there is no promise to those who are bent upon self-pleasing.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 562, 563)

On May 14 and 15, wherever HBO could be seen, a four-part series called “The Weight of the Nation” was sponsored by Kaiser Permanente, federal agencies, and the HBO network. Why all that attention and cost? Because two-thirds of adults and one-third of children in America are obese or overweight. This adds about \$150 billion a year to health costs. (<http://www.theweightofthenation.hbo.com>.)

More than only being “heavy, the connection between obesity and cancer has become acute: Though the decline in deaths from all cancers combined continued in the USA from 2004–2008, a major government report now highlights a worrisome rise in cases linked to obesity and inactivity. Research shows that excess weight and a sedentary lifestyle are risk factors for one-quarter to one-third of common cancers in the USA. About one-third of adults—almost 78 million—are obese, roughly 30 or more pounds over a healthy weight” (*USA TODAY*, 3/29/2012).

“I don’t think Americans understand the association between cancer and obesity,” says physician Marcus Plescia, director of the division of cancer prevention for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “We do know people are afraid of cancer. They know about the links from obesity to diabetes, heart disease and arthritis, but many don’t know about this. They need to know.”

A report, published in the journal *Cancer*, and co-authored by researchers from the CDC, the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries, the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society, said: “For people who do not smoke, maintaining a healthy weight and getting sufficient exercise may be among the most important ways to prevent cancer, the authors write. The risk factors are second only to tobacco as preventable causes of disease and death in the USA.”

The numbers keep adding up: Authors of a recent [article in the] *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* looking specifically at obesity found that children and adolescents (2 to 19 years old) who were screened from 2009 to 2010 had a 16.9 percent obesity rate, and adults had a

35.7 percent obesity rate. These numbers have increased significantly over the last 12 years for African-American and Mexican-American women, while all groups of men showed a significant trend toward obesity over the same period (Flegal KM, Carroll MD, Kit BK, Ogden CL. *Prevalence of obesity and trends in the distribution of body mass index among US adults, 1999–2010. JAMA.* 2012;307:491–7).

One fact stares us in the face: Because we are living longer, cancer is becoming a chronic disease—and because we can treat people better now, “surprise,” we live longer! Readers of these Red Alerts are not dummies! No one forces them to smoke! No one makes them drink alcohol! No one forces them to say NO to that extra Pizza or bowl of ice cream! No one ties them to the couch or computer when his/her spouse urges, “take a walk!”

“We do know people are afraid of cancer. They know about the links from obesity to diabetes, heart disease and arthritis, but many don’t know about this. They need to know.”

Let’s think about it for a moment: As soon as we get our medical checkups, we quickly drive to the pharmacy to fill the next prescription. We numbly write the check for hundreds of dollars annually (for some, monthly!) to get medicines for problems that a wiser diet and a walking program would have avoided. Now, let’s admit it!

I couldn’t resist repeating this: “The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body. . . . God has promised wisdom; but there is no promise to those who are bent upon self-pleasing.”

(Many thanks to Dr. Douglass for permission to reprint this alert. Red Alert is published by Dr. Douglass on the Internet. To receive his Red Alerts, please send your request to alert@eredalert.com



Dr. Herbert Douglass

Follow the Light!

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). I learned that Bible verse when I was very young, beyond the pale of my memory, before the meaning of it held any significance at all for me. Yet, a real-life illustration of it was part of my childhood.

Papa carried the flashlight and walked in front. Mama and I, single file, followed confidently. Papa’s flashlight illuminated the ground ahead, and as long as we kept our eyes focused on that splash of light, our footing was sure, though the narrow path beneath our feet was dark.

My brother and his new wife lived in their small house, perhaps three hundred yards north of ours. We often walked the path from our house to theirs to visit for a while after supper on summer evenings. Darkness usually settled over the countryside while we lingered, but Papa, ever safety-minded, always had a flashlight with him. For part of the way, it was a narrow path, too narrow to walk two or three abreast; single file was required

It was pleasant for me, a little girl of nine or ten, to walk the path with my parents in the dark, the familiar path over which I often ran and skipped in daylight hours. While my eyes followed the splotch of light ahead, my ears were attuned to the nocturnal sounds of summer. The eardrum-vibrating “chack-ack” mating calls of katydids was punctuated by whippoorwills’ musical repetition of their own names. Occasionally, the harsh, wild bark of a gray fox on the prowl or the eerie scream of a bobcat rent the air from the hillsides that enclosed our mountain hollow home.

The darkness beyond the golden circle of light might hold dangers unimaginable, but I knew no fear. With my father in the lead, shining the light on our path, I was safe every step of the way. If I lagged behind or if I took my eyes off the lighted pathway ahead, I was apt to stumble or even veer off the path into the weeds and briars on either side and become lost until Papa’s flashlight searched me out and guided me back to safety. “Follow the light!” he commanded. Faithfully following the light, we would walk toward the shelter of our own house, looming ahead, large and white, just up the hill. I knew it was there, even if I couldn’t see it, and that my father’s light would safely guide us there through the dark.

The path we walk through life in this sin-darkened world is as obscure as the dark path remembered from my childhood. Unless we allow God’s word to be the lamp to our feet and the light to our path, we will wander off into the danger zones, where our enemy, the devil himself, lurks to catch his prey (1 Peter 5:8). Keeping our eyes focused on Jesus, the living Word, guided by his light in the written Word, we can walk safely and surely, avoiding the terrors and dangers that lurk on every side, tempting us to stray from the narrow path that will lead us home.

We must walk the path single-file, since it is, indeed, a narrow path, though the fellowship of others makes the journey

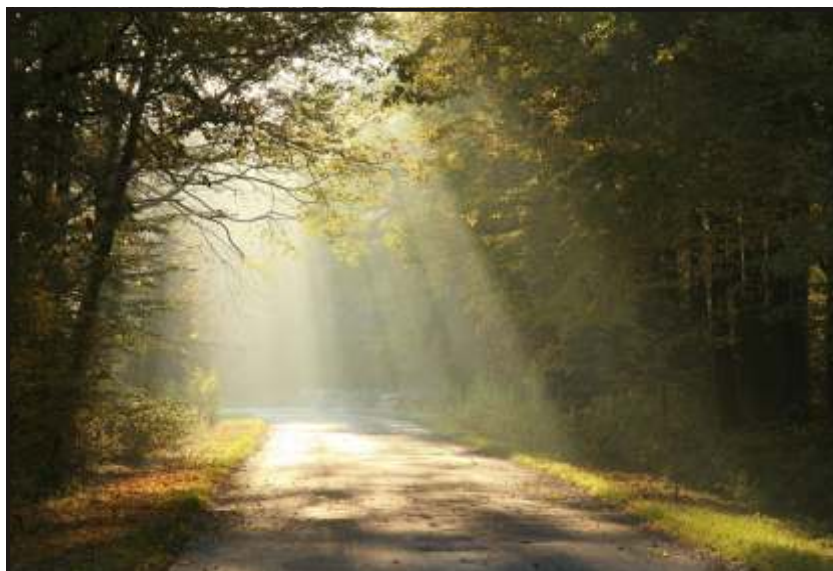
more enjoyable. We cannot walk the path for them; neither can they walk it for us, but we can encourage one another to follow the light and to stay on the path, so as not to lose our way. We may reflect the light of Jesus, encouraging each other to see more clearly the way to our Father’s house.

Through the straight gate at the end of the narrow way (Matthew 7:13) stand the many

mansions of our Father’s house that Jesus assured his disciples and us, through them, that he has gone to prepare (John 14:2, 3). The Father, God himself, who is Light and in whom there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5), waits for us. He waits, in the light of love streaming from his throne, to welcome us home.

Follow the Light! It will guide you there.

Grace Cox



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